

Identifying Bumble Bees in Utah



Bumble bee species (*Bombus*) share some defining features that will help you distinguish them from other types of insects:



Bumble bees have furry, rounded bodies, large black eyes, and bent antennae.

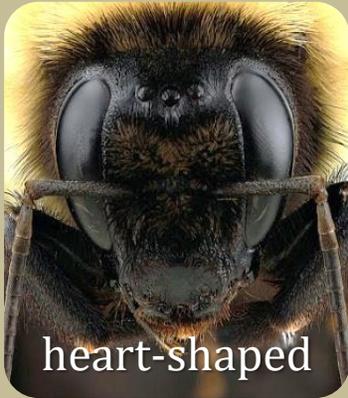
They fly fairly slowly, buzz the flowers they visit, climb among blooms on the same flower stalk, and are quite docile – they rarely sting unless defending their nest.



They can have black, buff, yellow, red/orange, or white body segments, and brown wings. They collect pollen on leg 'baskets' and can fly in low light and cool temps.

Identifying bumble bees from look-alikes

Face



Wings



Abdomen



Body



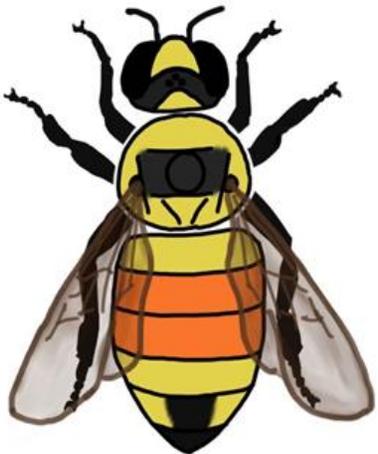
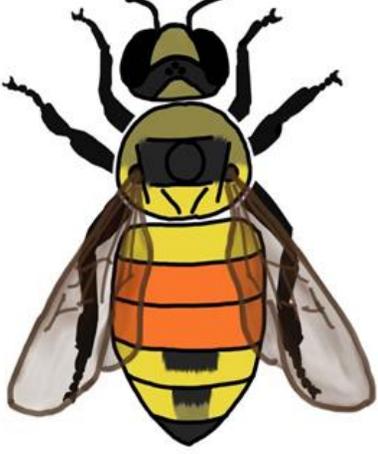
Not bumble bees!



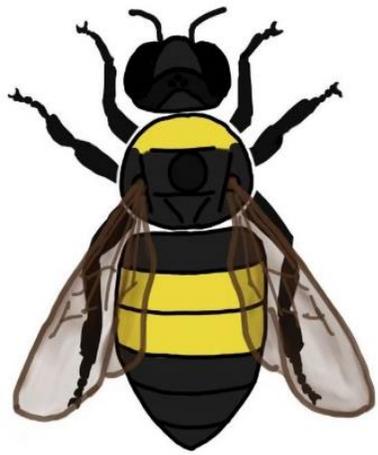
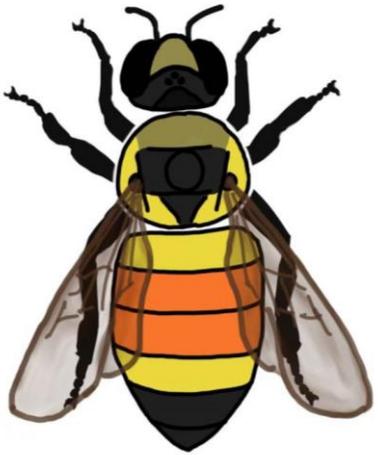
Recognizing Utah Bumble Bees

Hunt's bumble bee	Two-form bumble bee	Central bumble bee	Yellow-fronted bumble bee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- common in high desert scrub- hair short and even- medium body size  <p>huntii</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- common in grassy prairies, mountain meadows- hair short and even- small body size  <p>bifarius</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- moderately common in grassy prairies and mountain meadows- hair short and even- small body size  <p>centralis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- common in mountain meadows near forests- hair medium- small body size  <p>flavifrons</p>

