

Scientific note

The rare oligolectic bumblebee *Bombus gerstaeckeri* Morawitz, 1882 from Poland

(Hymenoptera, Apidae)

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The bumblebee *Bombus gerstaeckeri* Morawitz, 1882 has been spotted in Europe in the mountain areas of the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Carpathians and the Caucasus (Konovalova 2007, 2011, Rasmont & Iserbyt 2014, Williams 1998). The species belongs to the subgenus of so-called large species with elongated heads and tongues (*Megabombus*).

Body length of queens: 20–26 mm, workers: 15–17 mm, males 16–18 mm. Body hair black with yellow-brown trunk and dorsal part of the abdomen, white on the two penultimate segments of the abdomen, and black on the last segment. Underground nests. The family consists of 20–100 individuals. Seasonal activity of imago IV–VIII. Oligolectic, usually visits almost exclusively flowers of *Aconitum* spp.

So far, the species has not been recorded in the Polish fauna, even during the research in high parts of the Carpathians (Pawlikowski 2008).

In the unmarked entomological collections of the Museum of Upper Silesia a new queen specimen was found, which was collected by M. Bielewicz on 19 July 1960 on Ornak (1100 m a.s.l.) in the Tatra Mountains (UTM DV15). The specimen was dissected and photographed (Fig. 1).

As evidenced by the current dynamics of *Bombus gerstaeckeri* distribution in Europe, it is a constant species in the Carpathian mountains (Fig. 2). The fact that it has not been seen in the Polish Carpathians is most likely associated with the coloration of the body hair, which is very similar to the commonly occurring bumblebee *Bombus hypnorum* (L.).



Fig. 1. New queen of *Bombus gerstaeckeri* Mor. collected by M. Bielewicz on Ornak in Tatra Mts, 19 July 1960.

According to the climate projections for Europe for 100 years, its distribution will be reduced to areas in the highest mountain range (Rasmont et al. 2015).

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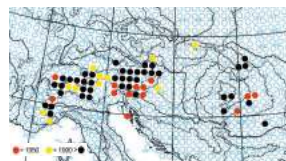


Fig. 2. Actual distribution of *Bombus gerstaeckeri* Mor. in Middle Europe.

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