

COMMON CARDER-BEE *Bombus pascuorum*

Fairly common, and also fairly widely distributed. Most often seen in very warm weather, and not often found in very exposed situations.

Summary

Possibly eleven species of *Bombus* bees have been recorded for the Island of Bute, and I have seen at least nine of these species myself. By far the commonest are *hortorum*, *lucorum* and *pratorum* (in that order), which together comprise the vast majority of the entire Bute bee population. In my limited experience the other species are all comparatively uncommon, or rare, but this, of course, may simply be because they are difficult to identify or inconspicuous, and indeed I strongly suspect I would never have noticed some of these at all had I not developed the routine habit of trapping and examining any bee which seemed unusual.

It is hoped, therefore, that the publication of the above short species list may stimulate others to add to the known information about the distribution of bees on Bute.

References

- ALFORD, D.V. (1975). *Bumblebees*. London: Davis-Poynter.
 ALFORD, D.V. (Ed.) (1980). *Atlas of the Bumblebees of the British Isles*. London: International Bee Research Association; and Huntingdon: Biological Records Centre, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology.
 GIBSON, J.A. (1990). Notes on the cuckoo-bees of the Island of Bute. *Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society*, 23: 51.
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NOTES ON THE CUCKOO-BEES
OF THE ISLAND OF BUTE

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Introduction

Most naturalists will be aware that there are two distinct types of bumble-bees, the working species (Genus *Bombus*), i.e. the true Bumble-Bees, and the non-working species (Genus *Psithyrus*), the so-called Cuckoo-Bees because of their inquiline or parasitic habits. The Cuckoo-Bees depend for their existence on the true Bumble-Bees, in whose nests they are reared.

In a companion paper in the current *Transactions* (Gibson, 1990) I give collected notes on the distribution of Bumble-Bees on the Island of Bute, and this short supplementary contribution lists what information I have been able to collect on the Cuckoo-Bees. All methods of working, identification, etc. are similar to those already detailed in the Bumble-Bee paper.

Systematic List

GIPSY CUCKOO-BEE *Psithyrus bohemicus*

Common and widely distributed. An inquiline of *Bombus lucorum*, whose distribution on Bute it follows.

BARBUT'S CUCKOO-BEE *Psithyrus barbutellus*

Fairly common and widely distributed. An inquiline of *Bombus hortorum*, the commonest bee on Bute, whose distribution it follows.

FIELD CUCKOO-BEE *Psithyrus campestris*

[An inquiline of *Bombus pascuorum*. I have no personal record, but Alford (1980) lists this for NS15, which may refer to Bute.]

FOUR-COLOURED CUCKOO-BEE *Psithyrus sylvestris*

An inquiline of *Bombus pratorum*. I have no personal record, but Alford (1980) lists a pre-1960 record for NS05.

References

- ALFORD, D.V. (Ed.) (1980). *Atlas of the Bumblebees of the British Isles*. London: International Bee Research Association; and Huntingdon: Biological Records Centre, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology.
 GIBSON, J.A. (1990). Collected notes on the bumble-bees of the Island of Bute. *Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society*, 23: 47-50.