

DISTINGUISHING *BOMBUS VESTALIS* (LEFT) AND *B. BOHEMICUS* (RIGHT)

Females (queen-sized, relatively short antennae)



Fresh female *vestalis*



Fresh female *bohemicus*



Faded female *vestalis*

Fresh females of *B. vestalis* have a chestnut collar of varying width. The tail has sulphur-yellow basal flashes. The main body pile is deep, velvety black and very neat, reminiscent of *B. lapidarius*. No pale hairs occur around the scutellum fringe. In older females, the collar fades dull yellow-buff and the yellow flashes of the tail fade whitish.

B. bohemicus females are fluffier and average smaller. The collar is broader and pale yellow. The tail starts off with pale yellow (never sulphur-yellow) basal flashes that are a similar colour to the collar but quickly fade whitish. The scutellum fringe often has some yellow hairs and the body does not have the velvety-texture of *vestalis*.

Males (smaller, slimmer with much longer antennae)



Fresh male *vestalis*



Fresh male *bohemicus*



Faded male *vestalis*



Faded male *bohemicus*

Male *B. vestalis* has a shorter, neater (sleeker) body pile, a buff collar and a bright yellow tail flash when fresh. Both species can have a pronounced midriff band but in some *bohemicus* it can be very pronounced, approaching the state of *B. barbutellus* and *B. hortorum*. They become less distinctive as they fade. **Checking antennal segment ratios and genitalia is recommended for male cuckoo bees.**