



Bumble Bee Bombus

Fuzzy little ball of bee. Not aggressive unless you bother their nest.
Can repeat sting.

28 species in Washington State. 250 species. Social bee – colony with one queen. Around 400 in colony. One queen, workers and males.
Pollinators.

ID

- Round plump hairy (fuzzy) bee.
- Various sizes and colors (black with orange, yellow, white, brown).
- Two pair of wings that fold at rest.
- Loud buzz noise when flying.
- Need heat and can maintain some heat.



Food

- Nectar and pollen (has pollen baskets). Can vibrate flowers to get better nectar or pollen. Long tongue bumbles can access many flowers, short tongue bumbles tear hole in flower side.
- Flies up to 1-2 klm or about 1 ½ miles

Nest

- Underground (mouse hole) or in hollows (bird house or other small space).
- Use dry grass, moss, or mouse nests for nesting material.
- Abandon nest every winter. New Queens hibernate elsewhere for winter.



- Life cycle – Queen mates with one male, overwinters, emerge, finds nest to create colony. Queen makes honey pot with wax, fills with nectar and pollen. Makes wax cap then lays eggs (brood clump).
- Egg, larvae (feeding 2 weeks), pupae cocoon (2 weeks), emerge. Live about 28 days.



Care

- Used in green houses to pollinate (tomatoes).
- Can make bumblebee house with wood or terracotta pot. 9x6x6 is good size for box, 12 inch pot. Add good ventilation holes. 1/2 to 3/4 inch entrance hole at base. Bee house can have divider between nest and entrance space (1/2). Add short PVC pipe to entrance.
- Place in garden with shade and little sun.
- Use old mouse nest or handful of dry grass/moss or cotton upholstery material. If in hole in ground needs to be on top of something like wire fencing to keep dry.

