

## Bees are diverse!

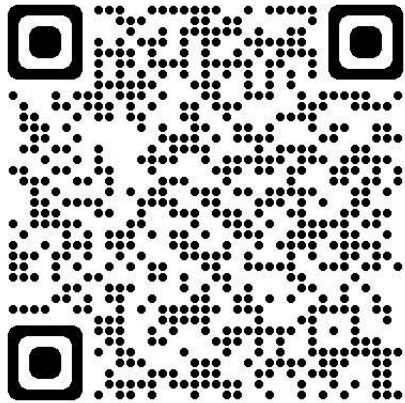
We have a wide variety of bees visiting our flowers. Some are black and yellow, and some are green, black, brown, or red. Bumblebees are large bees, honeybees are medium sized, and many bees are so small you might not even notice them.

When examining a flower visitor, look first at the head.

Bees have long antennae and medium sized eyes. Most bees have fuzzy hairs somewhere on their bodies. They may carry pollen on their legs or under their tails.

Flies have stubby antennae and large eyes.

Wasps have long antennae and medium sized eyes. They have long, thin waists, and their body is usually shiny or brightly colored.



Friends of Bees is a working group of Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice, and the Environment. We educate about and advocate for bees and other pollinators. Visit us at [watertowncitizens.org](http://watertowncitizens.org) or scan the QR code

## Bee-like visitors

Many flower visitors drink nectar, but aren't bees. Not only are flower flies and solitary wasps good pollinators, they eat pest insects and reduce the need for pesticides.



**Calligrapher fly (*Toxomerus*)**

Their larvae eat aphids. There are many black and yellow flies that resemble bees. Also called flower flies, hover flies, or syrphid flies.



**Great Black Wasp (*Sphex pensylvanicus*)**

A large black wasp with a blue sheen to the wings. They catch katydids to feed their young. Solitary and shy around people.



## Who is Visiting My Flowers?

**Introducing some common bees in  
Watertown, MA**

**By Pam Phillips**

**Pollinator Week 2023**

**All photos courtesy Pam Phillips**

**Logo designed by Sharon Bauer**

## Social bees

Our most familiar bees are social. They live in large colonies with a single egg-laying female, or queen. However, most bees are solitary. Each female raises her own family.



**Honey bee (*Apis Mellifera*)**

This iconic bee has short fuzz on the torso and a tail striped with dark browns to black over shades of gold and honey.



**Bumblebee (*Bombus*)**

These furry black and yellow bees can be twice the size of honeybees. Like honeybees, they carry tightly packed pollen in baskets on their legs.

## Ground nesting bees

About two-thirds of all bees dig tunnels in the ground to make their nests. Many prefer dry, sunny slopes. Leave some bare ground unmulched to provide nesting places.



**Metallic Green Sweat Bee (*Agapostemon*)**

About half the size of honeybees, they have shiny green heads and torsos, with a striped tail. Some species are completely green.



**Furrow Bee (*Halictus*)**

About a third to half the size of honeybees, they have dark bodies and striped tails. The pollen carried on their hind legs can look like fat saddlebags.

## Cavity nesting bees

About a third of all bees make their nests in hollow stems and other cavities. Many will nest in bee hotels. Cut standing stems in spring about two feet high to provide nesting places.



**Leafcutter bee (*Megachile*)**

About the size of a honeybee, they cut circles from leaves to line their nest. They carry pollen under their raised tails.



**Small carpenter bee (*Ceratina*)**

These tiny, dark green bees carve out nests in pithy stems such as raspberry canes and hydrangea stems.