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Business Supporters Newsletter: September 2023

The [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#) (AIPP) is a framework bringing together different sectors across the island of Ireland to create a landscape where pollinators can thrive. Implementation of the AIPP is coordinated by the [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#).

Dear All

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

New Business Supporters in August included: Finline Furniture, Doughtys Wilkinstown, Yellow River Greenway Park, Farrans Construction, Forane Nurseries, Donegal Bees and The Ardilaun Hotel.

Want to align your Marketing Communications with AIPP?

[REVIEW HERE](#) the AIPP Abridged Comms Plan for 2023. Follow us on: X @PollinatorPlan and Instagram @allirelandpollinatorplan.

Need ideas to help..?

Employees take pollinator friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#)

Suppliers take pollinator-friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#)

Community take pollinator-friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#)

No physical site? No problem; there are lots of [communication actions](#) in which your business can participate across employees, community and suppliers.

Discover the new **Business for Biodiversity Ireland** Platform: [READ MORE HERE](#)

'Impacts' & 'Dependencies': AIPP as an evidence-based, 'entry-level' into biodiversity on any site

- In the language of biodiversity we often talk of 'impacts' and 'dependencies'. Simply put - we are '*dependent*' on pollinators (wild bees) for pollination of crops, trees, flowers etc. and we know we can have an almost immediate '*impact*' on their environment by delivering AIPP evidence-based actions. We also know that as we start taking AIPP actions for pollinators, we are impacting on wider biodiversity.
- So, don't 'overthink' what your company might do for biodiversity. Focus on pollinators first, which can be cost-neutral or low cost, and then add other biodiversity year on year.
- Why not start with your [car park](#) and surrounding grassy areas? REMEMBER choose an alternative action to [wildflower seed mixes](#) and [honeybee hives](#) neither of which is a biodiversity action.
- Also can you choose (i) Peat-free compost (ii) Pesticide-free bulbs/shrubs/trees (iii) Provenance-Irish native trees (N.B. a Blackthorn from Central Europe will flower at the wrong time of year for our wild bees) (iv) Eco-alternatives to pesticides - BUT continue to spot spray [invasive species](#).

Sarah Kelly

Agri/Business Officer

*The [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025](#), co-ordinated by the [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#), actively addresses the time-critical pollinator-biodiversity challenge. It is a shared plan of action for the island, which builds on the targets within [The EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy](#), Ireland's *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021* (Objective 4) and is mentioned in Northern Ireland's *Biodiversity Plan to 2020*, to halt and reverse pollinator decline by 2030. It responds to the Irish Government's 2019 Biodiversity Emergency Declaration which happened alongside the Climate Declaration. It is also aligned with Bord Bia's Origin Green programme with reference to 'pollinator actions', and, supports members' biodiversity targets.

Thanks to the funders of the Agri-business Officer position: [Bord Bia Origin Green's](#) food sustainability programme and [Business for Biodiversity Ireland](#), Ireland's new biodiversity hub.

WILD BEE WATCH: keep an eye out for the Common Carder Bumblebee

By September, many of our bumblebees are thinking about hibernation. One of the last to be spotted is the Common Carder Bumblebee (*Bombus pascuorum*), which still flies into October. Keep an eye out for this very common bumblebee this month. It is variable and can become bleached in the sun. However, there are no other bumblebees that have all ginger hairs on the thorax, a ginger tail and then some black hairs on the abdomen. The photograph shows two Common Carder Bumblebees on Knapweed. Submit your bumblebee sightings through clicking the the link below. N.B. All submissions are validated.

ALL STAFF: Interested in learning more about how to identify, monitor and record common bumblebees? Complete the free online course [HERE](#).

Already completed the course? Consider participating in the challenging and very do-able [2024 Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme](#) - full training and ongoing support provided.



