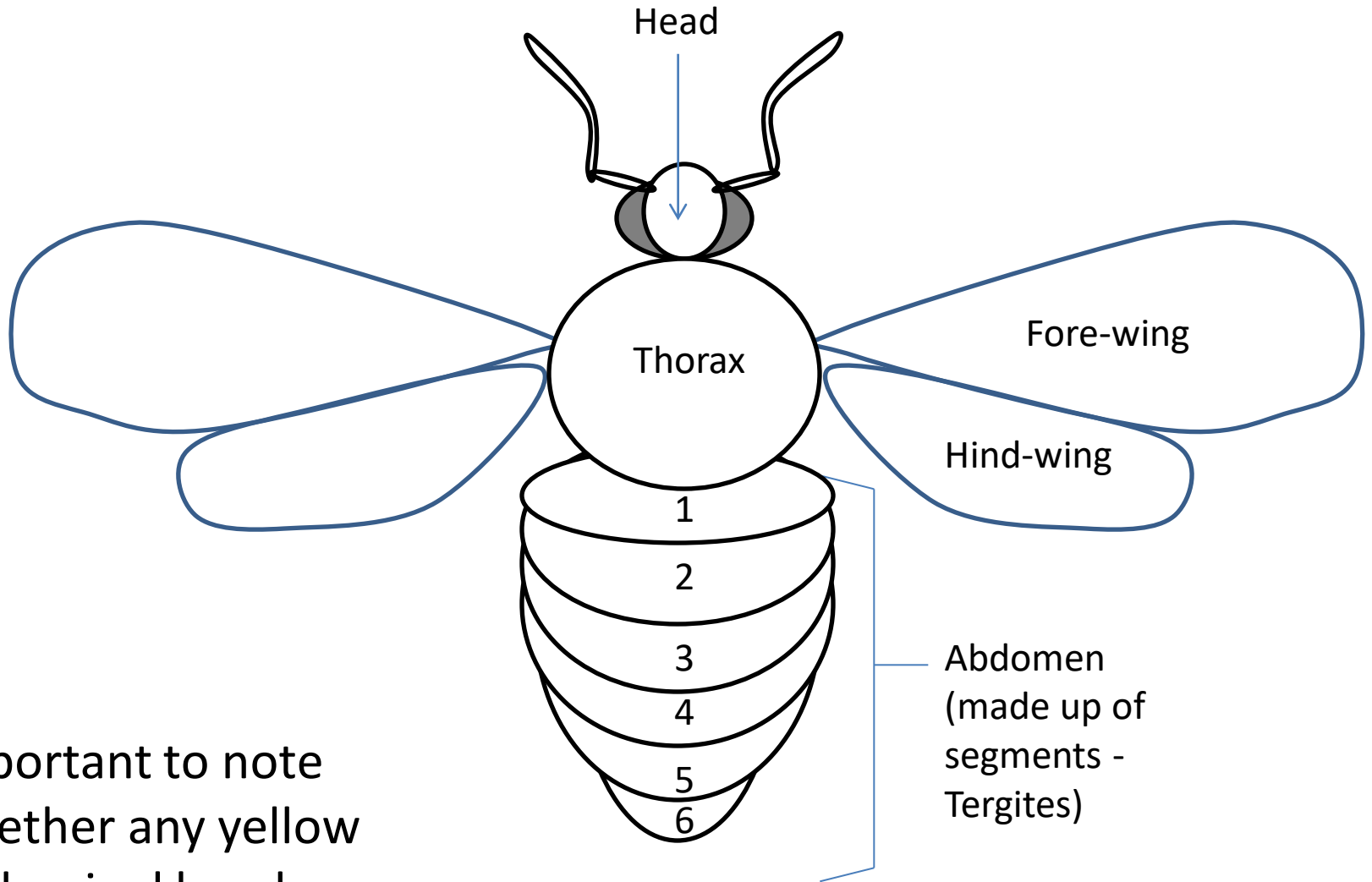


A simple key to Cumbrian Social Bumblebees



Stephen Hewitt

Fellfoot
Forward



