



Bumblebee cards

with printer's marks for printing
on A6 cards

Also available for printing on A4

About the cards

These cards feature photos of specimens from the collections at the Natural History Museum. The deck contains 78 individual specimens from 7 species common in the UK.

Some have been in the collections for nearly 100 years, so you will see that some of the bumblebees are dusty. Over this time, some of their colours may have faded or changed slightly from what you might see in living bumblebees.

The deck is divided into 7 sets. Sets 1 - 6 are intended to be the main working sets for students. Each set consists of 10 cards, 2 from each of 5 common UK species. Set 7 contains 18 cards that can be used to add complexity to the activities.

Set 7

Cards 701-706 are **drone red-tailed bumblebees**.

These are included to illustrate *polymorphism*. This is where there are different forms within a species. Sexual dimorphism is a type of polymorphism where there are two forms associated with reproduction. In social insects like bees and ants, a single species can have three or more different forms (also called castes) associated with different roles, which can include queens, guards, nurses, or foragers.

Cards 707-712 are **early-bumblebees**

At first, these look similar to the drone red-tailed bumblebees, but a close inspection reveals they have black heads and red/orange hairs only on the last segment of their abdomen.



Drone red-tailed bumblebee



Worker early bumblebee

Cards 713-718 are **ruderal bumblebees**.

This species is a type of cuckoo-bumblebee, meaning they lay their eggs in the nests of other bumblebees, like the cuckoo bird lays its eggs in the nests of other birds. Their colouring mimics the red-tailed bumblebee, whose nests they tend to lay their eggs in. They are still pollinators, but they do not need to actively collect pollen to feed their young, relying on the host colony to do that instead. Ruderal bumblebees and other cuckoo species can be recognized by the lack of a pollen basket on their hind legs. In other bumblebee species, the pollen basket is a smooth area surrounded by long hairs.



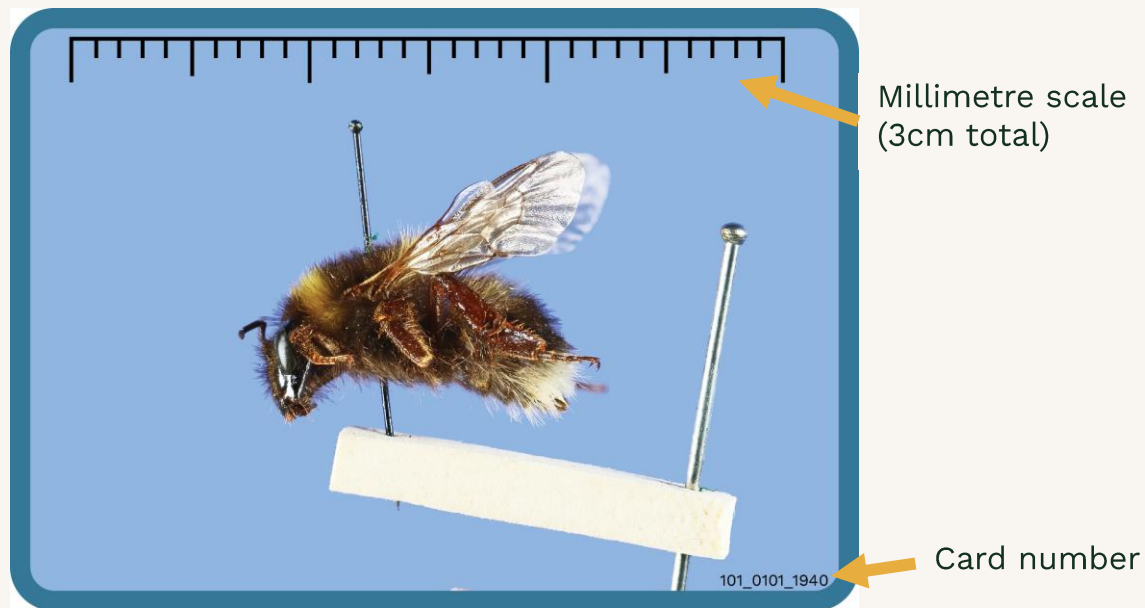
Red-tailed bumblebee queen



Ruderal bumblebee female



Decoding the card numbers



(Set + card) _ (Species + Caste) _ (Date collected)