SUBMIT - bumblebee sightings

AIPP ANNUAL REVIEW - submission required by 29 September 2023

As a Business Supporter we require you to report to us annually on evidence-based actions delivered by your business. Reporting as a Business Supporter comprises:

- 1) Submission of a simple 250-words structured within this short [Annual Review Questionnaire](#).
 - 2) PLUS mapped actions on [Actions for Pollinators](#) (GIS) biodiversity-accountability portal.
- PLEASE submit your Annual Review questionnaire as a Word doc. to skelly@biodiversityireland.ie by **12 noon on Friday 29 September 2023** and include confirmation of mapped actions on Actions for Pollinators (GIS) biodiversity-accountability portal.
 - **NOTE:** We will send ONE reminder email. Should your business/organization fail to submit the Annual Review Questionnaire, including mapped actions, AIPP will assume you no longer wish to participate and will remove your business from the Business Supporters list. You may, however, re-engage at any time by emailing skelly@biodiversityireland.ie



REVIEW PREVIOUS ANNUAL REVIEWS

WEBINAR: Pathways to Pollinator-biodiversity

What do healthy hedgerows for pollinators/biodiversity look like?

27 September 2023, 1000-1100

Masterclass Overview

Origin Green, in conjunction with the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP)*, will be hosting the final broadcast in the 2023 webinar series focused on processor/agri-business actions to encourage farm suppliers/growers in enhancing pollinator biodiversity.

This webinar will take place on Wednesday 27th September at 1000-1100 and will feature:

- Ruth Wilson, AIPP Farmland Pollinator Officer – will give an in-depth view of hedgerows in a pollinator-biodiversity context providing a deeper understanding of their value and benefits. She will also highlight the ethos of '*Retain Maintain Restore Create*' in relation to hedgerow management.
- The webinar will also feature Farmer-speaker, Donal Sheehan who will provide the farm context for hedgerow management.

Agenda and Speaker Details

Introduction: Martin Hofler, Senior Sustainability Manager at Bord Bia
Ruth Wilson, Farmland Pollinator Officer at All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP)
County Cork Dairy Farmer – Donal Sheehan

Book for this webinar at the [REGISTER HERE](#) link below.

- Missed a 'Pathways to Pollinator-biodiversity' webinar? Catch up [HERE](#).
- Are you a Processor looking for a step-by-step guide to positively interact with pollinators through your supply chain? [READ MORE HERE](#)



An initiative by

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD

REGISTER HERE

TO DO THIS MONTH: cut and lift the grass from your long-flowering meadow

September is the time when long-flowering meadows/mini meadows should be cut, AND the grass removed. Having these meadows, however small, is a fantastic action for biodiversity, as it is returning a vital species-rich grassland habitat that has been lost in Ireland.

September is the ideal time to cut and lift, but please be aware that some Councils and large organizations may have cut earlier than this. This can occur where they have large areas to mow before the weather changes and the ground becomes too wet for large machinery. Some flexibility in cutting is fine. More important is that the grass is removed. Note: Fertilizing or mulching grass back in will enrich the soil and give grasses an advantage over any wildflowers in future years.

Flower-rich meadows are a very fragile and habitat that require the correct management each year.

Biodiversity Plan(ing) for 2024? Consider reduced mowing, a key evidence-based action to support our wild bees, in your *Biodiversity Plan* for 2024 by following the simple guidelines [HERE](#). Include participation in [No Mow May](#). For more detailed information, click the link below.

PIC: a long-flowering meadow managed by Waterford City and County Council.



GUIDE - creating meadows on business sites, local communities & gardens

VIDEO-SHORT - top tips for creating a meadow

Are you a Landscape Contractor/Grounds Maintenance/Facilities

Management company working with Councils?

**Irish research finds 'areas managed for wildlife' are best for
pollinators in urban parks**

This research was conducted as part of an undergraduate project by Roisin Gowen at Trinity College Dublin, who assessed different park management strategies and how they impacted plant and pollinator diversity, and urban park users' relationships with green spaces and biodiversity. It was supported by [Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council](#).