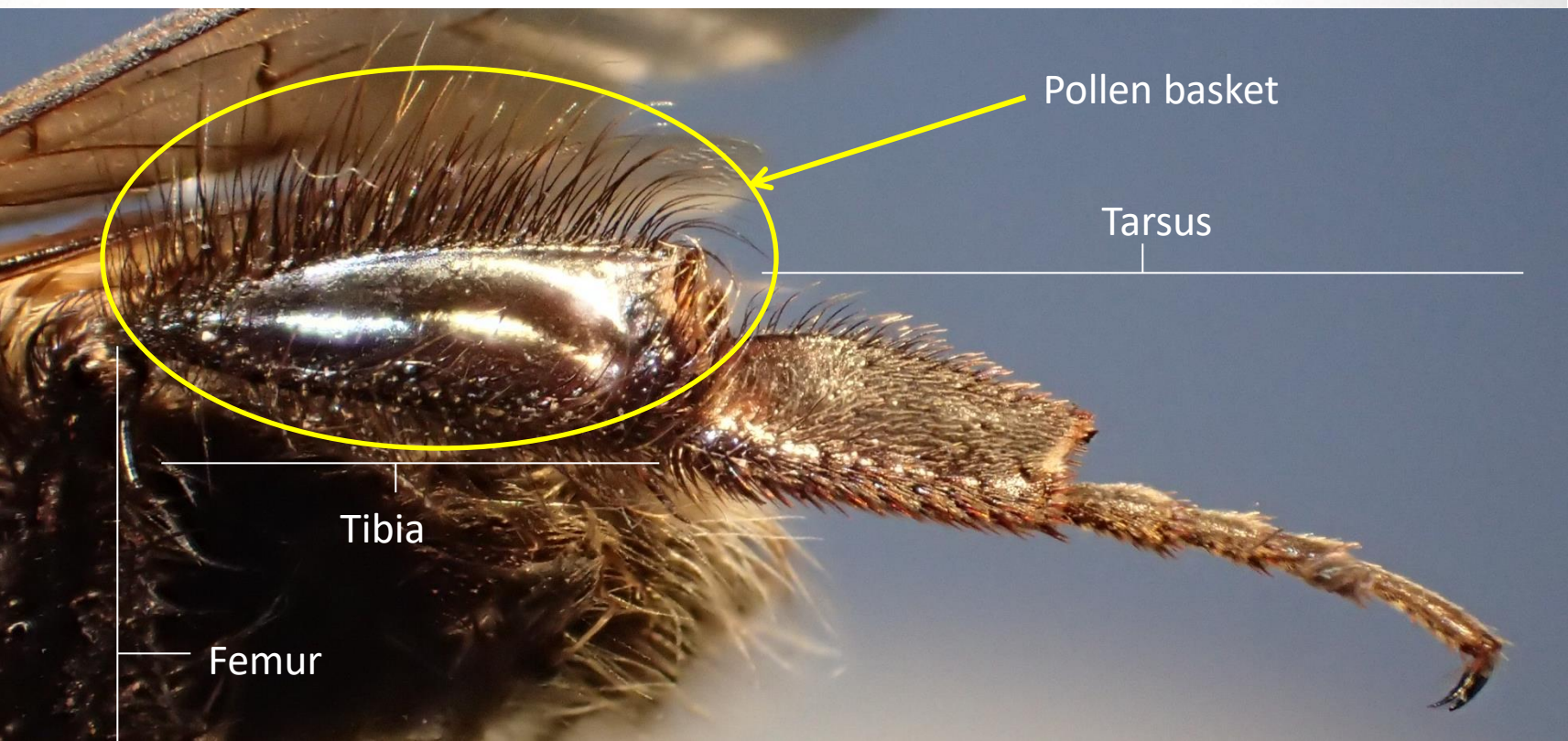
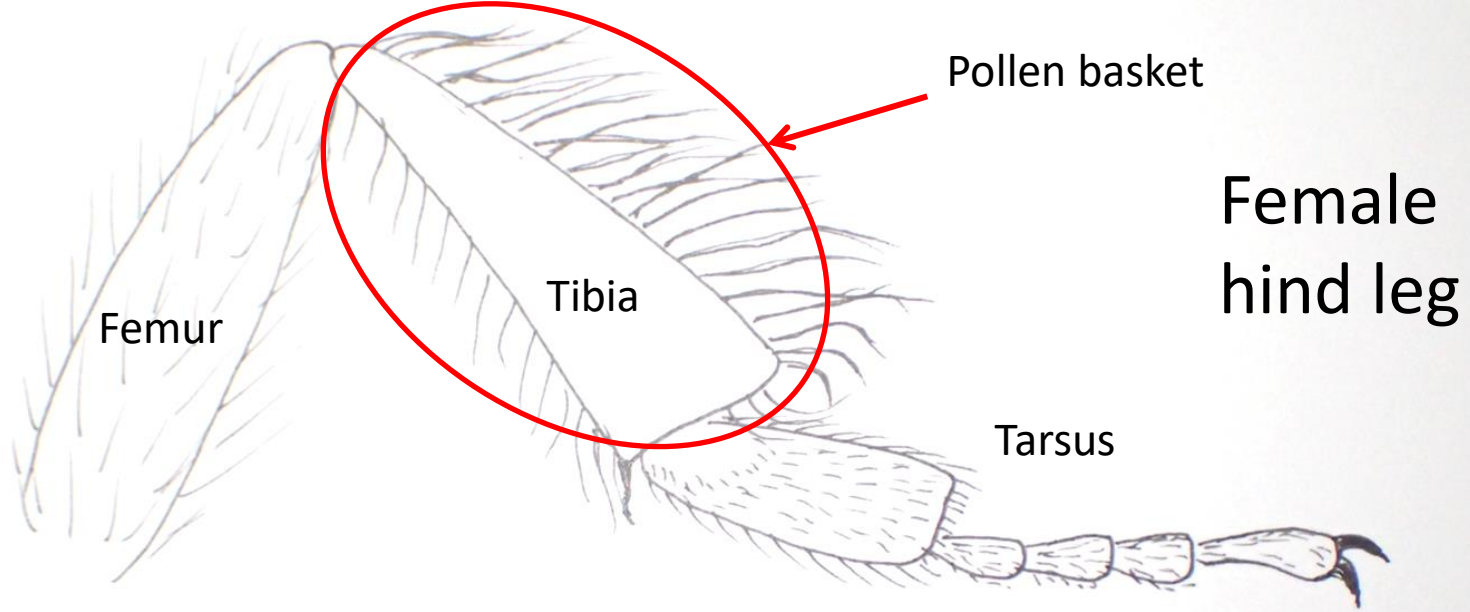
Important to note whether any yellow abdominal bands are on tergite 1 or 2

