

DISTINGUISHING MALE CUCKOO BEES FRESH & WORN (EX RUPESTRIS)

This covers the male cuckoo bees with white, cream or yellow tails.

Bombus vestalis



fresh male



old faded male



genitalia

Bombus bohemicus



fresh male



old faded male

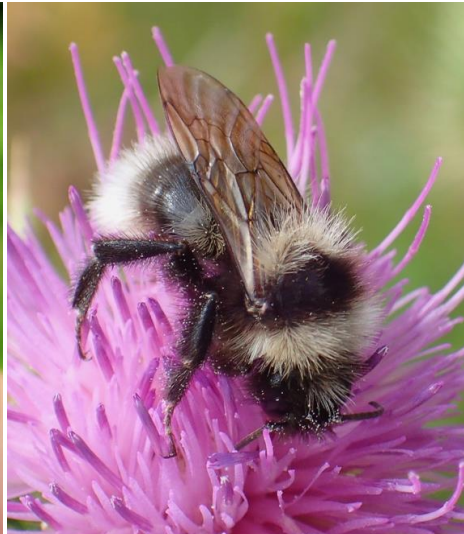


genitalia

Bombus barbutellus



fresh male



old faded male



genitalia

Vestalis has the sleekest males of all cuckoo bees, the thoracic pile being relatively short and neat and the abdominal pile adpressed. Fresh individuals have sulphur-yellow flashes at the base of the white tail and a buff collar. A midriff band of varying intensity is present but is rarely as obvious as in *bohemicus* and *barbutellus*. *Bohemicus* and *barbutellus* are fluffier. Fresh male *bohemicus* have pale yellow flashes at the base of the white tail and a broader, paler collar than *vestalis*. *Barbutellus* has a pure white tail and usually a well-developed midriff band. A pair of welts are present near the tip of sternite 6. Old faded males of these three are regularly confused and should be confirmed using genitalia and antennal segment ratios (segment 3 much shorter than 5 in *vestalis* but these segments of similar length in *bohemicus*).

Bombus sylvestris



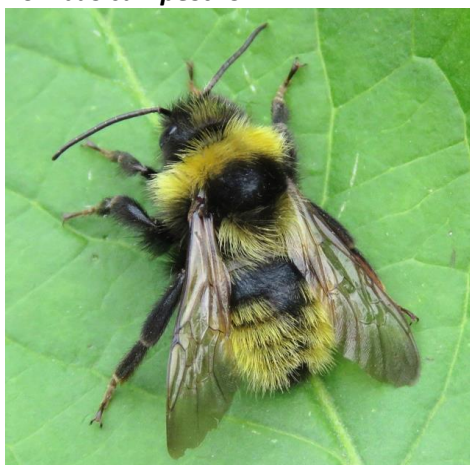
old faded male



genitalia

Typical males have a red and black tip to the white tail, a bright yellow collar, and a weak midriff band that is usually confined to tergite 1 leaving the scutellum black. The tail can sometimes be yellow, and the red hairs at the tip can be missing. Darker individuals are common and occasionally fully black ones. The hind legs have particularly long hairs and the bee is very fluffy. The genitalia have narrow claspers.

Bombus campestris



fresh typical male



darker male



black male



old faded male



genitalia

Highly variable. The palest ones have a broad yellow collar and midriff band, with the abdomen yellow-haired except for tergite 2. But darker or fully black ones are not uncommon and can be difficult to distinguish from dark sylvestris. Sternite 6 has a dense tuft of long hairs on each side. The genitalia are distinctive with very broad claspers.