

Bumblebee *Bombus lucorum* queen meets Wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*

Mike Averill

The preferred nesting site chosen by the White-tailed bumblebee *Bombus lucorum* is usually quoted as a mouse hole or an abandoned underground nest of another small mammal. Using a static Wildlife camera set by a Wood Mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* entrance hole in the Spring I was surprised to see this species of Bumblebee take over an in-use burrow in a flower border in my garden.



01. Wood Mouse at nest hole. Mike Averill.

The camera was placed at the Wood Mouse entrance hole on the 25th April 2016 and the mouse was still using it (01) when the Bumblebee started to take an interest on the 8th May. Through the 8th and 9th the queen bee continued to fill the entrance with small sticks, vegetation and soil all dragged in by the bee reversing backwards into the hole (02, 03, 04, 05). She also made numerous forward entrances presumably to lay eggs. All was then quiet until on the night of the 10th May when a Wood Mouse was photographed investigating the filled-in hole (06.). The mouse wasn't seen near that entrance again so presumably it had other burrows.



02. *Bombus lucorum* starting to drag sticks into nest. Mike Averill.



03. *Bombus lucorum* dragging vegetation into hole. Mike Averill.



04. *Bombus lucorum* filling nest hole entrance. Mike Averill..



05. *Bombus lucorum* filling nest hole entrance. Mike Averill



06. Wood Mouse revisiting entrance hole filled by *Bombus lucorum*. Mike Averill

Images

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