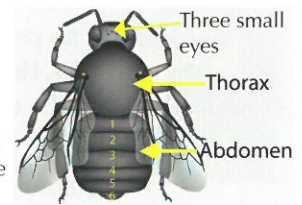




# GUIDE TO MN BUMBLE BEES: FEMALES

This guide is only for females (12 antennal segments, 6 abdominal segments, most bumble bees, most have pollen baskets, no beards on their mandibles). First determine which yellow highlighted section your bee is in, then go through numbered characters to find a match. See if your bee matches the color patterns shown and the description in the text. **Color patterns can vary.** More detailed keys are available at [discoverlife.org](http://discoverlife.org). Join the search for bumble bees with [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org)



## Yellow hairs between wings, 1st abdominal band yellow (may have black spot in center of thorax)

1. Black on sides of 2nd ab, yellow or rusty in center



2nd abdominal band with yellow in middle, black on sides. Yellow often in a "W" shape. Top of head yellow.

*Bombus bimaculatus*  
two-spotted bumble bee



2nd abdominal band with yellow in middle bordered by rusty brown in a swooping shape. Top of head black.

*Bombus griseocollis*  
brown-belted bumble bee



Light lemon yellow hairs on top of head and on thorax.

*Bombus impatiens*  
common eastern bumble bee



Center spot on thorax with sometimes faint V shaped extension back from the middle. Queens do not have brownish central patch.

*Bombus affinis*  
rusty patched bumble bee

2. All other ab segments black 3. 2nd ab brownish centrally surrounded by yellow

4. 2nd ab entirely yellow and ab 3-6 black



Yellow on top of head. Slightly elongate space above mandible

*Bombus vagans*  
half-black bumble bee



Black on top of head. Square cheek. A few yellow hairs on 5th ab. Smaller than vagans. Spot on thorax variable but often to wing pads.

*Bombus sandersoni*  
Sanderson's bumble bee



Variable color patterns. Smaller than many other bumble bees. Cheek shorter than width of mandible.

*Bombus rufocinctus*  
red-belted bumble bee



Variable color patterns. Usually brown/black on sides of thorax.

*Bombus perplexus*  
confusing bumble bee

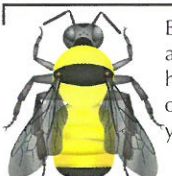


5. Yellow on front edge of 2nd ab

6. No obvious spot on thorax.

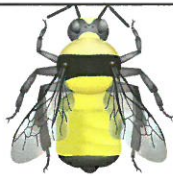
## Black stripe between wings

1. Yellow on ab 1-4



Black on top and front of head. Sides of thorax yellow.

*Bombus fervidus*  
yellow bumble bee



Yellow on top and front of head. Sides of thorax with brown hairs. 5th ab may be black.

*Bombus borealis*  
boreal bumble bee



Distinct V shape extending back from center stripe on thorax. Black hairs on face and top of head.

*Bombus ternarius*  
tricolored bumble bee



Yellow hairs on top of head and front of face. Only in Western MN.

*Bombus huntii*  
Hunt's bumble bee



Variable colors. Smaller than many. Cheek shorter than width of mandible. A few yellow hairs between wings, but often looks like stripe.

*Bombus rufocinctus*  
red-belted bumble bee

2. Orange/red on ab 2-3

## Back half of thorax is predominantly black

1. Yellow on top of head

2. Black on top of head



Often with yellow on rear sides of thorax and yellow on top of head. Three small eyes lower on face (see below).

*Bombus auricomus*  
black and gold bumble bee



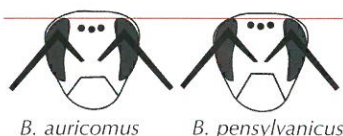
Usually black hairs on top of head. Three small eyes higher on face (see below). Long spine on hind basitarsus.

*Bombus pensylvanicus*  
American bumble bee



Smaller and stouter than many other bumble bees. Fringe of yellow hairs near end of abdomen. Short cheek.

*Bombus terricola*  
yellowbanded bumble bee



*B. auricomus*

*B. pensylvanicus*

## Much of abdomen lacking hair, no pollen baskets



*Bombus citrinus*  
lemon cuckoo bumble bee



*Bombus bohemicus*  
Ashton's bumble bee



*Bombus insularis*  
indiscriminate cuckoo bumble bee



*Bombus flavidus*  
Fernalde cuckoo bumble bee



Common in southern MN



Common in northern MN