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Business Supporters Newsletter: November 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 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan in October: John Paul Construction, King & Moffatt Building Services, Irish Dog Foods, Coen Steel, Chemco Ireland Ltd., Morgans Fine Fish (T/A) - Seafood Processors Ltd., Irish Trees Limited, Park Developments. Two companies re-signed this month: Applegreen (Petrogas Group) and Adare Manor Golf Resort.

Sarah Kelly
Agri/Business Officer

WILD BEE WATCH: this month keep an eye out for queen bumblebees

The normal lifecycle of most Irish bumblebees ends when the workers and males die off, and the newly mated queens hibernate through the colder winter months. Occasionally, at this time of year you can still see some bumblebee queens fattening up for hibernation. If you spot any queen bumblebees that you're

able to identify, it's very useful to let us know what plant it was feeding on. Last November, queens were observed feeding on Ivy and on garden plants like Mahonia, Comfrey and Hebe. Please submit any bumblebee sightings to the *National Biodiversity Data Centre* through the link below this helps to track changes over time. PIC: Buff-tailed bumblebee - Joe Curtis



[SUBMIT BUMBLEBEE SIGHTINGS HERE](#)

TO DO THIS MONTH: plant (or sponsor) bare root fruit trees

Bare-root fruit trees are generally cheaper than potted trees, and the time to buy and plant them is from November to March. Consider adding (or sponsoring) a small orchard to your business site, garden, local community site or farm.

As well as helping preserve some of our *rare heritage fruit tree varieties*, a small orchard can be valuable for biodiversity. They're made up of several habitats, including elements of woodland, hedgerow and meadow. Over time, this mosaic of habitats can be home to a range of biodiversity, including bees, butterflies, birds, bats, mosses, beetles, fungi and lichen. Windfallen fruit is also a vital source of food in autumn and winter for a whole range of wildlife. Species-rich grassland beneath the trees can be a haven for pollinators and biodiversity, especially if they contain the native, naturally occurring wildflowers. Make sure to include a native Crab Apple tree in your orchard, where you can.

Pollinators like wild bees, hoverflies and moths have a vital 'pollination service' role in orchards, with almost all fruit resulting from pollination by a bee or other insect. In turn, fruit trees provide nectar and pollen, essential for the survival of these important insects.



DOWNLOAD GUIDE: Traditional Orchards and Fruit Trees for Pollinators

NEW RESOURCE: flyer on pollinator-friendly sensory gardens

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is delighted to release a new free flyer on creating pollinator-friendly sensory gardens. Sensory gardens are spaces that offer opportunities to connect with nature through the five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.

Studies show that spending time in nature and connecting with the world around us is good for our health and wellbeing. Big or small, a sensory garden can be a wonderful addition to a business site, healthcare site or garden. As a business you might consider sponsoring a sensory garden within a community space or school in 2024. Fill it with pollinator-friendly plants that feed our wild bees, stimulate the senses, and create a vibrant and relaxing haven for people and pollinators.

Note: while sensory gardens should contain as many native plants as possible, this is largely a horticultural action and should be kept strictly to business site/ garden settings.

Creating a pollinator-friendly Sensory Garden

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Studies show that spending time in nature and connecting with the world around us is good for our health and wellbeing. Big or small, a sensory garden can be a wonderful addition to a community space, school, healthcare site, business, or even your own home.

Fill it with pollinator-friendly plants that feed our wild bees, stimulate the senses, and create a vibrant and relaxing haven for people and pollinators.

Taste delicious homegrown fruit and vegetables like Apples, Tomatoes and Raspberries.

Hear the sound of bees and birds in native trees and hedgerows.

Feel grass beneath your toes, mow every 6 weeks to let Dandelions and Clover grow.

Smell pollen and nectar-rich herbs like Lavender, Rosemary, and Thyme.

Look at colourful pollinator-friendly flowers in recycled containers.



REVIEW & DOWNLOAD FLYER

WHAT DOES THE DATA TELL US? All-Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring

