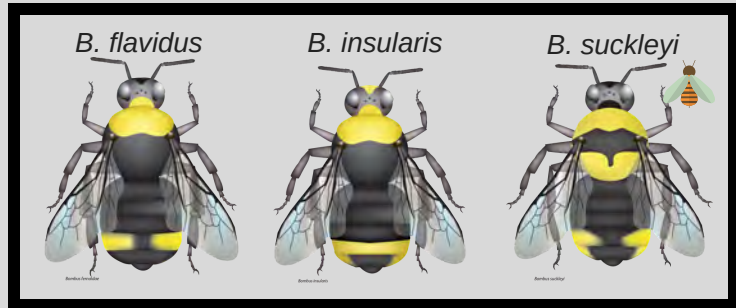
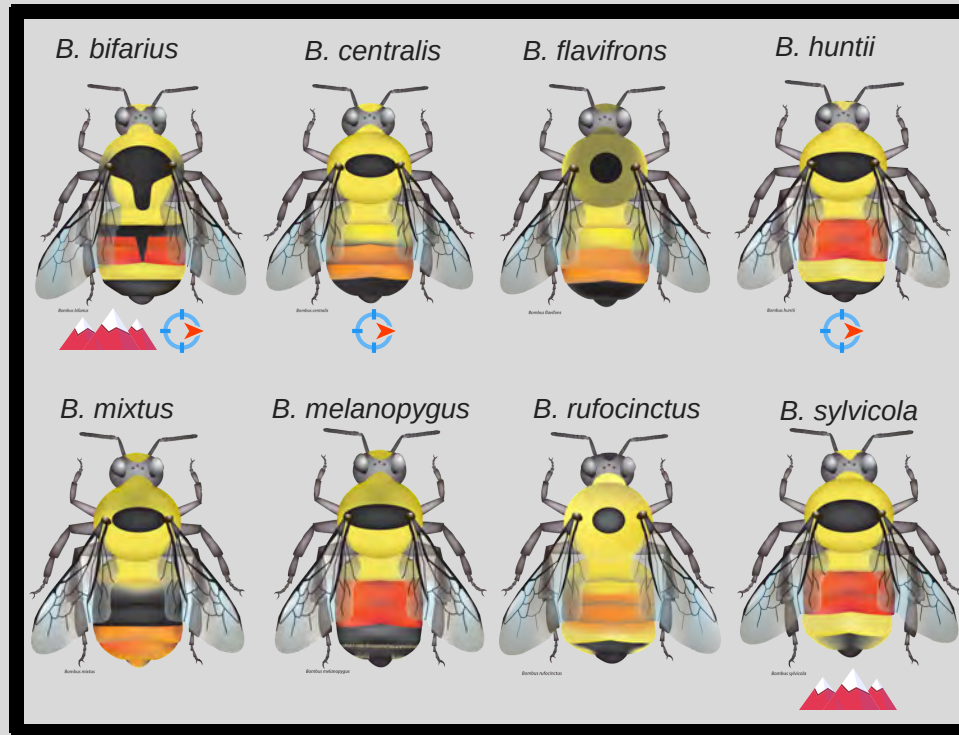
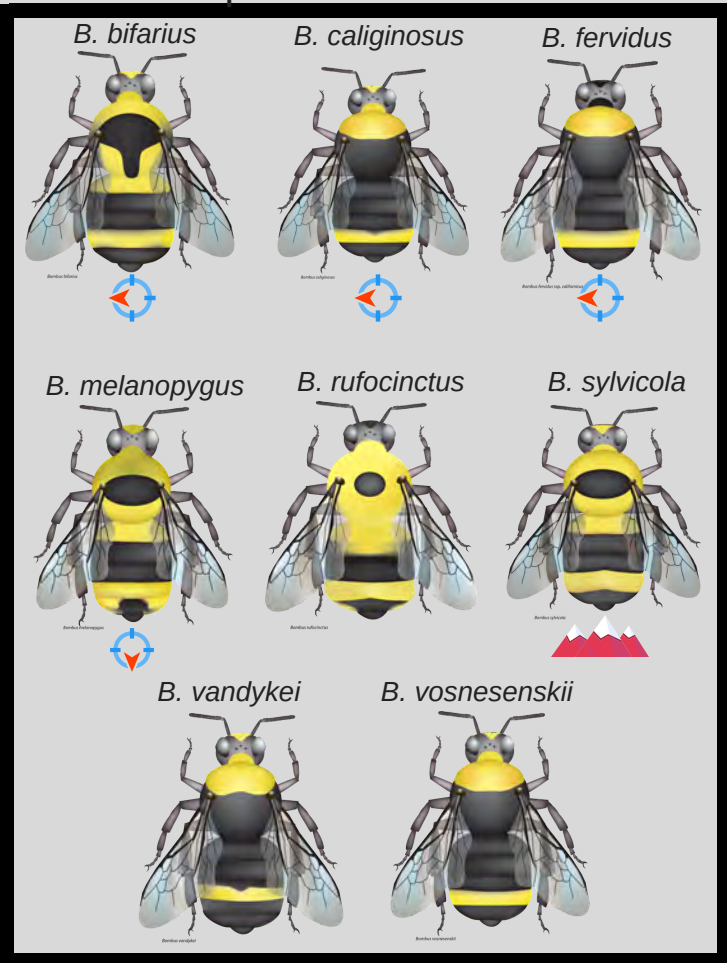


