

## BUMBLE BEES OF SASKATCHEWAN (HYMENOPTERA: APIDAE) A SURVEY OF THEIR GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

PHILIP S. CURRY 1984. Natural History Contributions, Number 5, Museum of Natural History, Saskatchewan Department of Culture and Recreation, Regina. 44 pp. Free.

Did you ever wonder whether or not you were seeing more than one kind of bumble bee during your summer outings or when you were working on the flower beds in the back yard? Did you ever speculate that there might be more than one kind? There are 21 species of bumble bees in Saskatchewan whose distributions are ably described by Phil Curry in this publication.

The introduction to this booklet includes brief descriptions of the distribution of bumble bees in North America, the biology of *Bombus* and *Psithyrus* (the two genera found in Saskatchewan) and the mapping of insect ranges. Other major sections describe methods of mapping of these bees, the geographic distribution of the bees by vegetative zones, and a key which emphasizes colour as an aid in the identification of the two genera and 21

species. There are also three appendices which include 21 distribution maps, site collection records, and a glossary of anatomical terms. Two illustrations in the text depict the vegetation zones of Saskatchewan and the anatomical parts of the bee for identifying it to species.

The booklet is well written but suffers from several minor problems. An essential anatomical term, the *interalar area*, is not included in the figure of body parts, therefore reducing the effectiveness of the key. Additional life history material from sources such as *Bumblebee Economics* by Bernd Heinrich or *The Insect Societies* by E.O. Wilson could be included without detracting from the major intent of the publication, which is the geographic distribution of bumble bees in Saskatchewan. The maps with their external trappings would be more attractive without the grid and underlining. Also, the categories, *common name*, *synonymy* and *food*, with no information could have been deleted from the maps.

This booklet is an excellent contribution to the entomological record of Saskatchewan. It should be a valuable reference to both the amateur and professional entomologist interested in identifying bumble bees and learning the distribution in Saskatchewan. — Reviewed by E.A. Driver, Canadian Wildlife Service, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N 0X4