



**Worcestershire**  
Wildlife Trust

# Wyre Forest Local Group

Spring newsletter 2026

## The Humble Bumblebee - the 'Vulcan Bomber' of the Bee World

Bumblebees are large social bees in the genus *Bombus*, family Apidae. Almost all are found in the northern hemisphere but there are a few tropical species and some northern European species have been introduced to New Zealand and Australia. They fly with a loud buzzing or humming sound, leading to alternative names of drumble, dumbledor and humblebee. The word bumblebee is recorded as early as 1530 according to the Oxford English Dictionary.

It is believed that bumblebees evolved about 25-40 million years ago in the Himalayas and spread further from Asia during a period of cooler weather. They can fly in air temperatures of 10°C or less and can 'shiver' their wings to warm up their bodies. They have inbuilt compasses that allow them to make their nests in south and south-facing sites whilst they hibernate in north-facing sites to avoid early awakening.

There are about 250 species of bumblebee worldwide and 24 species found in Britain, some of which are very rare. Our most recent arrivals are tree bumblebees – they were first spotted in the UK in 2001 in the south of England and they arrived in Worcestershire in 2008.

There are 18 species of true (social) bumblebees and six species of cuckoos (parasitic). In social species the queen makes her own nest, produces 'daughter' worker bees that collect pollen and nectar to feed the growing colony. Nest sites include old rodent burrows, grassy tumps, compost heaps, under sheds and empty nest boxes. Female cuckoo bees take over established nests of social bees, have no workers and don't collect pollen.

Bumblebees have either short or long tongues and forage on different plants. Common carders have long tongues and feed on tubular-shaped flowers, such as foxgloves and vetches. Buff-tailed bumblebees have short tongues and feed on plants including *Cotoneaster* and clovers.

Bumblebees can pollinate some flowers by grabbing the flower with their mouthparts, dislocating their wings and rapidly vibrating their flight muscles. This shakes the anther and causes the flower to release pollen all over the bee who then combs the grains into her pollen baskets, pollinating the flower at the same time. Humans have taken advantage of this and bumblebees are reared commercially with nests placed in glasshouses and polytunnels to pollinate crops such as tomatoes and soft fruits.

### *More information*

Bumblebees - an Introduction, published 2018 by Bumblebee Conservation Trust  
The Garden Jungle by Dave Goulson, published 2019

## Talks

Everyone is welcome to join us. Holy Innocents Community Hall, Kidderminster, 7.30 pm.  
Admission £3.00

**Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr 2026 – Great British Birds by Ashley Grove** – stories about birds, the winners and losers of climate change, record breakers and just those special birds we all love. His talk will be packed with great images of many of our personal favourites.

**Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 – Wildlife Question Time** – on, hopefully, a warm and pleasant May evening here's something different to end our winter series of indoor meetings; an opportunity for you to put questions to a panel of four local wildlife and conservation experts and discuss their answers. Listen to their experiences and hear their views on town and country wildlife and habitats in our area, good and bad. Take part or just relax and listen.

## Walks

All start at 10am. Donations to the Trust. Well behaved dogs on a lead welcome.

**Sun 12th April – Fields, lanes and views around Cleobury Mortimer, led by Viv Farrell**

**Meet:** Childe Road West car park, Cleobury Mortimer. S0673756 / DY14 8PB

Parking also available on opposite side of the road a few metres away. Toilets nearby.

Undulating countryside with a steepish descent after the Jubilee bench. Livestock so dogs on leads please. This is a walk of approx. three miles, three stiles with a few steps.

**Sun 10th May – A ramble from near Mamble, led by Glyn Walters**

**Meet:** lay by alongside A456 west of Mamble. S0686712 / DY14 9JN

This walk may be muddy after heavy rain. There is a steady uphill section and a short walk along a lane. We will pass fishing lakes and may be lucky enough to see bee orchids. This is a walk of three miles and includes six stiles.

**Sunday 14th June – Orchids in the wood, led by Chris Morris and Roma Bubb**

**Meet:** Hawksbatch Wood car park S0765773 / DY12 3AF

A gentle stroll looking at wildflowers and other natural wonders. No stiles. Mainly flat but a slight incline. This is a walk of approx. three miles.

**Sunday 12th July – Upper Arley circular walk to Trimley reservoir and Eymore Wood, led by Gail Devries**

**Meet:** car park at Arley Arboretum, please park in the left hand corner adjacent to the fencing S0764804 / DY12 1SQ

Some level riverside and woodland walking with a number of steep sections. One unmanned Severn Valley Railway crossing and a short section on the road. No steps or stiles. This is a walk of approx. four miles.

For more information about our walks, please contact either  
Roma Bubb: [bubb.roma@outlook.com](mailto:bubb.roma@outlook.com) or Chris Morris: [chrismorris222@btinternet.com](mailto:chrismorris222@btinternet.com)

You can also find out more information at: [www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk](http://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk)

For further information about the group, please contact Joan Kearton-Jones: [joan.kj@sky.com](mailto:joan.kj@sky.com)

*Your editor – Caris Edwards*