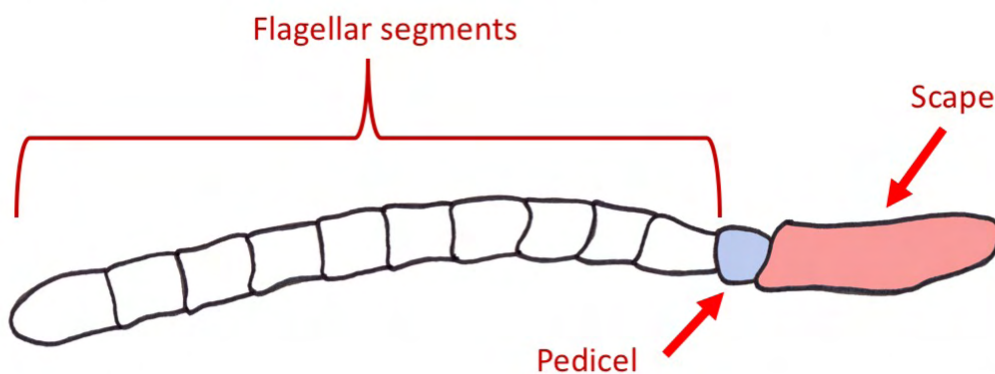


Female or male?

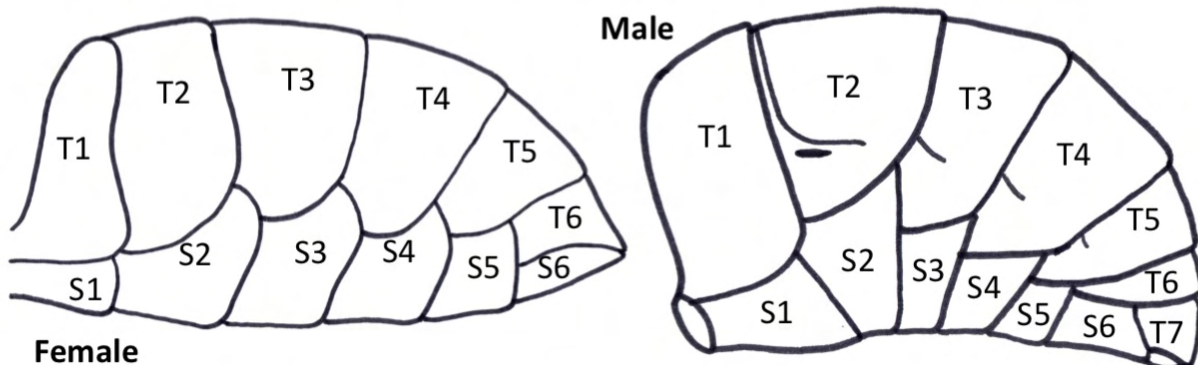
Determining the sex of your specimen is the first step to identifying the genus using this key, as females and males of the same species are often dissimilar in a number of characteristics, and are therefore dealt with separately in parts of this key. The quickest way to determine sex is to look to see if your specimen has a protruding sting. If you see a sting, it is a female, as male bees do not possess a sting. However, many female specimens die with their stings not protruding from the metasoma. So, in addition to the presence of a sting, there are two easy methods of determining the sex of bee specimens: **1)** the number of antennal segments, and **2)** the number of metasomal segments.

Antennal segments. Count the total number of antennal segments, including the scape and pedicel. Female bees have **12** segments, and males have **13** segments.



Note: One Australian bee subgenus, *Euryglossina* (*Quasihesma*) (the smallest bees in the world, see page 60), Colletidae, has some species with one less antennal segment than the usual number. These *Euryglossina* (*Quasihesma*) females have 11 antennal segments, and males have 12.

Metasomal segments. Count the total number of metasomal segments. These are pairs of terga (top) and sterna (bottom). Female bees have **6** segments, and males have **7** visible terga, and two extra sterna (S7 and S8) that are hidden internally.



Line drawings by Tobias Smith (metasomas based on diagrams in Michener 2007)

