



RARE MINNESOTA BEES

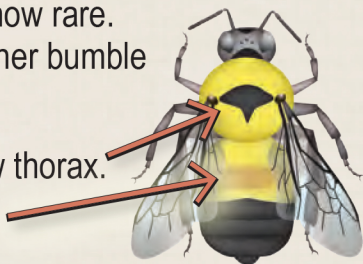


RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLE BEE



Once common, the rusty patched bumble bee is now rare. To distinguish rusty patched bumble bees from other bumble bees look for these features:

1. T-shape of black hairs on an otherwise yellow thorax.
2. Rusty patch on second abdominal segment.



COMMONLY MISTAKEN FOR RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLE BEES:



TRICOLORED BUMBLE BEES
(*Bombus ternarius*) have bright orange hairs on abdominal segments 2 and 3.



BROWNBELTED BUMBLE BEES
(*Bombus griseocollis*) have a rusty brown patch on the second abdominal segment, bordered at the back by black hairs.



HALF-BLACK BUMBLE BEES
(*Bombus vagans*) have all yellow hairs on abdominal segments 2 and 3.



REDBELTED BUMBLE BEES
(*Bombus rufocinctus*) have many different color patterns. Some have orange hairs on the 2nd abdominal segment, but not in the same pattern as the rusty patched bumble bee.



YELLOWBANDED BUMBLE BEE

Though once common, the yellowbanded bumble bee (*Bombus terricola*) is now only found in scattered locations, mostly in northern Minnesota.



To distinguish yellowbanded bumble bees from other bumble bees, look for these features:

1. Black hair on the back half of the thorax.
2. A fringe of yellow hairs appearing with black hairs at the end of the abdomen.



COMMONLY MISTAKEN FOR YELLOW BANDED BUMBLE BEES:

Black and gold bumble bees (*Bombus auricomus*) and American bumble bees (*Bombus pensylvanicus*) are much larger and have no yellow fringe at the end of the abdomen.



Bombus auricomus



Bombus pensylvanicus



ASHTON'S CUCKOO BEE

Possibly Minnesota's rarest bee, Ashton's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus ashtoni*) takes over other bumble bee nests, relying on rusty patched and yellow-banded bumble bees (both in decline), instead of making their own. Look for bumble bees with sparse hair on the abdomen. There are usually light hairs near the tip of the abdomen.



OIL BEES



Find yellow loosestrife flowers (*Lysimachia*) near wetlands, then look for medium-sized, shiny black bees with long hair on their back legs below the knee. Oil bees (*Macropis*) only visit yellow loosestrife.



Yellow loosestrife



Help us find these rare bee pollinators. Have your camera ready to take and share photos on [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org)



You can help document bumble bee locations and trends by taking photos for the bumble bee watch program.
bumblebeewatch.org



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