

Bumble Bee Spotting Tips

Look for colours!

Pay attention to what is in bloom and spend time around those areas. The easiest way to spot a bee is to look for them when they are foraging, as many nest in hard-to-see areas such as underground burrows and dead logs. Many bees are important pollinators and will be searching for flowers, shrubs, and trees that are in bloom as their source of nectar and pollen. What is in bloom changes throughout the season, so just get out there and have a look around, and then gravitate towards those areas.

Listen closely!

One of the best ways to spot some of the larger bees such as honey bees and bumble bees is to listen! These bees make a loud buzzing noise as they forage and move from flower to flower. Many bee-spotters hear bees before they see them.

Bee slow!

Many smaller bees (such as mason bees) are nervous around humans, and tend to fly away when they are disturbed. But, if you are slow and careful with your movements, you can peek into the center of a flower and often watch these smaller bees foraging. One of the best flowers to see this on is a dandelion, because the flower petals hide the bees as they forage. Look closely and you can often see many small, wild bees diving right into dandelions, so long as you don't give yourself away!

Bee patient!

If you happen to disturb a bee, just wait. Often bees will return to continue foraging in the same area, so you may have another chance to spot it again.

Say cheese!

Believe it or not, Canada is home to over 850 different species of bees. While you may only recognize one or two, bee spotting can open you up to an entire world that you didn't know existed. Snapping a photo of the bees you spot gives you a chance to try and identify the type of bee you saw later on. There are many ways to do this such as searching on google, using a field guide, or talking to an expert. Try to snap a couple of shots from each angle (top, side, front), which will help with identification later on.