The research focus was inspired by the second objective of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, which focuses on “making public land pollinator friendly”. It sought to support this objective by determining which park management strategy is most effective in promoting plant and pollinator biodiversity. It compared amenity grassland, formal planting and areas managed for wildlife across parks in Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown.

The study found that **areas managed for wildlife had the highest pollinator and plant species richness and abundance**. Reducing management intensity not only reduces costs and saves time, but is also the best way to promote floral and pollinator diversity in urban parks. Support your client Council's park management strategy to support pollinators-biodiversity by reviewing the [Councils: actions to help pollinators](#) guidelines.

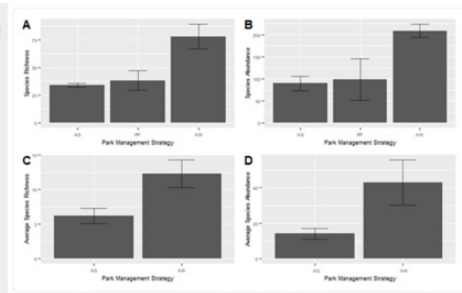


Fig. 2. Species richness and abundance for plants (A, B) and pollinators (C, D) across the park management strategies.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

& IN OTHER WILD BEE NEWS:

CORK - Blarney Street Pollinator Path initiative

Since the Pollinator Plan launched in 2015, many incredible initiatives have taken place at the grass roots level. We are very grateful for the actions all of you take in support of the Plan. This is one of the most inspiring. [Read this lovely blog from Molly Garvey](#), of the Blarney Street Pollinator Path group. It explains how a neighborhood has come together to help pollinators in Cork City.

Is your business considering a local pollinator sponsorship opportunity in 2024? Contact your local **Tidy Towns** group (including a Pollinator Award judged by AIPP) or **Biodiversity Officer** to discuss. **NOTE:** Any pollinator sponsorship should (a) endeavour to elicit an AIPP evidence-based action and should (b) require as a KPI, mapping on [Actions for Pollinators](#) GIS biodiversity-accountability portal.

Drafting your company's 2024 Biodiversity-Pollinator Plan?

As a Business Supporter you will be following the suggested evidence-based actions listed **A-F** in the [Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#) guidelines, aligned to ISO14001:2015 (currently being updated to align to the UN SDGs). Don't forget to SPECIFY planting and management from the AIPP's companion resources [READ MORE HERE](#).

At this time of year you may be considering planting or sponsoring [pollinator friendly trees](#)? **SPECIFY** that the provenance is from the island of Ireland. A Blackthorn from Central Europe will flower at the wrong time of year for our pollinators.

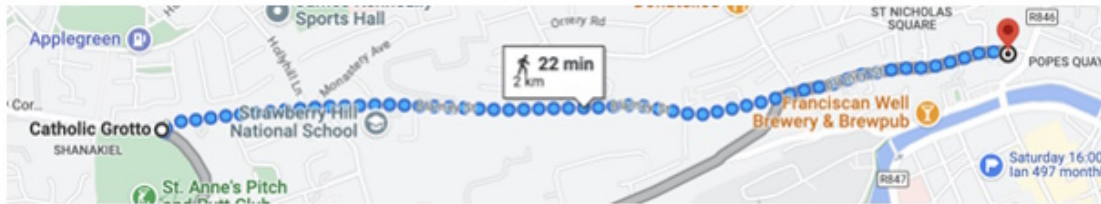
NEW RESOURCE: short How-to-guide Protecting nocturnal pollinators

We are delighted to release a new free resource on how to help protect nocturnal pollinators. It was developed in collaboration with the [Mayo Dark Sky Park](#) and [MothsIreland](#). Many of our pollinators are busy at work during the night, whilst we are sleeping. Moths and other nocturnal invertebrates carry out essential functions in our ecosystem and are as important as their daytime counterparts. On the island of Ireland, light pollution has increased significantly over the last 25 years, leaving a brighter-than-natural nocturnal environment across most of the landscape. This places stresses on our nocturnal pollinators and other wildlife. This guide explains ten actions we can all take to help. [REVIEW HERE](#)

Tralee - Wild Bee Festival

On the 12/13 August 2023, Tralee hosted the second ever *Wild Bee Festival* on the island of Ireland. An annual event coordinated by the *National Biodiversity Data Centre*, the Wild Bee Festival is a series of walks, talks and workshops for communities to learn about pollinators and how to help them.

