

# Common Bees of Iowa

Compiled by Steve Hendrix, Dept. Biology, U. Iowa (stephen-hendrix@uiowa.edu)



**Family:** Halictidae  
**Genus:** Augochlorella  
**Species:** aurata

Completely metallic green; Most common wild bee in IA; 5-6 mm

**Family:** Halictidae  
**Genus:** Lasioglossum

Greenish/black sheen; many species; Known as "sweat bees" Often high abundances; Very small; 3-6 mm



**Family:** Halictidae  
**Genus:** Agapostemon  
**Species:** virescens

Head & thorax metallic green; abdomen striped; 2nd most common bee; 10 mm

**Family:** Halictidae  
**Genus:** Halictus

Hair bands on abdomen; Two common species in IA; Local abundances high; Size 8-10 mm;



**Bombus workers are smaller versions of queens**



**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Bombus  
**Species:** greisocollis

Head black; yellow on 2 segments of abdomen; Most common bumble bee in IA; Queens 21-23 mm.

**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Bombus  
**Species:** impatiens

Yellow on top of head & thorax; 2 yellow spots on abdomen; Queens 17-21 mm.



**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Bombus  
**Species:** auricomus

Yellow on top of head; Yellow & black alternate abdomen and thorax; Queens 20-25 mm.

**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Apis  
**Species:** mellifera

Distinctive shape of cells in front wing; Managed honey bee; Large, 10-12 mm.



**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Melissodes  
**Species:** bimaculata

All black, white hairs on legs; Common in gardens, roadsides; 10-12 mm.

**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Melissodes  
**Species:** trinodis

Reddish hairs on thorax; Hair bands on abdomen; Size 11-12 mm; "Long-horned" bees.



**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Ceratina

Small carpenter bees, Dull greenish-blue; Pale mark on face; Rounded abdomen tip; 3-4 common species in Iowa; 6-8 mm.

**Family:** Apidae  
**Genus:** Svastra  
**Species:** obliqua

Hair bands on abdomen. Reddish & black hairs; Large pollen loads common; 15-17 mm.



**Family:** Andrenidae  
**Genus:** Andrena

Hairy face and thorax; Pointed abdomen Variable hair bands on abdomen, complete or Incomplete; 60+ species in IA; Many in spring only; Variable color; Variable size, 7-15 mm



**Family:** Colletidae "plaster bees"  
**Genus:** Colletes sp.

Pale abdomen hair bands; Eyes convergent below; 8 species in IA; 7-10 mm.

**Family:** Andrenidae  
**Genus:** Calliopsis sp.  
**Species:** obliqua

Face broader than long; Eyes light colored; Yellow/white marks on face; Legs on male pale; Common urban bee; 7-8 mm



**Family:** Megachilidae

Pollen collected on abdomen; most cavity nesters\* and leaf cutters

**Genus:** Megachile  
**Species:** latimanus

Entirely black with pale hairs and orange under abdomen hairs; \*Ground-nester; 13-14 mm.

**Genus:** Megachile  
**Species:** brevis

Mostly black; White hair bands; Under abdomen hairs pale; 9-12 mm.



**Genus:** Osmia  
**Species:** simillina

Bluish-black color; Abdomen tip bulb like; Related species used commercially; 11-12 mm.

**Genus:** Anthidium  
**Species:** manicatum

Distinctive yellow marks; Introduced species; "Wool carder" bee; Lines nest with plant hairs 11-13 mm.

