

Common Carder Bee

Bombus pascuorum

Insects · Active Mar–Nov



Photo by André Karwath aka Aka, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons

A medium-sized bumblebee with a distinctly ginger-brown thorax and a variably banded, often greyish abdomen with no white tail. The all-ginger thorax makes it one of the easiest bumblebees to identify with confidence. Common carders are abundant in gardens, hedgerows and rough ground around Dumfries, and have one of the longest seasons of any bumblebee here.

BEHAVIOUR

Carder bees are long-tongued, so they can work deep tubular flowers — comfrey, foxglove, dead-nettle, vetch — that short-tongued bumblebees have to rob. The name comes from the nesting habit: they build on or just under the surface, combing moss and dry grass over the nest to cover it, rather than digging. Colonies keep going late, often into November.

WHEN TO SEE IT

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Bees (Apidae)
SIZE	Queens 15–18 mm
STATUS	Native; abundant and widespread

Photo by André Karwath aka Aka, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons

Natureville