Red on the Body?

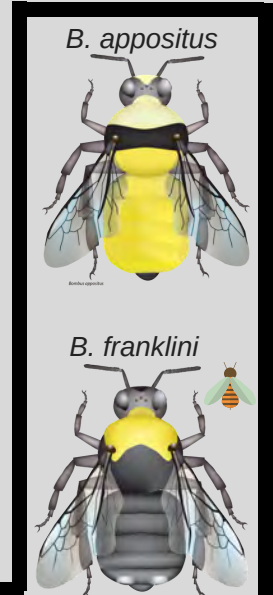
Cuckoo Bumble bees



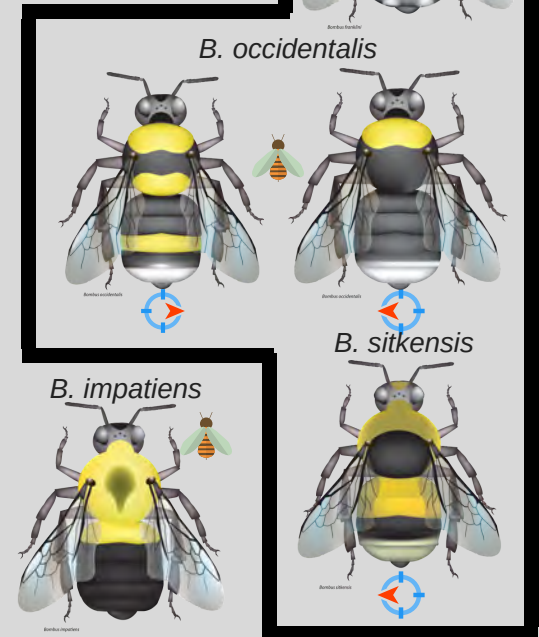
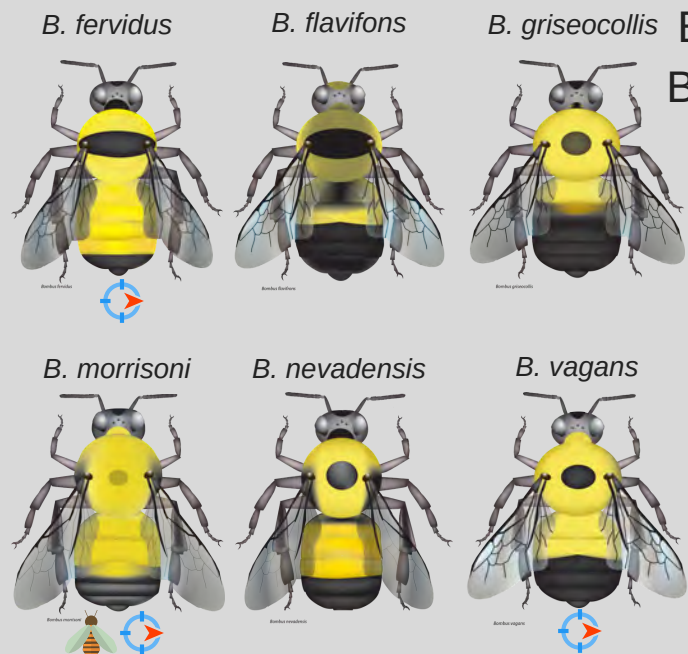
Striped Bumble Bees



White on the body?



