

**Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust web site have this very useful guide to the different types of bees.**

There are several hundred different types of bee resident in the British Isles. We talk about two different groups: social bees and solitary bees. [Note: other insects like hoverflies, hornet moths & clearwing moths, mimic the colours of bees so they don't get eaten.]

### **Social bees.**

As their name suggests, **social bees** live in groups. Honeybees are particularly sociable and can live in groups of up to 50,000 together in a single hive. Bumblebees are also social, but live in smaller groups of 50-150.

Both types depend on queen bees who lay all of the eggs for the group.

**Social bees** are a common sight in our gardens. Here are the more common ones. [Click on the picture to view].



Common carder bee



Honey bee



Red-tailed bumblebee



White-tailed bumblebee



Early bumblebee



Tree bumblebee

### **Solitary bees.**

In contrast **solitary bees**, as the name implies, live on their own. They can make burrows underground, or live in quarry faces, old wood, and even masonry. A female solitary bee builds her nest and provides food for her young without the help of any worker bees. Despite this some **solitary bees** may appear to live in colonies, with many bees making their nests close to each other in a suitable piece of habitat.

There are over 250 kinds of **solitary bee**. Here are a few you might see. [Click on the picture to view].



Leaf-cutter bee



Red mason bee



Tawny mining bee



Ivy bee