Female bumblebees have 12 segments to their antennae



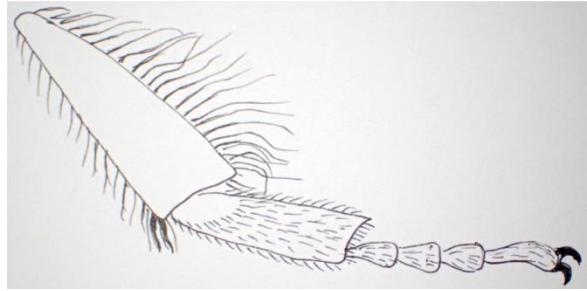
Male bumblebees
have 13 segments to
their antennae





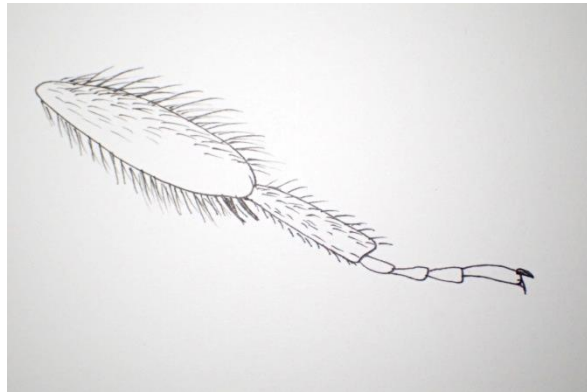
Social bumblebee female

Hind tibia broad at tip, bare and smooth with fringe of long hairs on either edge to form the sides of the basket where pollen is stored for transporting back to the nest.



