

Fact Sheet: About Bumblebees

At the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, we are passionate about saving bees.

Here is why.

Save our bees

Bumblebees are among the most loved and familiar of garden insects. The sight and sound of them buzzing from flower to flower is an essential part of summertime, but sadly these fat, furry little creatures are struggling to survive.



At the time of writing, 24 bumblebee species are found in the UK, but unfortunately, in the last 80 years, two UK species have become extinct and others have declined sharply. In our modern world of paved gardens and intensive farming, our bumblebees find themselves hungry and homeless. The reason for this is simple and clearly visible: there are now far fewer flowers to provide bees with the pollen and nectar that they need to survive. But all is not lost – you can take action today to help save these hardworking pollinators. This fact sheet explains how.

What's so different about the bumblebee?

To most people, bees are instantly recognisable but there are distinct differences between the appearance and lives of bumblebees and honeybees. Bumblebees are larger and hairier than their cousins which makes them perfectly suited for colder climates. Bumblebee nests are small and they do not store large quantities of honey, so their extra furry coat allows them to venture out on cold days to collect pollen and nectar when honeybees stay inside.

Don't 'bee' confused

Don't confuse bumblebees with wasps. Bumblebees do not swarm and are not aggressive. Only female bumblebees can sting and they will only do so if they feel very threatened. Bumblebees will never interrupt your picnic or steal your sandwiches!

Buzz pollination

Did you know that bumblebees have smelly feet?

Well they do and they're quite useful! After feeding, they leave a scent on the flower which lets other



bumblebees know to avoid wasting energy landing – the flower will contain very little nectar or pollen.

Things you can do to help

Bumblebees help pollinate plants in more than one million acres of British gardens and the flowers they find can be a lifeline for them. No matter how small your garden, you can help to save the sound of summer by providing lots of bee-friendly flowers throughout the year. By 'bee-friendly' we mean flowers that are rich in pollen and nectar. Many ornamental plants that are commonly found in British gardens, such as pansies and begonias, are of no value to wildlife. These decorative and colourful flowers often produce little pollen or nectar. However, there are hundreds of beautiful flowers that do offer these rewards, including foxgloves, lavender, geraniums, herbs and wild roses that you can add to your garden.

Why not try planting these?



Geranium



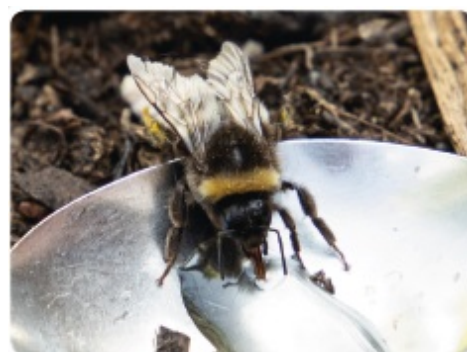
Lavender



Wild rose

Energy drink for bees

If you find a stranded or sleepy bumblebee, you can help to boost its energy levels with a simple sugar and water mix. Mix equal parts white sugar and warm water then pour into a small container or sponge. Place both the bee and the artificial nectar near to some flowers



Act now

You can also help by supporting our work to conserve bumblebee habitats and raise public awareness. There are various ways to show your support including volunteering, fundraising and becoming a member of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. For more information on all of the above, including access to our Bee Kind gardening web page, visit:

www.bumblebeeconservation.org

1. What is the name of the organisation that produced this fact sheet about bumblebees?

1 mark

2. Look at the section headed: **Save our bees.**

Complete the table below with **one** piece of evidence from the leaflet to support each statement.

	Evidence
The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is worried about bees.	
The leaflet makes readers feel hopeful for bumblebees.	

2 marks

3. *In our modern world of paved gardens and intensive farming, our bumblebees find themselves hungry and homeless.*

This suggests that...

Tick **one**.

- farming has helped bees.
- paved gardens are attractive.
- bees are good at finding their way.
- bees have only started struggling recently.

