

Species Statement for Sussex

Brown-banded carder bee *Bombus humilis*

1. Introduction

Bombus humilis is a brown carder bumblebee which makes its nest on the surface of the ground at the base of long vegetation, often under accumulated plant litter. It has most often been recorded as associated with areas of grassland supporting a large number of plant species with long corolla flower types, notably those belonging to the plant families Lamiaceae and Fabaceae. It is one of a number of bumblebee species to have undergone a drastic reduction in range and abundance, as a result of the loss of this habitat in the modern agricultural landscape, although it appears to be able to survive in less extensive areas of flower-rich habitat compared with some bumblebee species.

At the beginning of the 20th century this bumblebee was considered uncommon in southern England. However, it was a widespread species, reaching Yorkshire and Lancashire in the north. By the 1970s it had disappeared from most of its northern and inland localities, although it was still widespread along much of the coast. The species has continued to decline in the eastern half of England, where it is now local and sporadic. It is still readily found along the south-western coast of England, from Dorset westwards, and on the southern coast of Wales. There are also a number of inland localities associated with the larger areas of chalk grasslands, notably Salisbury Plain. There are no records of this species from Scotland or Northern Ireland. *B. humilis* is widespread in Europe.

In Great Britain this species is classified as *Local*.

2. Current Factors Affecting the Species

- Loss of extensive, herb-rich grasslands through agricultural intensification.

- Non-native forms of *Bombus* used for pollination in greenhouses may be a threat, but this requires further investigation.

3. National Species Action Plan

National Species Action Plan objectives and targets are as follows:

- Maintain populations at all known sites.

4. Current Action

Some populations are on SSSIs.

5. Objectives

- i. Maintain populations at all known sites.

6. Targets and Costs

This Species Statement is now archived

7. Potential

8. Action plan

This Species Statement is now archived

9. Monitoring/Review

This action plan will be monitored by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership annually and reviewed and updated by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership every five years.

10. References

UK Biodiversity Group, (1999). National Species Action Plan for *Bombus humilis*.

11. Consultation

12. Appendices