101_0101_1940 is decoded as:

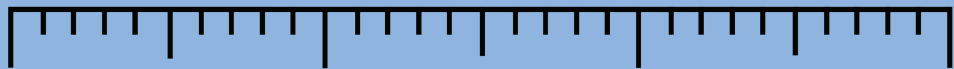
Set 1 card 01 _ White-tailed bumblebee (worker) _ Collected in 1940

Species numbers

01	White-tailed bumblebee
02	Tree bumblebee
03	Red-tailed bumblebee
04	Common carder bumblebee
05	Buff-tailed bumblebee
06	Early bumblebee
07	Ruderal bumblebee

Caste numbers

01	Worker
02	Drone
03	Queen



101_0101_1940



102_0101_1939



103_0201_2015



104_0202_2006



105_0301_1921



106_0301_1908



107_0401_1940



108_0401_1954

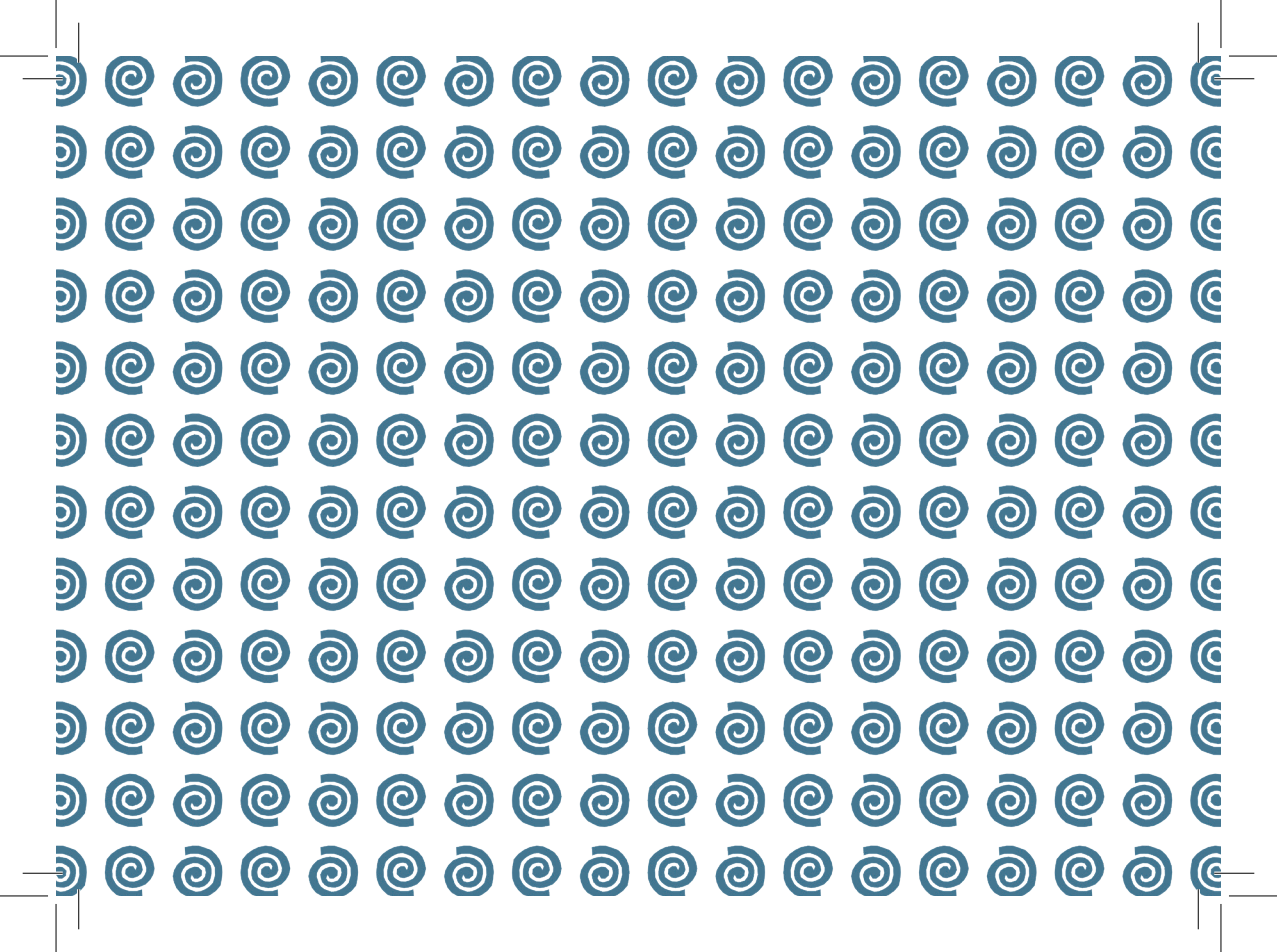


109_0503_1921



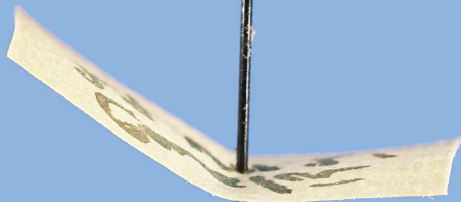
Bombus terrestris
Linn.
1758

110_0503_1960





201_0101_1921



202_0101_1921



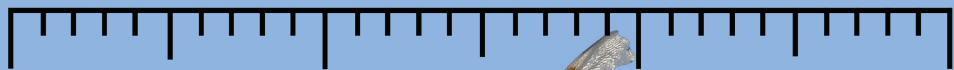
203_0201_2016



203_0201_2010



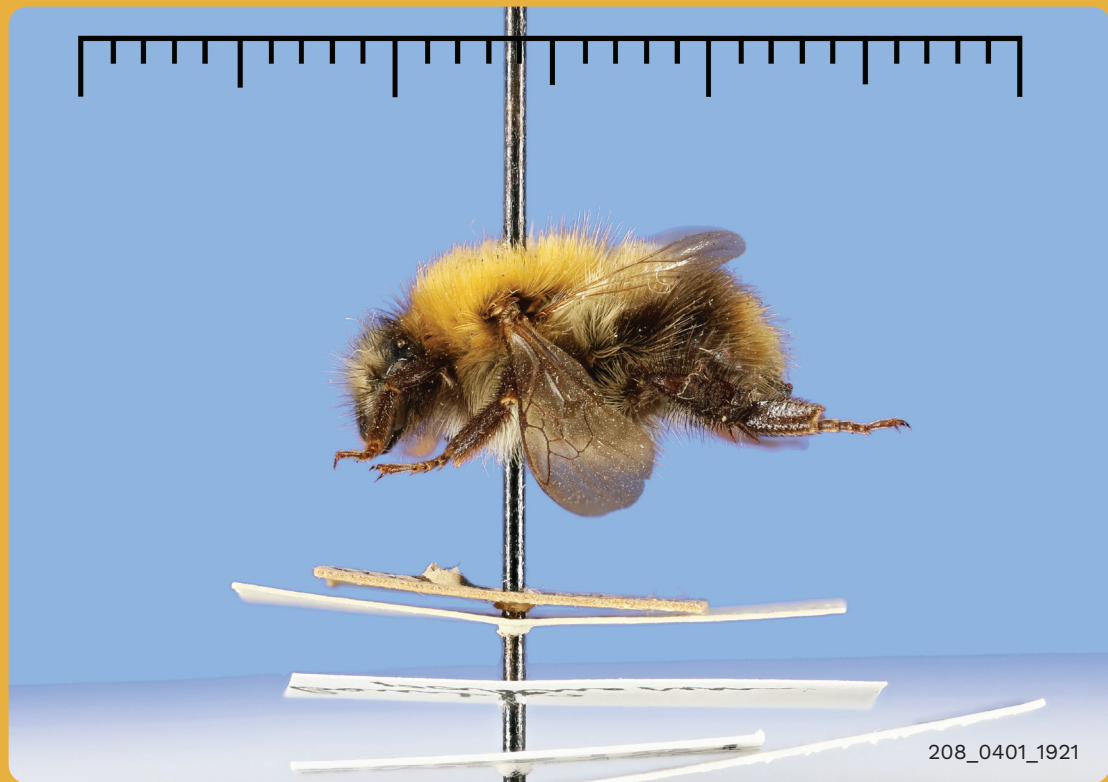
204_0303_1905



206_0301_1908



207_0401_1940