Black Tailed Bumble Bees



Identifying Bumble Bees in the Pacific Northwest

1. After determining that it is a bumble bee (and not a fly, wasp, carpenter bee, or other native bee) you must identify if it is a male or female bumble bee (see Figure 1).
2. Next, you need to determine if you have a true bumble bee, or a cuckoo bumble bee (see Figure 2). The photos below are from a true bumble bee female (left) and cuckoo bumble bee female (right). Note the concave, hairless, corbicula on the true bumble bee (for collecting pollen) and the convex, hairy leg on the cuckoo bumble bee (who does not collect pollen). Legs of males are more difficult to tell apart, but generally, cuckoo male legs are hairier than true male bumble bee legs.
3. Next, you can start to look at color patterns. The groups on the front of this page will help you to make a determination, or at least provide a starting point. **Color patterns are not 100% reliable and should only be used as a guide.** Note that male color patterns are not shown on the front, and in many cases DO differ from the females. Consult a field guide for more information.
4. Beyond color patterns, some of the features that you will find helpful are: cheek length (the ratio of length to width, see Figure 4); and sternal hairs (see Figure 3).

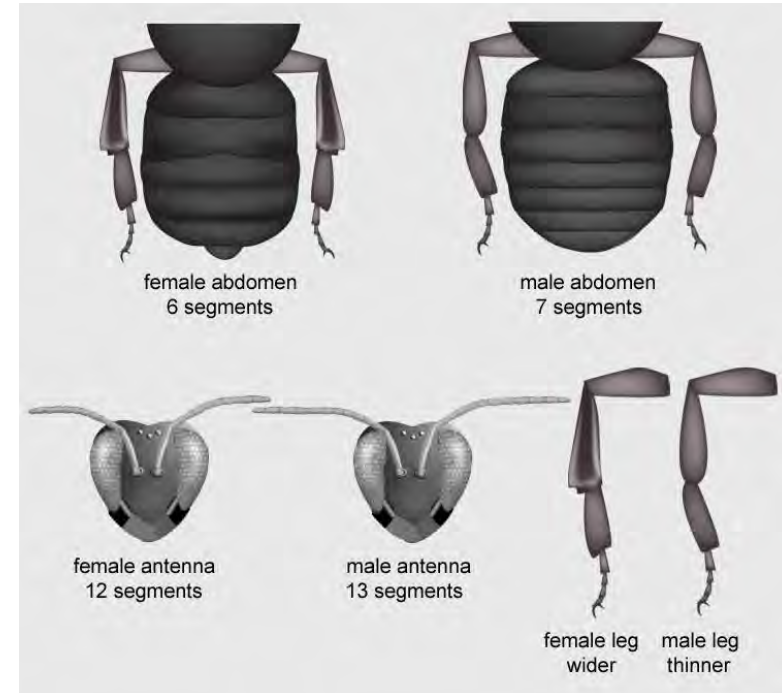


Figure 1: Characteristics of male vs. female bumble bees. Illustrations by Elaine Evans, the Xerces Society

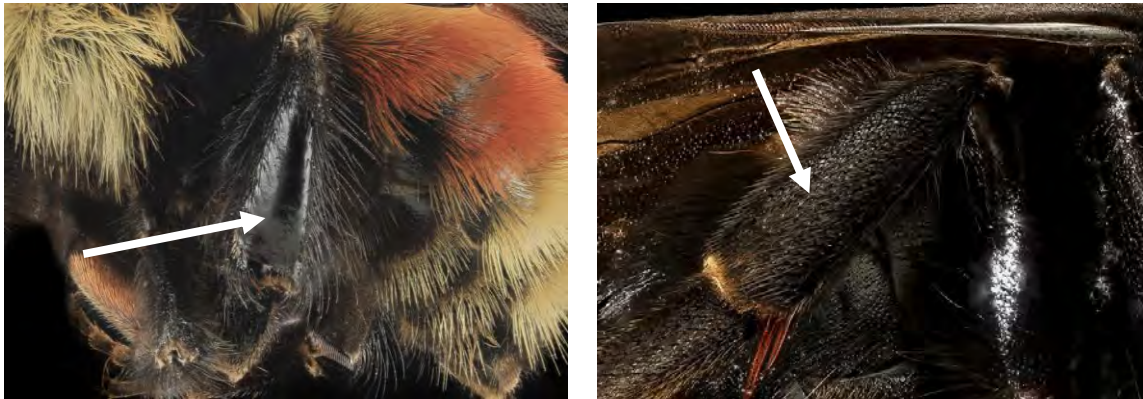


Figure 2: Hind legs tibial segment of true (left) vs. cuckoo (right) bumble bees. Photos by Sam Droege, USGS Bee Inventory and Monitoring Lab.

Figure 4: Cheek Length. The bee on the left has a long cheek and the bee on the right has a short cheek. Photos by Rich Hatfield, the Xerces Society.



Figure 3: Note the yellow hairs on the sternal (underside of the abdomen) segments. Similar species have black hairs in that location. Photo by Rich Hatfield, the Xerces Society.

