Yellow-banded Bumble Bee

Bombus terricola

STATUS	
	Special Concern
	Vulnerable

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Species Description

The Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is a medium sized bumble bee with queens ranging in size from 19-21 mm, workers 10-15 mm, and males 13-15 mm. It is fluffy in appearance, with a black head and distinctive body patterning of yellow, black, yellow, black moving backward from head. No other bumble bee species in Nova Scotia has this pattern. It has a short, round face, with a short tongue and antennae.

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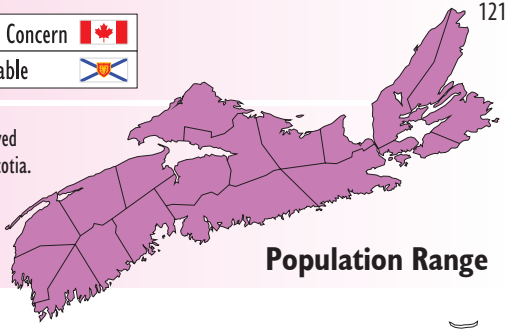
Has been historically observed throughout most of Nova Scotia. Known to occur in every Canadian province and territory except Nunavut.



Population Range

Habitat

The Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is found throughout Nova Scotia in a wide range of habitats, including forests, meadows, wetlands, farms and agricultural areas, grasslands, and urban areas. It is a generalist pollen forager and visits a variety of flowering plant species. Yellow-banded Bumble Bee nests are located underground in abandoned animal burrows, rotting logs, or other pre-existing soil cavities.

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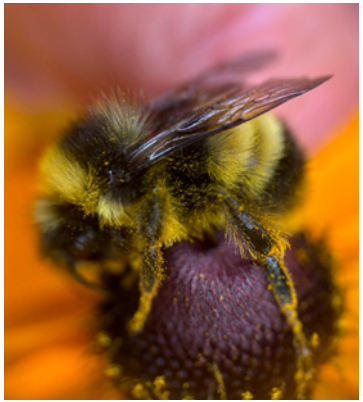
Look for Yellow-banded Bumble Bees around flowering plants across Nova Scotia.

Interesting Points

- It can vibrate its body in order to dislodge pollen from flowers (called buzz pollination) and to increase its body temperature, making it cold-resistant.
- Yellow-banded Bumble Bees are likely the sole host of Bohemian Cuckoo Bumble Bees and Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bees in Nova Scotia.
- Its population in the northeastern U.S. and southeastern Canada appears to have stabilized, though it is still at a far lower level of abundance than it was historically.



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Similar Species

The Yellow Banded Bumble Bee may appear similar to other *Bombus* species, however its patterning of yellow, black, yellow, black backward from head is unique within Nova Scotia.

Yellow Bumble Bee
(Bombus fervidus)

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Northern Amber Bumble Bee
(Bombus borealis)

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Threats to Survival

- Application of neonicotinoid pesticides in agricultural operations.
- Habitat loss due to residential, commercial, and agricultural development.
- Pollution and climate change (temperature extremes, droughts, storms and flooding).
- Pathogen spillover and competition for resources from commercial and introduced bee species.

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Commercial honey bee

How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species and report your sightings. Support local and organic agriculture. Property owners can plant native flowering plants that bloom throughout the seasons, especially early blooming plants, and leave areas of bare ground, including old rodent burrows. Participate in citizen science forums such as iNaturalist, Bumble Bee Watch, and BugGuide.

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Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: NS Department of Natural Resources: biodiversity@novascotia.ca
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Sighting Reports: Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre: john.klymko@accdc.ca; 1-866-727-3447; www.bumblebeewatch.org; www.inaturalist.org; bugguide.net