

Hymettus

Bombus muscorum and *Bombus humilis*
in the South West in 2008



Patrick Saunders

2008

Hymettus Ltd., Lea-Side, Carron Lane, MIDHURST, West Sussex GU29 9LB
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Cover illustration:
Bombus humilis by Patrick Saunders

Summary

- *Bombus humilis* was more numerous than *Bombus muscorum* on all of the transects apart from one.
- *B. muscorum* is likely to be confused for *B. humilis* in field records. Distribution maps and historical data to be treated with caution.
- *B. muscorum* had the highest counts on sites with both heathland / species rich grassland and near dune systems. A possible link between *B. muscorum* needing larger and higher quality sites in the region than *B. humilis* is suggested.
- *B. muscorum* was reported as uncommon in Devon in past. Historical records indicate a more scattered distribution than *B. humilis*.
- *B. pascorum* was present in lower numbers than *B. humilis* within the highest quality sites.
- There was no evidence to support the theory that *B. humilis* is expanding at the expense of *B. muscorum* in south west England.
- Further transects and survey work are necessary to establish the ecological partitioning between *B. muscorum* and *B. humilis*.
- Fieldwork was possible only within a very narrow window of weather in 2008.

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<i>Bombus muscorum</i> (prob)	5	Bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i>	Treose Head	SW8576	08/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	1q		Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	3m	Black Knapweed <i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	3w	Black Knapweed <i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	1w	Ling <i>Caluna vulgaris</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	1m	Ling <i>Caluna vulgaris</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	2m	Bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	6w	Bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus humilis</i>	1w	Autumn squill <i>Scilla autumnalis</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus pascorum</i>	3w		Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus pascorum</i>	5w	Ling <i>Caluna vulgaris</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006
<i>Bombus pascorum</i>	2w	Bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i>	Tintagel Head	SX0488	21/08/2006