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## NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2021

Dear All

We are delighted to welcome the following companies/organizations as business supporters of the AIPP.

*New business supporters include:* SIRO, Structure Tone, McDonalds (Franchisee Tralee & Killarney), OCG Spares, CBRE Data Solutions Ireland, CommScope EMEA Ltd., St. Patrick's Distillery, GCS Consulting, EPS Group, Farmers to Market and Huhtamaki.

It's **Annual Review** time, which is now MANDATORY and requires you to submit a short, sharp 250 words within 6 questions (see details below). We really appreciate that it has been a tough year/eighteen months for businesses so if you feel that your pollinator actions have had to take a *back seat* for the last year all we need is a response indicating 'No Actions due to Covid-19'. Those who have already submitted their report - **THANK YOU**.

Thanks to all of you for your support and we look forward to hearing what actions you have been taking for pollinators-biodiversity.

**Sarah Kelly**  
**Agri Business Officer**

\*The [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025](#), managed by the *National Biodiversity Data Centre* (a Heritage Council programme), actively addresses the time-critical pollinator-biodiversity challenge. It is a shared plan of action for the island now in its sixth year, which builds on the targets within *The EU 2030*

*Biodiversity Strategy and Ireland's National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 (Objective 4)*, to halt and reverse pollinator decline by 2030. It is also, aligned with Bord Bia's Origin Green programme with reference to 'pollinator actions', and supports members' biodiversity targets.

### 1. BEE WATCH: Violet Carpenter Bee

A fascinating bee to keep an eye out for this month! The Violet Carpenter Bee is a very distinctive solitary bee. It's entirely black with dark wings and is one of the largest solitary bees in Europe. It nests in dead wood and is **not** aggressive, despite how it might initially appear!

Before this year, it was recorded only once from Ireland, in Waterford City in 2007. In June 2021, we had a sighting from Kinsale in Cork. Over the last few weeks, new records have come in from Roscrea in Tipperary and from Dublin City. It started overwintering in Britain in 2007 and is likely to be a regular new addition to our bee fauna as a result of climate change.

If you think you've spotted this bee, please send a photo for verification to [ufitzpatrick@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:ufitzpatrick@biodiversityireland.ie)



2. IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!  
AIPP Annual Review for Business Supporters

To maintain the integrity of the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025* in its new phase, a **mandatory 250-word Feedback Report** is now required on the pollinator-biodiversity actions delivered by your business/organization during 2021.

The *National Biodiversity Data Centre* and the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan* team appreciate the enormous challenges businesses have faced in the past year and are so grateful for all your amazing and inspiring work on pollinator-biodiversity!

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK REPORT by completing the 6 short questions in the [Annual Review Questionnaire](#) and submit to [skelly@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:skelly@biodiversityireland.ie) by **Friday 15 October 2021**

**Impacted by Covid-19?** (eg hospitality/leisure) Please respond with '*No Actions taken due to Covid-19*'. **OR New AIPP business supporter?** We are keen to hear about the start of your journey so please respond with that in mind.

**NOTE:** We will send ONE reminder email on 8 October 2021. Should a business/organization not submit a Feedback Report by 15 October 2021 then AIPP will assume that you no longer wishes to participate. Businesses/organizations which do not provide a Feedback Report will be removed from the business supporters list HOWEVER may re-engage at any time by emailing [skelly@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:skelly@biodiversityireland.ie)



### 3. NEW BUSINESS SUPPORTER - OCG SPARES

Spares a thought for pollinators-biodiversity!

OCG Spares, Naas, County Kildare, is proving to be poetry in motion in their actions for pollinators-biodiversity. Over the past couple of years new hedging

around the outer boundary of the yard/fields has been planted with a mixture of whitethorn, hazel and various fruit/berry trees. This is cleverly offset by pollinator-friendly-shrub-lined pathways subdividing the yard adjacent to the building. A series of flower beds surrounding the building are built out of dry limestone walling where cracks between the stone blocks provide perfect nesting opportunities for pollinators and other insects. Add to all that a small bee hotel and it's a perfect combination of food, shelter and safety for pollinators!

Owner Steven O'Connor says of his next adventures with pollinator-biodiversity on his site: 'The three hectare field surrounding the yard which we no longer farm we will now grow as a meadow. It means we will take one cut of hay away at the beginning of September to allow wild flower seeding. I'm also currently building a new dry-stone wall around a single hedge in the middle of the field which will house an earth mound for solitary mining bees.'

An epic pollinator journey in 2021. We look forward to hearing more in 2022!

Photograph: Steven O'Connor



#### 4. MONDELEZ SUPPORTING BIODIVERSITY IN COOLOCK

Over the course of 2020/21 Mondelez Ireland has made significant pollinator-biodiversity changes to the grounds of the *Cadbury Coolock* site as it has evolved from a manicured parkland feel to a more naturalized setting with over 8 acres of land transformed from mowed lawn to managed meadow.