In and around Tralee, several organisations have been doing amazing work for pollinators. We were delighted when they agreed to collaborate with us in running the 2023 Festival. Huge thanks to Kerry County Council, Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco & Activity Park, Transition Kerry, Tralee Tidy Towns and the Irish Wildlife Trust (Kerry branch). Review the blog from Kate Chandler, the AIPP Communities and Engagement Pollinator Officer, on [the lessons we learned from the event in 2023](#).



BLOG - Blarney Street Pollinator Path

DRIVING BIODIVERSITY MEASUREMENT:

Are pollinators thriving on your business site?

FINAL MONTH OF 2023 FOR FIT COUNTS

FIT Counts are a really important way to help us monitor pollinator activity and is one of the simplest recording initiatives available. It will help you track what is happening on your business site(s). Maybe invite employees to conduct FIT Counts on your site or in their gardens?

3 Steps to a FIT Count: (1) Download the free FIT Count App. (2) Watch a 50x50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes, and, (3) Count how many insects visit. Why not try one where you are to see how your business site compares?

In 2022, the average number of insects recorded on a FIT Count was 8. In September it's especially useful to carry out FIT Counts on *Ivy* or *Heathers* (two of our 15 target flowers), however, you can conduct it on other flowers too. N.B. A FIT Count can be carried out anywhere, and on any flower. Don't forget, ALL submissions are validated.

ALL STAFF - MEASUREMENT & MONITORING: Consider engaging your employees in weekly pollinator FIT Counts (via App) on your business site in 2024. Or invite your Green Team to participate in the more challenging but do-able 2024 monthly Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme now open for registration. Full training and ongoing support provided.

Drafting your 2024 Biodiversity-Pollinator Plan to include pollinator-biodiversity measurement on your site(s)?

- COMMISSION a **Baseline Ecological Survey**. Specify that it should include the *National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme* recommended methodology.
- MONITOR pollinators through weekly **Flower Insect Timed (FIT) Counts** and monthly **Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme** to provide data to the *National Biodiversity Data Centre*.
- 'LOCATE' species on/adjacent to your site **Biodiversity Maps**.
- MAP evidence-based actions your business has delivered on **Actions for Pollinators** GIS biodiversity-accountability portal.

- VISUAL RECORDS/PHOTOGRAPHS - document the nature-positive journey on your site(s).
- Agri-food Processors' can direct their farm suppliers/growers to a simple farmers recording initiative - **Biodiversity on Your Farm** based on the AIPP **Farmland: actions to help pollinators** guidelines. No experience necessary.
- MANAGE and map invasive species on your site(s) via www.invasives.ie

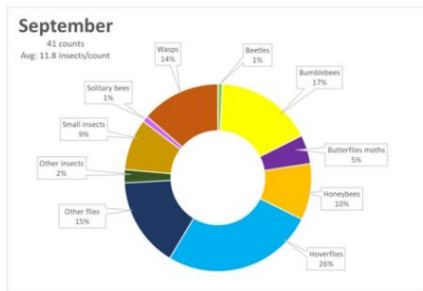
Pollinator monitoring: Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts)

<https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/>

Watch a 50cm x 50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit.
This scheme runs from April until September

SEPTEMBER

Target Flowers: This month please try to carry out FIT Counts on **Ivy** or **Heathers**. Other good target flowers are Lavender, Knapweed, Ragwort, White Dead-nettle, White Clover, Red Clover, Buddleja, Thistle.



Wasps were not observed in the April count, but made up 14% of sightings in September



Ivy Bee on Ivy

[FIT Count website](https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/)

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