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## **NEWSLETTER FOR BUSINESS SUPPORTERS: AUGUST 2020**

Welcome to the following companies who have all signed up as a business supporter of the AIPP in July (up to 21<sup>st</sup>): Devenish Research Development and Innovation Limited; Rohan Estate Management Ltd.; Honey Coffee Roasters; Croke Park; Blooming Native Wildflowers; Roadbridge.

The total number of business supporters now stands at 258. Thanks to all of you for your support.

Dr Úna FitzPatrick

### **1. To do this month: check if your bee hotel is being used – if not, consider moving it to a new location**

Now is the perfect time to check if your bee box has been used this year. They are mainly used by two types of solitary bees - leaf cutter bees and mason bees. Leaf cutter bees cut circular pieces of leaves and use them to line the cells in the nest (photo below). The Red Mason bees line the cells with mud. Check if any of the cavities in your nest box are closed off with pieces of leaf or with mud. If they are all still empty it hasn't been used this year. In that case, it's worth moving it to a new location so it's in place for early next spring. The more flowers there are around your nest box, the more likely it is to be found and used.

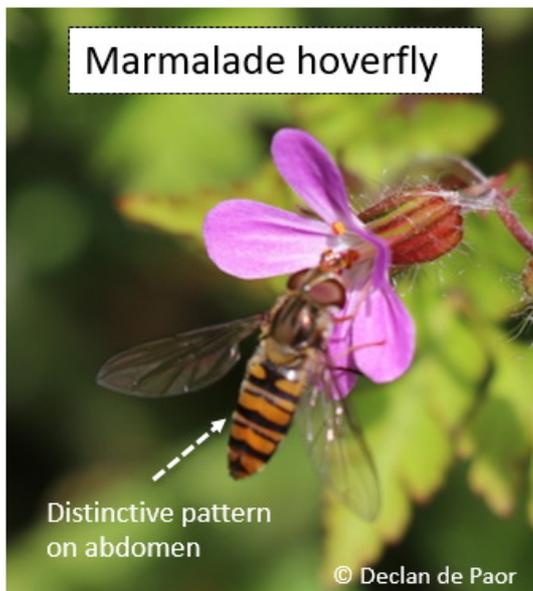


**Ideal size for a solitary bee nest box**

- You'll know your bee box/hotel is being used if the cavity entrances have been closed off with pieces of leaf or mud. If it's not being used, consider moving it to a new location
- They should be placed 1.5-2m off the ground in a sheltered south or east facing location
- They must be close to food sources – solitary bees don't fly far!
- These boxes only target a small number of our cavity nesting solitary bees. Don't forget that 80% of our solitary bees nest in bare ground which is even easier to create by scraping back vegetation!
- Larger bee boxes or insect hotels will attract predators and are more likely to harbour disease

## 2. To spot this month: Keep an eye out for the Marmalade hoverfly

Keep an eye out for this very common hoverfly. It's called the Marmalade hoverfly (*Episyrphus balteatus*). There are around 180 different hoverflies in Ireland. Many are black & yellow striped, but no other species has this exact pattern on its abdomen. It might not be obvious at first, but once you get your eye in, it's very easy to spot.



## 3. Thanks for taking the short online engagement survey

Many thanks to all of you who completed this survey for us in July. We had 719 responses in total and 100 from businesses which is fantastic! It will really help us improve as we develop the next version of the AIPP for 2021-2025. When the new Plan is developed later in the year, we'll have a short public consultation when you

can all comment on the next version – so plenty more opportunities to feed in!

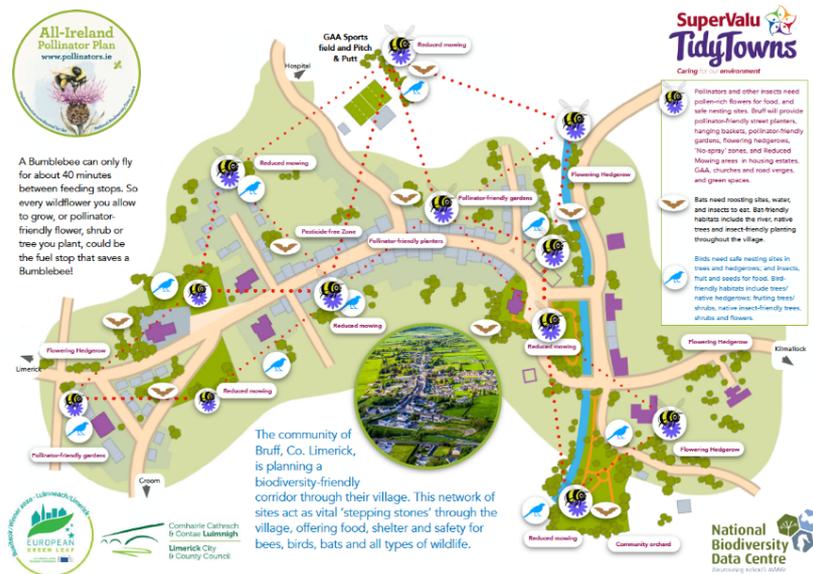


## All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Engagement Survey

### 4. New infographic on creating ecological corridors

This is not of direct relevance to businesses, but might be of interest. The community of Bruff, Co. Limerick, are planning to create ecological corridors through the town to join up green spaces using pollinator-friendly planting. This whole-landscape network approach is hugely valuable to biodiversity and could be considered by all community groups.

<https://pollinators.ie/creating-ecological-corridors-in-bruff/>



### 5. Great new blog with practical advice on managing wildflower meadows

Anne Sundermann, Ricky Whelan and Brian Gaynor explain how natural meadows

are flourishing under management practices of the Irish Wildlife Trust Laois/Offaly branch. This excellent blog provides lots of advice and tips. It will apply to meadows of all sizes. You can read more here: <https://pollinators.ie/blog/>



## 6. Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts)

We got off to a great start with these, but numbers being submitted has now dropped off unfortunately. If you have 10 minutes to spare, this is a great way to get involved in helping us track changes in our pollinators. At site level, it's a great way to track if the changes you may have made as a result of the AIPP are working. You just need to watch a 50cmx50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit. The most useful counts are those that are repeated over time at the same location (or very nearby). You can use different target flowers at different times of year.

<https://pollinators.ie/record-pollinators/fit-count/>



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