Padraig Nolan, Mondelez Facilities and Environment Manager, explained: *'We have assigned significant resources to improve site bio-diversity with the planting of 60 native trees, 6000 native shrubs and 6000 flowering bulbs. We believe we have universal acceptance and appreciation for these changes from company staff, management, business partners and visitors and will continue the programme with further planting out of wildflowers beds moving forwards.'*

Photograph: Pdraig Nolan



### 5. DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: WEBINAR

**Origin Green 'Farmland Biodiversity' 27 October 2021, 1000-1100**

Origin Green, Bord Bia's food sustainability programme, in conjunction with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) will be hosting the second of three '*Pathways to Biodiversity*' webinars. This time, the webinar will focus on how AIPP and Bord Bia are seeking to improve 'farmland biodiversity'.

The webinar will include an overview of the AIPP [European Innovation Project \(EIP\) project 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators'](#) which is developing and testing a whole-farm pollinator scoring system to identify what management practices on Irish farmland benefit pollinators.

In addition, Bord Bia will unveil their **\*new online training course** on Biodiversity for Origin Green farm members, which will detail the importance of maintaining farmland biodiversity and the practical actions farmers can take. Bord Bia will also provide an update on collaboration on the ***Farming with Nature*** initiative which is being developed as a holistic biodiversity brand from the ground up.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR](#)



An initiative by  
**BORD BIA**  
IRISH FOOD BOARD

## 6. TO DO | AUTUMN: Help hungry bumblebees fatten up for hibernation

This is the time when pollinator-friendly planting around businesses and gardens can be incredibly important. As our meadow flowers wind down for the season, autumn-flowering garden plants can provide vital pollen and nectar for bumblebees as they fatten up for hibernation. Business sites, gardens, schools, parks can be lifesavers for pollinators at this time of year.

Try to make sure you have pollinator-friendly plants where you are.  
**CHECK OUT:** [Pollinator-friendly Planting Code](#) and [Garden Plants](#).  
**DON'T FORGET:** You and your colleagues can 'Pledge Your Garden' (Pots/Planters) for pollinators [HERE](#).

**How do you know if a plant is pollinator friendly?**

- Do you see pollinators visiting? When choosing plants at a garden centre, you will quickly spot which flowers insects visit most.
- Choose **single-flowered** varieties or **perennials** (double-flowered or annuals are generally poor sources of pollen and nectar).

See our website for more actions you can take to help pollinators in your garden, business, farm, school or local community.

**Autumn:** Rudbeckia, Heathers, Eupatorium, Aster, Salvia, Single flowered Dahlia

**Winter:** Mahonia, Willow, Viburnum, Crocus, Snowdrop, Helleborus

[www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)

National Biodiversity Data Centre  
Supporting Ireland's Biodiversity

Additional text in infographic:  
Daffodils, Tulips, and traditional bedding plants like Geraniums, Begonias, busy Lizzy, Petunias, Polyanthus or Salvia splendens have virtually no pollen and nectar and are of little value to pollinators.  
Farmland: All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020  
Gardens: All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020

## 7. DON'T FORGET: Wildflower Meadows = some maintenance and management

September is the time when long-flowering meadows should be cut, and the grass removed. Having these meadows, however small, is a fantastic action for pollinators-biodiversity as it is returning a vital species-rich grassland habitat that has been lost in Ireland. *Don't forget that these meadows do still need some management.*

WEED REMOVAL - Each year remove by hand the large, fast-growing plants and noxious weeds which will dominate a wildflower area if left unmanaged - Nettles, Docks, Ragwort, Hogweed, Thistles. Invasive species should also *always* be removed. Normally, this will only be necessary in the initial years, and it'll then settle into a lower-growing meadow flora that naturally becomes more flower-rich over time. Unfortunately, if this step is ignored these areas may never reach their potential.

The photo shows a fantastic new meadow in an area that was previously short grass. The potential of this meadow is huge, but in these initial years it would greatly benefit from the removal of the large brown Docks.

WATCH: this short (7 minute) Top Tips video on [Creating a Meadow](#)



