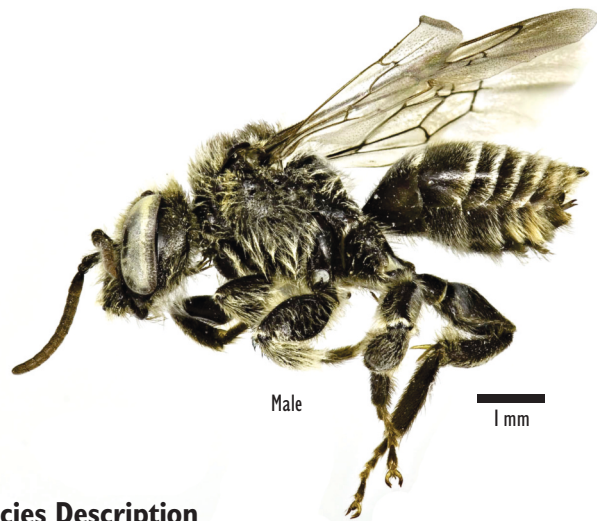


Macropis Cuckoo Bee

Epeoloides pilosulus



Male

1 mm

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Species Description

The *Macropis* Cuckoo Bee is a medium-sized (7.5-10 mm long) shiny black bee with dense bands of white hairs on its abdomen. It does not make its own nest, but rather lays its eggs in nests made by its host (*Macropis nuda* bees). Species with this strategy are known as cleptoparasites; their young feed off the food collected by the host species. As a result of this, females do not have specialized hairs on their legs or body used for carrying pollen back to the nest. For further identification features, refer to the similar species section to learn how to access a reference key for the bees of Eastern Canada.

STATUS

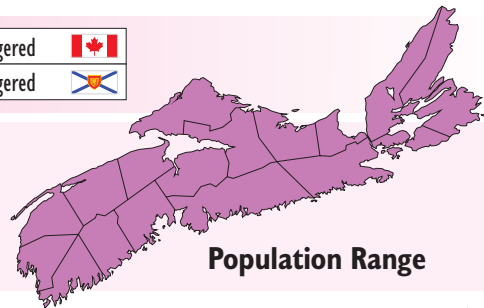
Endangered



Endangered



Full range unknown.
Could potentially occur
anywhere in Nova
Scotia in the specific
habitats mentioned
below.



Population Range

87

Habitat

Found in habitats that support its host (*Macropis nuda* in Nova Scotia). *Macropis nuda* is an oil-collecting bee that uses oil from plants in the genus *Lysimachia* to line its nest and feed larvae. This includes Swamp Candle and Fringed Loosestrife, which grow in open, wet areas including wetlands, lake and river shores, and roadside ditches. *Macropis nuda* also require nearby sandy, well-drained soils to create tunnelled nests. These nests are where the *Macropis* Cuckoo Bee lays its eggs and overwinters as a larva.



Habitat in Middletown where observed in 2002



Swamp Candle Wetland

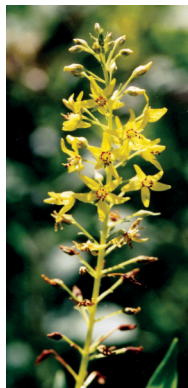
Adults are active in late-June and July and could be observed in habitats with the plants Fringed Loosestrife and Swamp Candle.

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Interesting Points

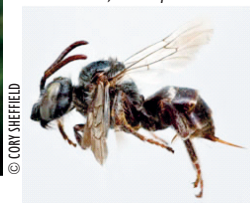
- Thought to be extinct until observed in Middleton in 2002 in a bee pan trap. There has been only one other record (in the USA in 2006) since the 1960s.
- They are considered one of the rarest species of bee in North America; the last living specimen was observed over 65 years ago.
- *Macropis* Cuckoo Bees find their hosts nests by searching for the scent of plant oil and pollen collected by the host bee.



Swamp Candle



The host bee, *Macropis nuda*



Female



Male

Similar Species

Bee identification can be technical and challenging. An identification key produced by L. Packer, J. A. Genaro, and C. S. Sheffield can be accessed by searching “The Bee Genera of Eastern Canada” in your internet browser. Species similar to the *Macropis* Cuckoo Bee include bees in the genus *Coelioxys*, which also have abdomens that are black with white bands. Other species that are similar are bees in the genera *Halictus* and *Dufourea*.

Threats to Survival

- Habitat loss and degradation that reduce numbers of *Macropis* bee species and the plants they forage on (wetland draining, invasive plants, loss of sand barrens).
- Fragmentation and isolation of suitable habitats (increasing distance between populations).
- Small, fragmented populations are further impacted as they are comprised of low numbers of egg-laying females.

How You Can Help

Landowners in Nova Scotia can maintain wet habitats on their property. Take photos of bees visiting Swamp Candle, Fringed Loosestrife, and flowers near these plants, and report potential sightings of the *Macropis* Cuckoo Bee or its host to the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre (contact information below).



Fringed Loosestrife



Bee research

Contacts, Information, & Sighting Reports

Contact: NS DNR (902) 679-6091

Info: www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre: (506) 364-2660, jklymko@mta.ca