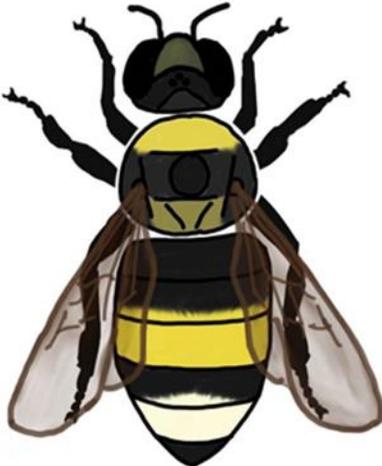
Recognizing Utah Bumble Bees

Forest bumble bee	Black tail bumble bee	Red-belted bumble bee	Mixed bumble bee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- moderately common in open grassy areas, mountain meadows above 7800 ft- hair long and uneven- small body size  <p><i>sylvicola</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- common in open grassy areas, shrubland below 6500 ft- hair short and even- small body size  <p><i>melanopygus</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- common close to or within wooded areas- hair short and even- small body size  <p><i>rufocinctus</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- moderately common in open grassy areas, shrubland, mountain meadows below 7000 ft- hair long and even- small body size  <p><i>mixtus</i></p>

Recognizing Utah Bumble Bees

<p>American bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rapidly declining in range; often found on sunflowers & nightshades - low elevation fields and farmlands, mainly SE Utah - hair short and even - large body size 	<p>Sonoran bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - often found on sunflowers, nightshades and globe mallows - low elevations and deserts, mainly SW Utah - hair short and even - large body size 	<p>Morrison's bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - uncommon and possibly declining, in open dry scrub - hair very short and even - large body size 	<p>Tri-colored bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extremely rare in Utah; close to woodland or within woodland, wetlands - hair very short and even - medium body size *can be mistaken for Hunt's bumble bee*
 <p>pennsylvanicus</p>	 <p>sonorus</p>	 <p>morrisoni</p>	 <p>ternarius</p>

Recognizing Utah Bumble Bees

<p>Golden-northern bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - slowly declining in range; open grassland, farmland, parks, gardens - hair medium and even - medium body size 	<p>Nevada bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - moderately common in open grassy prairies and meadows below 6500 ft - hair very short and even - large body size 	<p>Western bumble bee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formerly common in open grassy areas, mountain meadows, found at high elevation - hair moderately short and even - medium body size *IN STEEP DECLINE*
 <p><i>fervidus</i></p>	 <p><i>nevadensis</i></p>	 <p><i>occidentalis</i></p>

**White-shouldered
bumble bee**

- found in open meadows and granite soil slopes
- hair medium and even
- large body size

**Brown-belted
bumble bee**

- common in open farmland, fields, parks, gardens, and wetlands
- hair very short and even
- medium body size

**Golden-belted
bumble bee**

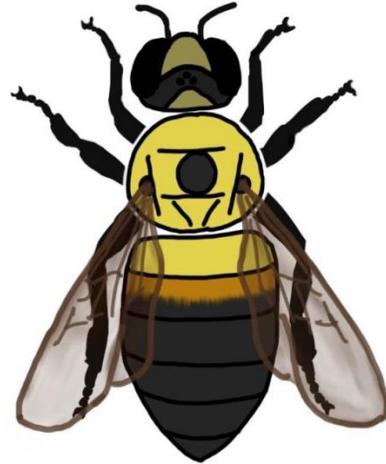
- uncommon; found in open boreal areas mostly above tree line
- hair moderately long and even
- medium body size

**Yellow-banded
bumble bee**

- formerly common close to or within wooded areas and wetlands
- hair short and even
- medium body size



appositus



griseocollis



balteatus



terricola

Recognizing Utah Bumble Bees

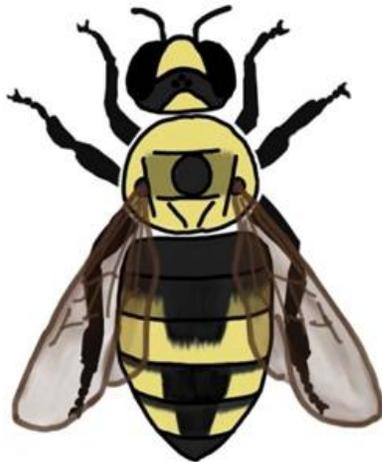
Cuckoo Bumble Bees

Indiscriminate cuckoo bumble bee

- social parasite (of other *Bombus* spp); possibly in decline; moderately common in Utah
- found where host species occur, mountain meadows
- hair medium
- body size large (females are queens, not workers)

Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee

- social parasite of *B. occidentalis*; declining rapidly; very uncommon in Utah
- found where host species occur, high elevations
- hair short and even
- body size large (females are queens, not workers)



insularis



suckleyi