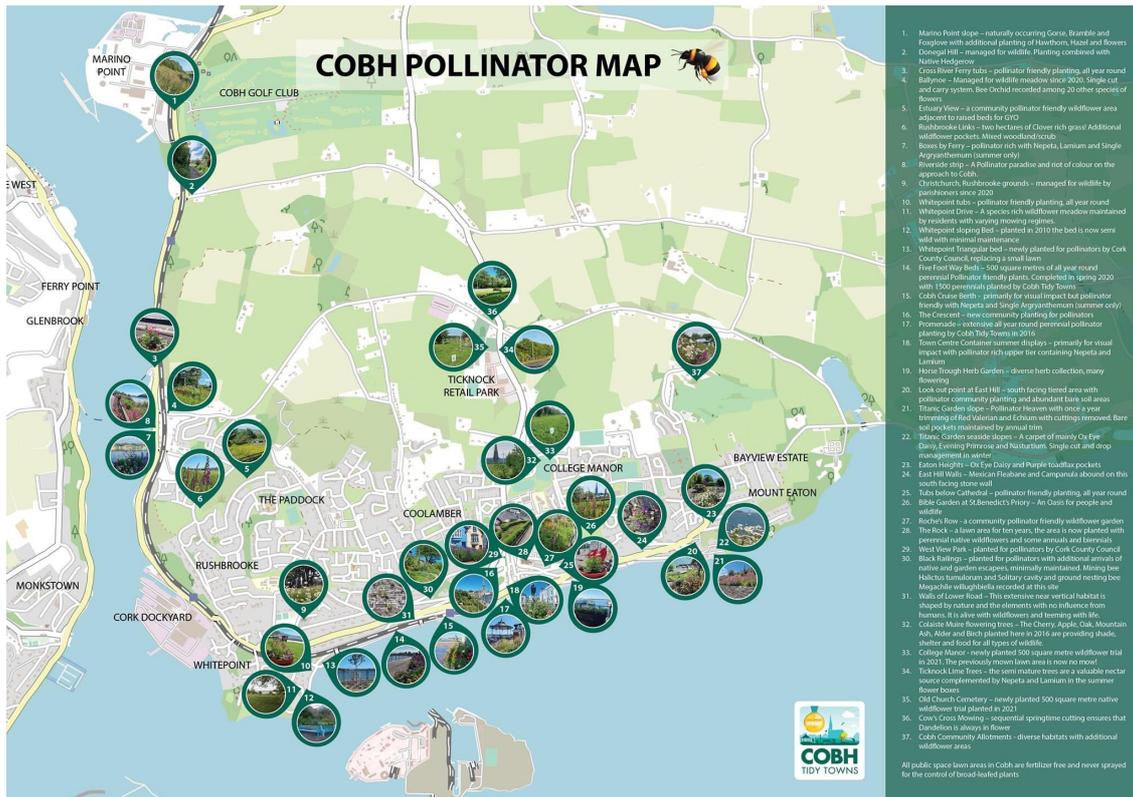
#### **8. IDEAS HUB: Cobh Tidy Towns - a pollinator map created by the community**

We are continually inspired by the actions that are being taken by Tidy Towns Groups to make changes for the better. Cobh has an incredible 37 sites that are managed by the community to help pollinators. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

**IDEAS HUB:** Wanting to take actions within your *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR) Plan for pollinators-biodiversity?  
Why not sponsor the development of a map in your area via your Tidy

Towns/Council? Or maybe an Ecological Corridor? [CLICK HERE FOR MORE IDEAS](#)

\*If you have an idea you're implementing and would like us to share with other Business Supporters please send to [skelly@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:skelly@biodiversityireland.ie)



## 9. THE GREAT YELLOW BUMBLEBEE HUNT - good news from Mayo

The Great Yellow Bumblebee (*Bombus distinguendus*) is one of our rarest bumblebees and is classified as 'Endangered' on the *Irish Red List*. Most of the remaining populations are now on the Mullet Peninsula in Co. Mayo. On 15 and 16 August 2021, Dr. Dara Stanley and her research group in University College Dublin carried out a bumblebee 'blitz' to survey for Great Yellow Bumblebee in the Mullet. Records of these new sightings have been submitted to the *National Biodiversity Data Centre*. [CLICK HERE](#) to find out more.



**10. SEPTEMBER SEED COLLECTION - the perfect time to collect seed from your local, naturally growing pollinator-friendly wildflowers**

If you have reduced mowing to allow a natural wildflower meadow to develop, you can help it along by collecting seed from pollinator-friendly wildflowers growing in your local area. This month is the perfect time to do this and is especially useful if your meadow is not as flower rich as you would like.

Our '[Collecting and using pollinator friendly wildflower seed](#)' *Guide* contains tips and advice on how to find the right seeds to collect, how to collect and store seeds, and how to sow them. Knapweed is an easy one to start with. This late summer flowering plant is brilliant in meadows as it has huge amounts of pollen and nectar.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the recent blog on collecting seeds.



## 11. GET BUG FIT FOR 2021: Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts)

Do you have a Biodiversity Committee in your business/organization. Would your employees like to become Pollinator Trackers?  
Then the FIT count is a perfect way to start that journey!

200 FIT Counts have been submitted online since the beginning of April. If you have 10 minutes to spare, this is a great way to get involved in helping us track changes in our pollinators. At the site level, it will help you track if the changes you 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. Counts from Knapweed, Butterfly Bush or Lavender would be especially useful this month.

NOTE: the data submitted through this FIT count shapes the evidence-based actions for pollinators-biodiversity.

[GET BUG FIT HERE](#)



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