1 mark

4. Look at the section headed: **What's so different about the bumblebee?**

The text refers to the bumblebees' *cousins*. Who are their *cousins*?

1 mark

5. Which section of the leaflet is written to inform readers that they are unlikely to be stung by bumblebees? Write the name of the section:

1 mark

6. In what way is *buzz pollination* more useful than other forms of pollination?

1 mark

7. Look at page 2.

Why is it important for bumblebees to leave a smelly scent on some flowers?

Tick **one**.

so that others avoid it

because it smells better than nectar

so others know it has pollen

because bees give flowers their scent

1 mark

8. Look at the section headed: ***Things you can do to help.***

Find and copy one word that shows how essential flowers are to bees.

1 mark

9. Look at page 2.

(a) Tick one box in each row to show whether each of the following flowers is **bee-friendly** or **not bee-friendly**.

	Bee-friendly	Not bee-friendly
lavender		
pansy		
herbs		
wild rose		

1 mark

(b) Explain why the flowers that are not bee-friendly do not attract bees.

1 mark

Mark schemes

Q2.

1. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for:

- *Bumblebee Conservation Trust.*

Do not accept responses which give part of the name only, e.g.

- *Bumblebee Trust*
- *Conservation Trust*
- *www.bumblebeeconservation.org.*

1 mark

2. **Content domain:** 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for reference to any of the following, up to a maximum of **2 marks**:

	Evidence
The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is worried about bees.	<p>1. bumblebees are <i>struggling to survive</i>, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>bumblebees are endangered</i> • <i>there are now far fewer flowers to provide bees with the pollen and nectar.</i> <p>2. bumblebees are finding <i>themselves hungry and homeless</i>, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>because they don't have a home and they are going hungry.</i> <p>3. two UK species having become <i>extinct</i>, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>bees are slowly going extinct.</i> <p>4. bumblebee numbers having <i>declined sharply</i>, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>population of bees is declining</i> • <i>there is less and less of them.</i> <p>Do not accept reference to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust asking for our help.</p>
The leaflet makes readers feel hopeful for bumblebees.	<p>5. all not being lost</p> <p>6. we can take action today to help save them, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>you can take action today</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>we can help to save these hardworking pollinators.</i> <p>Do not accept general comments about help, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>you can help.</i>
--	--

3. **Content domain:** 2b – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| farming has helped bees. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| paved gardens are attractive. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| bees are good at finding their way. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| bees have only started struggling recently. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

1 mark

4. **Content domain:** 2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context

Award 1 mark for reference to honeybees, e.g.

- *the honeybee.*

1 mark

5. **Content domain:** 2c – summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph

Award 1 mark for:

- *Don't 'bee' confused.*

1 mark

6. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:

1. it releases pollen that would otherwise stay inside the flower, e.g.

- *because it releases trapped pollen that they wouldn't have been able to get out*
- *it makes a buzz that gets more pollen than other bees do*
- *it helps release more pollen.*

2. key produce is more expensive / harder to get without it, e.g.

- *it makes some vegetables we eat easier to produce and sell a lot cheaper*
- *it means we can buy more common foods cheaper*
- *it would be harder to grow beans.*

1 mark

7. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for:

- so that others avoid it
- because it smells better than nectar
- so others know it has pollen
- because bees give flowers their scent

1 mark

8. **Award 1 mark for:**

- *lifeline.*

1 mark

9. (a) **Award 1 mark for all four correct:**

	Bee-friendly	Not bee-friendly
lavender	✓	
pansy		✓
herbs	✓	
wild rose	✓	

(b) **Award 1 mark** for reference to insufficient production of pollen / nectar / food, e.g.

- *it is because they don't have much pollen*
- *they don't have as much pollen and nectar as they need*
- *they are not rich in pollen.*

Also accept reference to flowers that are not bee-friendly having no / little value, e.g.

- *because they are no value to the wildlife.*

1 mark