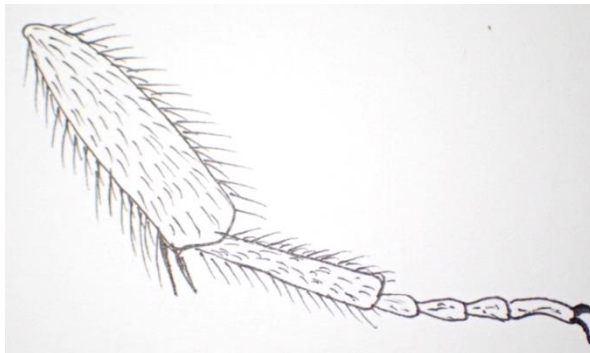
Social bumblebee male

Hind tibia narrowing towards the tip, shiny but partly covered in fine hairs. No pollen basket, hairs at edges much shorter than in females.



Cuckoo bumblebee

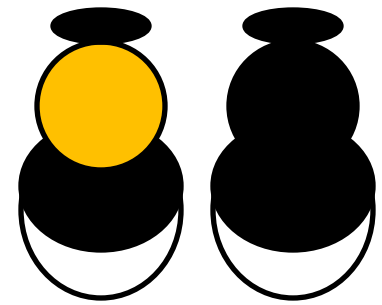
Hind tibia not broadened at tip, dull and covered in hairs. No pollen basket of long hairs.



White-tailed females

1 No yellow bands, thorax entirely ginger or black haired.

.....**Tree Bumblebee**
Common in gardens, open woodlands and other areas



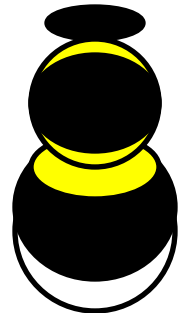
Thorax black with 1 or more yellow bands.....2

2 No yellow band at the back of the thorax, segment 1 of abdomen black, segment 2 yellow.....**White-tailed Bumblebee** group

*Common in gardens and elsewhere. (There are two other very similar, local, species.) Workers of the **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** are also included here as they too have white tails and often cannot be distinguished.*

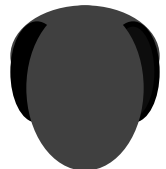


Yellow band at back of thorax merges with yellow band on 1st segment of abdomen3



3 Face shorter in front view, heart-shaped. Pale hairs fringing pollen basket.....**Heath Bumblebee**

Locally distributed on moorland and on lowland mosses



Face longer in front view, "horse-faced". Black hairs fringing pollen basket.....**Garden Bumblebee**

Widespread but not common in a variety of habitats including gardens



Females without a white tail (1/2)

1 All black with a red tail.....**Red-tailed Bumblebee**
Common in gardens and elsewhere



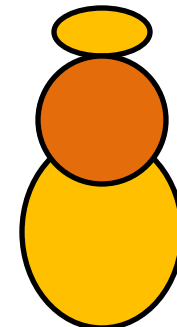
Not all black with a red tail.....2

2 Body appears entirely ginger or orange haired, no obvious bands
of different colours.....3



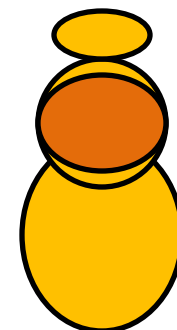
Black and yellow/orange banded, with an orange or buff tail.....4

3 Some black hairs mixed in with the ginger hairs on the abdomen.....
.....**Common Carder Bee**
Common in gardens and elsewhere



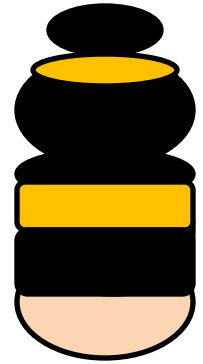
No black hairs on the abdomen, hairs on the front and back of the
thorax slightly paler than those in the centre.....

.....**Moss Carder Bee**
Rare, on flower-rich uplands, lowland mosses and coasts.