208_0401_1921



209_0503_1921



210_0503_2009





301_0101_1940



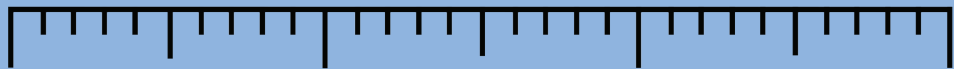
302_0101_1921



303_0201_2010



303_0201_2015



304_0301_1908



306_0303_1968



307_0401_1947



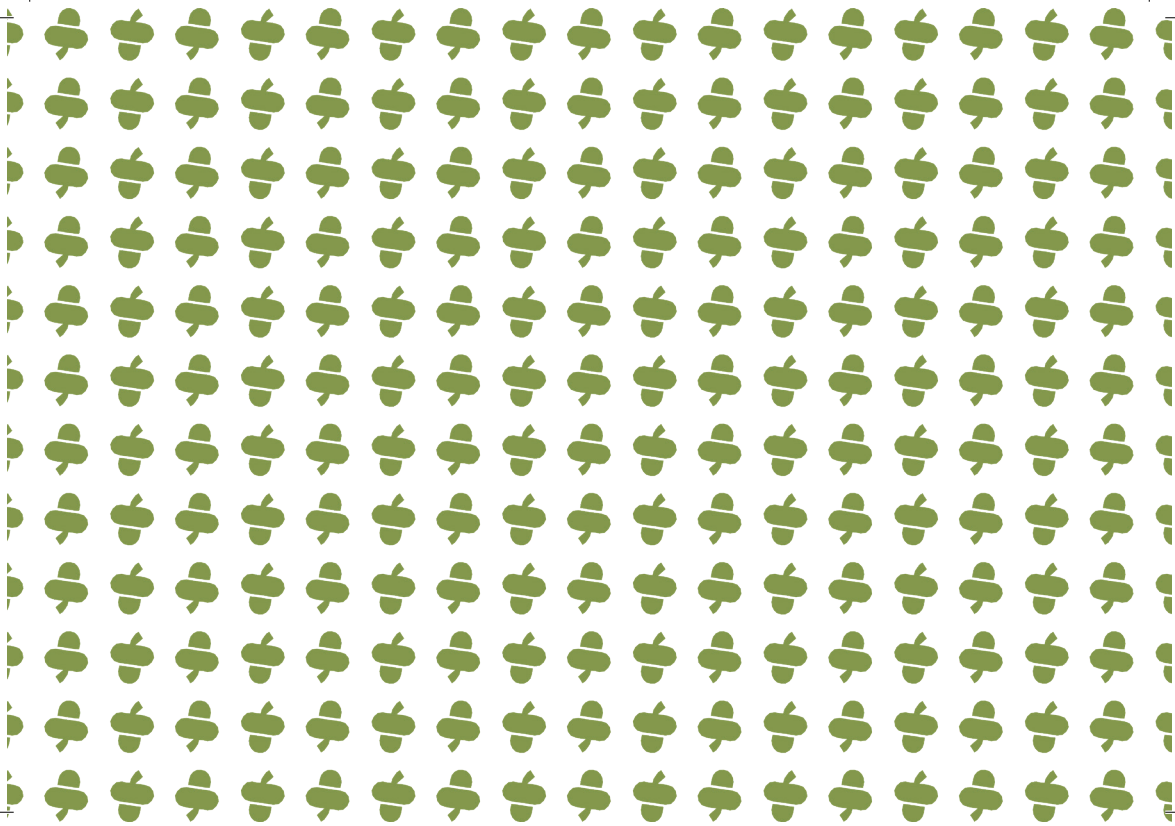
308_0402_1998

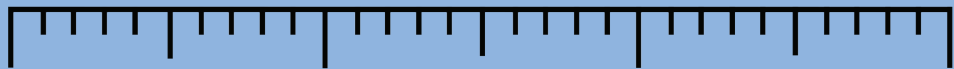


309_0501_1954



310_0503_1973





401_0101_1940



402_0101_1911



403_0201_2010



403_0201_2010



404_0303_1939



