

## What “Bee” that?

April on Troopers Hill Local Nature is a great time to see bees. As plum and willow come into blossom they provide an excellent supply of nectar and pollen, food for bees. Seventy-seven species of bee have been recorded on Troopers Hill; many of them are mining bees.

You will see mining bees hovering low over bare patches of ground. Stop, wait and watch and you may be lucky enough to see them dig out small holes, in which they will lay eggs and leave food for the larvae to eat when they hatch.

All this hard work can be wasted because there are also cuckoo bees, who will lay their own eggs in the mining bees nest. Only the cuckoo bee larvae will survive. Most of the cuckoo bees are of the group *Nomada*. They are often mistaken for wasps as many have yellow markings.

A very rare cuckoo bee found on Troopers Hill is *Nomada guttulata*, the short-spined nomad bee. This bee preys on a slightly less rare mining bee, *Andrena labiata*, the red-girdled mining bee. Do not leave it too long to come looking for these two bees, their flight time ends in June.

**Join the Friends of Troopers Hill on their 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month conservation work parties to find out more and carry out work to preserve and improve the very special habitats on Troopers Hill.**



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