

TAWNY MINING BEE

The Latin name for this bee is *Andrena fulva*.

Mining bees look rather like honey-bees, though most are smaller than the honey-bee. They have shorter tongues than most bees. Most prepare cells for their eggs by mining in sand or earth, hence the name.

This attractive little bee has a yellowish-brown hairy body, about 1cm long. The male is rather smaller and darker.

The female digs a burrow to lay her eggs, sometimes up to 60cm deep. She does this by pulling the earth backwards with her fore feet then brushing it out with her hind feet. She makes a cell at the end of the tunnel, filling it with a ball of honey and pollen. She does this by making several trips, carrying half her own weight in pollen. She then lays an egg on the ball and closes the cell. She makes three to six cells in all, and then comes to the surface and dies.

This species is harmless, and does not sting. It spends most of its time foraging for nectar on the flowers of garden plants.