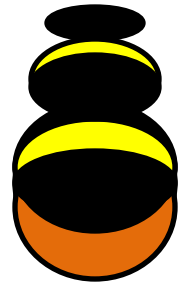
Females without a white tail (2/2)

- 4 Large, orange-yellow bands at front of thorax and on second segment of the abdomen, tail pale cream/buff to orange.....**Buff-tailed Bumblebee**
Widespread and common (workers have white tails and cannot be distinguished from workers of the White-tailed Bumblebee group)

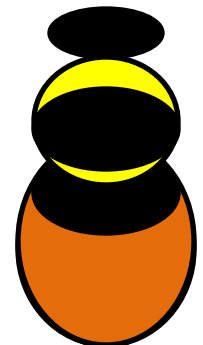


Smaller, bands more lemon-yellow , tail bright orange5

- 5 Lemon-yellow bands at front of thorax and at base of abdomen, only tip of tail orange coloured. Small.....**Early Bumblebee**
Widespread and common

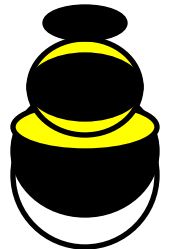
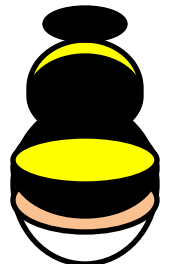
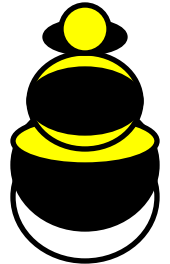
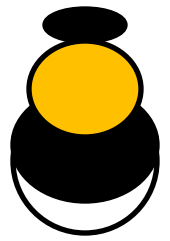


Lemon-yellow bands at front and back of thorax, not on the abdomen. More than half the abdomen orange coloured. Medium-sized**Bilberry Bumblebee**
Widespread but local in the uplands



White/cream-tailed males

- 1 Thorax entirely ginger haired.....**Tree Bumblebee**
 Thorax black with yellow bands.....2
- 2 Head with yellow hairs.....3
 Head entirely black haired.....4
- 3 Second abdominal segment entirely or mostly yellow haired.....
**White-tailed Bumblebee**
 Second abdominal segment entirely or mostly black haired.....
**Heath Bumblebee**
- 4 No yellow band on rear of thorax, only one at front of thorax and
 one on segment 2 of abdomen. Narrow buff margin at base of
 tail.....**Buff-tailed Bumblebee**
 Yellow bands at front and back of thorax and also at base of
 abdomen.....**Garden Bumblebee**



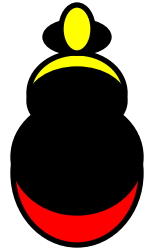
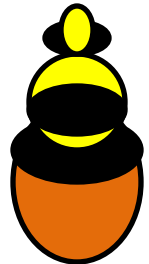
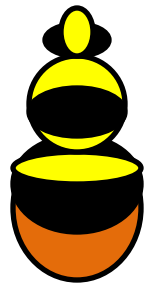
Red/orange-tailed males

1 Yellow band at base of abdomen.....**Early Bumblebee**

No yellow band at base of abdomen.....2

2 Yellow bands at front and back of thorax. Rear half or more of the abdomen covered in orange hairs.....**Bilberry bumblebee**

Yellow band at front of thorax only.....**Red-tailed bumblebee**



Ginger-bodied males

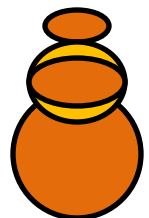
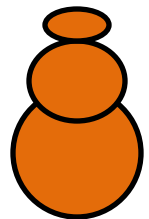
1 Some black hairs mixed in with the ginger hairs on the abdomen.....

.....**Common Carder Bee**

Common in gardens and elsewhere

No black hairs on the abdomen, hairs on the front and back of the thorax slightly paler than those in the centre..... **Moss Carder Bee**

Rare, in flower-rich uplands and coasts



Online resources

Steven Falk's bumblebee crib sheets and albums

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/63075200@N07/collections/>

Get Cumbria Buzzing!

<https://www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/getcumbriabuzzing/>

Planting for Pollinators

<https://www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/planting-pollinators/>

Bumblebee Conservation Trust

<https://www.bumblebeeconservationtrust.org/>

Bees Wasps and Ants Recording Society

<https://www.bwars.com/>

Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre

<https://www.cbdc.org.uk>