406_0301_1924



407_0401_1952



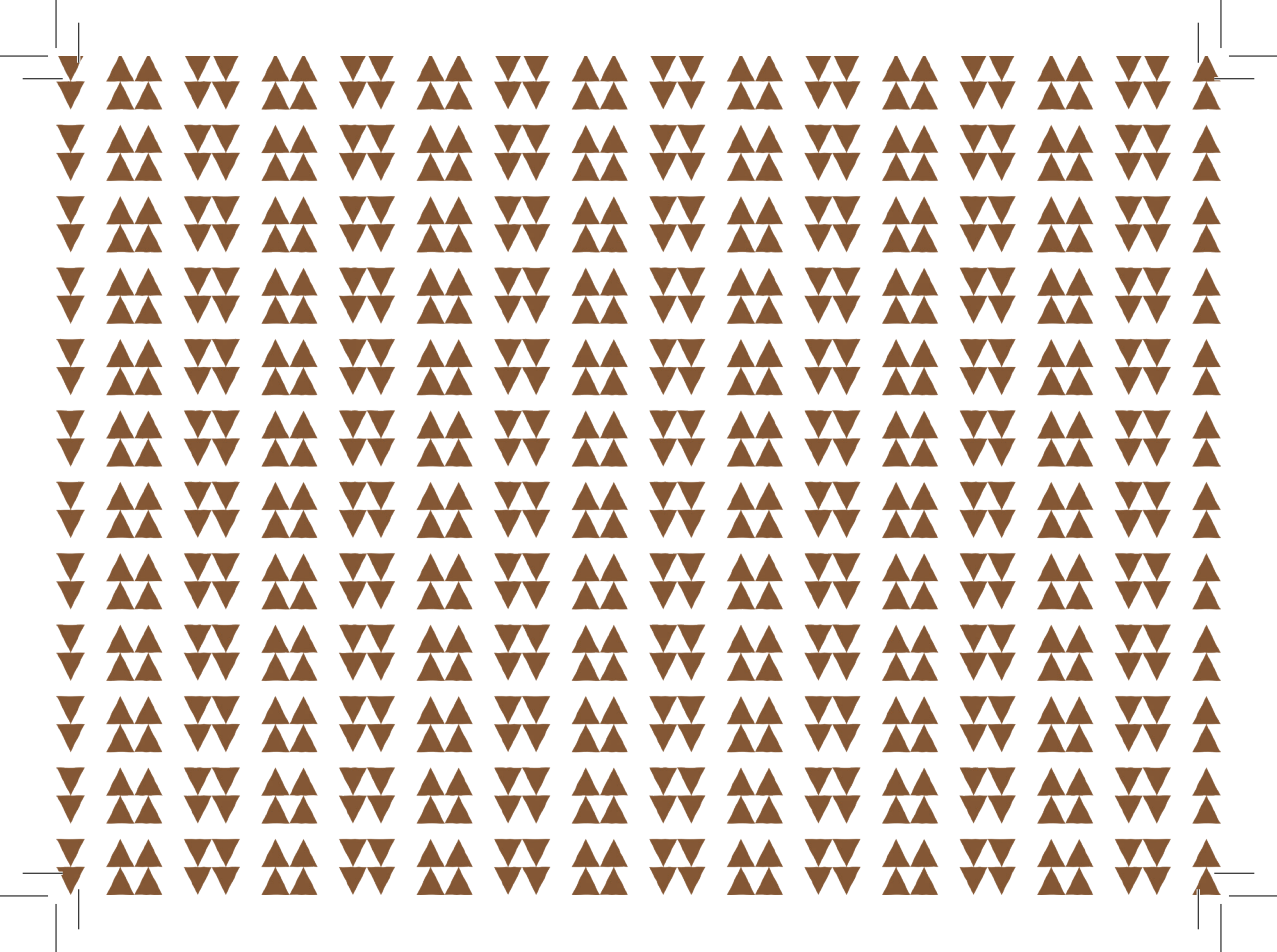
408_0402_1998



409_0501_1973



410_0503_1939





501_0101_1921



502_0101_1940



503_0201_2010

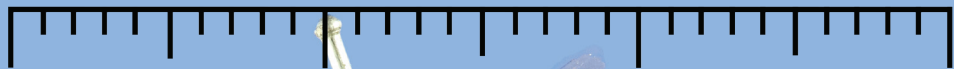


Handwritten label on a small piece of paper, oriented upside down relative to the bee. The text is mirrored and difficult to read, but appears to contain collection data such as date and location.

