Councils: actions to help pollinators

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Wexford County Council
Councils: actions to help pollinators

• Importance of Pollinators to Wexford
• Life before the AIPP
• Examples of actions in County Wexford
• Council Guidelines & the Benefits
• Mapping the pollinator patches
• Future Actions and Role of Councils
Importance of wild pollinators to Wexford
Life before the AIPP

• Trying to convince managers benefits of changing our practices
• Budget
• Small start and slow progress
• Hard to track progress
• No framework for actions
Life before the AIPP

• 2014 Lets Bee Friendly campaign – supported by Wexford County Council as an action under the Wexford County Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018, aimed at helping safeguard Ireland’s bees and other under-threat pollinators.

• Let it Bee – ‘Let it Bee’ signs at pollinator friendly flower beds or wildflower areas

• Aimed at helping schools and public areas such as libraries, parks, community gardens etc. to establish pollinator friendly areas
Examples of actions:
County Hall Wildflower Meadow
County Hall Wildflower Meadow
(4980m² or 1.2 Acres)
Examples of Actions: Wildflower beds and planters
Life Lives on the Edge

- Pilot project on four sections of national primary roads
- Aims to highlight the importance of road verges and hedgerows as crucial wildlife corridors
- Tailored management of roadside vegetation to encourage establishment of native wildflower abundance;
  - reduced and structured mowing regime
  - Removal of cuttings to reduce nutrients in soil
  - Ban on use of pesticides at sites
Life Lives on the Edge

- Annual baseline survey - ongoing
- Basic species composition
- Inform future verge and hedgerow management practices.
Replanting ½ Acre Roundabout M11
Council Guidelines

- Protect what we have
- Alter the frequency of mowing
- Pollinator Planting
- Provide nesting habitat
- Reduce use of pesticides
Council Guidelines

Action 19
Reduce use of Pesticides

• Use pesticides sparingly
• Only when necessary e.g: Japanese knotweed
• Treat only target areas

Benefits
• Chemical free zone
• Cost saving on purchase of pesticides
• Better for the environment
• Set a good example

Best Practice in the Use of Pesticides

In addition to the honey bee who lives in hives, we also have 20 different types of bumblebees and 77 different types of solitary bees in Ireland. Bumblebees and solitary bees live entirely in the wild. We need healthy populations of all these bees to carry out pollination. If we want to have wildflowers in the landscape, we need to grow our own fruits and vegetables, or buy affordable, locally grown apples or strawberries in our shops. Bees and other pollinators can only survive in a landscape that provides them with food, shelter and safety throughout the year. Already, one third of our 98 bee species are threatened with extinction in Ireland.

Pesticides pose the greatest direct hazard to insect pollinators. However, herbicides are having a much greater negative impact on pollinators because they are so widely used. Herbicides, Fungicides and Plant Growth Regulators typically have little or no toxicity to pollinators, but many of the plants we spray as weeds are vital sources of food for pollinators, especially in early spring. Pollinators need a range of flowers to feed on from spring through to autumn. The overuse of these chemicals is making it very difficult for them to find enough food to survive in our landscape.

Pesticides should be used sparingly and only when absolutely necessary, such as in the treatment of invasive species like Japanese Knotweed.

Do's
• Check the label and select pesticides that are less harmful to pollinators.
• Always read, understand and follow the product label instructions fully.
• Treat only the target area.
• Spot treat rather than use blanket sprays.
Benefits of Actions to Councils

- Many actions are cost effective ways to manage council lands
- Benefits local food producers
- Contribute toward local tidy town competitions
- Educational benefits
- Good for the environment
- Positive message for Council
- Excellent platform to show case combined efforts
Importance of signage

Over winter wildflower areas can look more untidy compared to short mown lawns so inform!
And then even with the signs!
## Manage my sites

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<td>16/02/2017</td>
<td>Clough Roundabout</td>
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<td>Gorey Community &amp; Tidy Town Groups Pollinator Workshop</td>
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<td>County hall wildflower meadow</td>
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<td>County hall wildflower planters</td>
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<td>County Hall roof planters</td>
<td>Councils-Actions</td>
<td>0 km²</td>
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</tbody>
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Future Pollinator Projects

Maybe a design award for innovatively designed pollinator pods on public land! Exempted Development Class 36 of Schedule 2 Part 1 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Picture: K-Abeilles Hotel for Bees built for the 2012 Muttersholtz Archi Festival in France
Future Projects

• Use existing wildflower meadow to collect wildflower seed
• New bypasses under construction, hoping to get a mile of wildflowers sown on each
Promote and Share

• Promote the Plan and Guidance within council and with community groups

• Encourage businesses to get involved

• Short on resources? Share your knowledge, resources or land with community groups to achieve actions.
Thank You

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