503_0201_2015



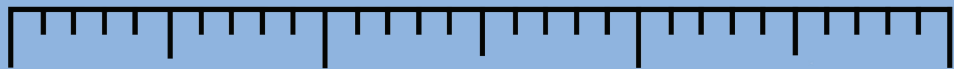
504_0303_1939



506_0301_1894



507_0401_1929



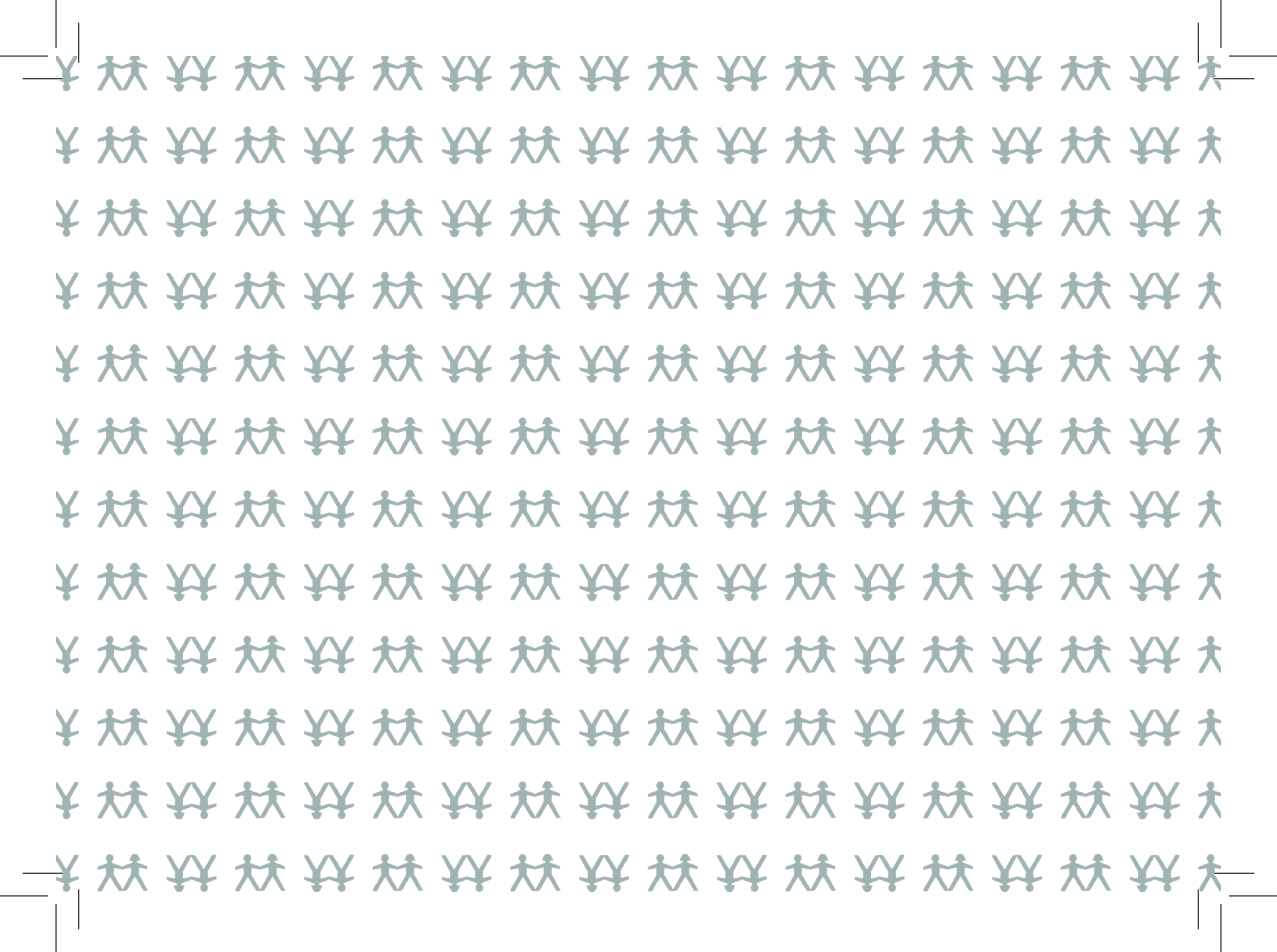
508_0402_1957



509_0503_1921



510_0503_1921





601_0101_1940



602_0101_1940



603_0202_2010



604_0202_2015



605_0301_1901



606_0301_1892



607_0401_1978
C

607_0401_1978



608_0402_1965

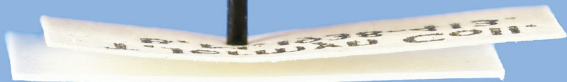
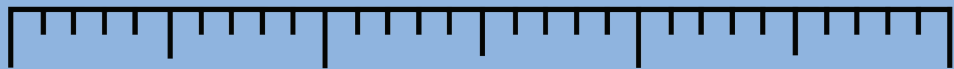


609_0503_1956



610_0503_1958





701_0302_1919



St. Boniface
W. Ventnor
-W. O. M.
ENGLAND: 170.M.

702_0302_1976



703_0302_1939



704_0302_1921



705_0302_1921



706_0302_1939



707_0601_1970



708_0601_1970



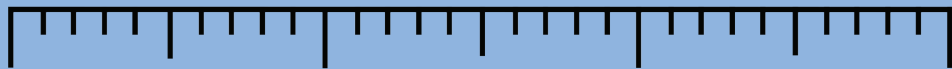
709_0601_2008



710_0601_2011



711_0601_1970



712_0601_1960



713_0702_1963



714_0702_1963



715_0701_1942



Specimen label with mirrored text, likely a collection or identification number.

Specimen label with mirrored text, likely a collection or identification number.

716_0701_1936



717_0701_1936



718_0701_1936