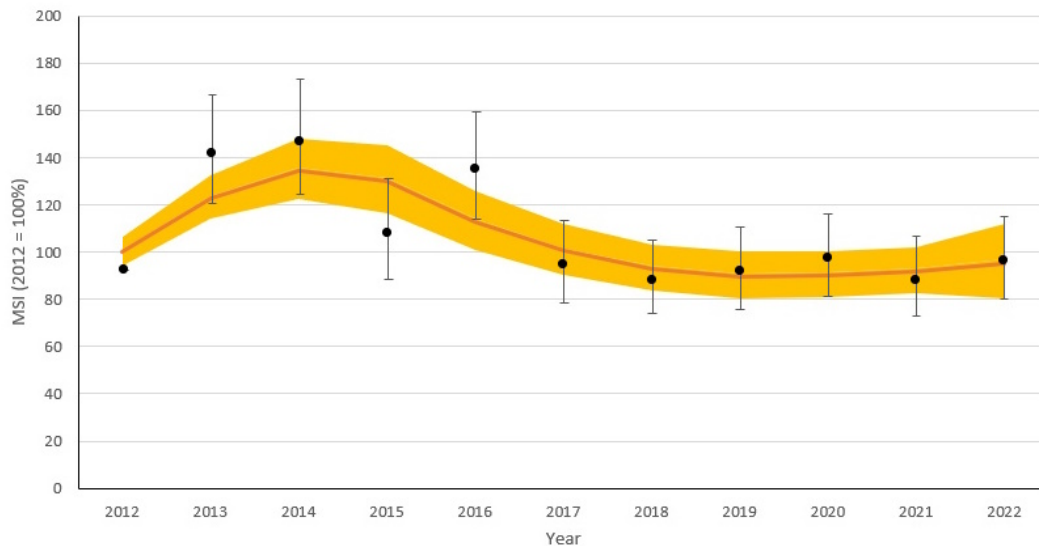
Scheme: 2012-2022 report released

The All-Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme, established by the *National Biodiversity Data Centre* in 2012, is one of the first of its kind globally. It tracks bumblebees and uses the status of the 8 commonest species to generate a multi-species population index as a measure of the health of Ireland's bumblebee populations. It provides vital baseline data that will be used to assess the impact of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The scheme involves volunteers walking a fixed route (transect) each month from March to October and counting all the bumblebees seen. It represents a huge voluntary effort by citizen scientists. In 2022, 76 volunteers walked more than 1,000km and counted 17,980 individual bumblebees.

The current overall trend from 2012-2021 is a year-on-year decline of 3.3%. *Bombus pascuorum* (Common Carder Bee) has traditionally been one of our most common bumblebees, but is now showing a moderate decline. Unfortunately, *Bombus muscorum* (Large Carder Bee) is in severe decline. The Tree Bumblebee (*Bombus hypnorum*) is our most recent bumblebee arrival, being first recorded from the island of Ireland in Autumn 2017. It was recorded in the scheme for the first time in 2021. In 2022, it was picked up in low numbers on three transects in N. Ireland.

In response to the findings of the scheme, an evidence-based guideline document on how businesses and local communities can help protect the Large Carder Bee was published by the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan in 2022.

Multispecies Index of bumblebee population change 2012-2022



LATEST BIODIVERSITY TRENDS: National Biodiversity Data Centre - Butterfly and Bumblebee Monitoring Schemes

RESOURCES: simple actions to help the Large Carder Bee

MOST POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY TOWN/VILLAGE TidyTowns

Pollinator Award Winners 2023

Local Communities continue to carry out inspiring work in support of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan assisted in some instances by local business sponsorship. The *Local Authority Pollinator Award* aims to encourage groups to implement pollinator-friendly actions in their towns and villages as part of the TidyTowns competition. It is coordinated and sponsored by the Heritage Offices and Biodiversity Offices of Local Authorities across Ireland, in partnership with the *National Biodiversity Data Centre*. To date more than 200 communities have become pollinator friendly through the award. The SuperValu TidyTowns competition is organised by the Department of Rural and Community Development and sponsored by SuperValu the competition's sponsors since 1991.

Congratulations to all award winners but particularly to the overall 2023 winner, **Raheny Tidy Village Group** in Dublin.

Other awards:

- **Best newcomer:** Dalkey Tidy Towns, Co. Dublin
- **Large town winners:** Raheny Tidy Village Group, Co. Dublin; Cobh Tidy Towns, Co. Cork; Clonmel Tidy Towns, Co. Tipperary; Buncrana Tidy Towns, Co. Donegal
- **Small town winners:** Athboy Tidy Towns, Co. Meath; Sneem Tidy Towns Co. Kerry; Tullahought Community Development Ltd., Co. Kilkenny; Belmullet Tidy Towns/ Baile Slachtmhar Bhéal an Mhuirthead, Co. Mayo
- The following were **highly commended:** Abbeyleix Tidy Towns, Balbriggan Tidy Towns, Castlegregory Tidy Towns, Skerries Tidy Towns, Tyrrellspass Tidy Towns, Woodford Parish Development.

REMINDER: If your business is considering sponsoring a local TidyTowns project in 2024 ensure you are eliciting an AIPP evidence-based action.



Planting native trees in Our Mother of Divine Grace grounds, Raheny

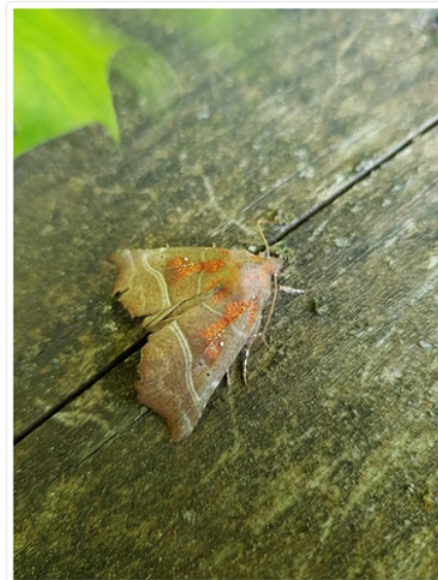
[READ MORE HERE](#)

BLOG: where do pollinators go in winter?

Learn how our bumblebees, solitary bees, hoverflies and moths survive the cold winter months. Read this blog from Ruth Wilson, the farmland pollinator officer.



A Buff Ermine moth cocoon, found overwintering as a chrysalis (pupa) amongst plant and leaf litter. Photo: Ruth Wilson



The adult Herald Moth overwinters as an adult in barns, outbuildings or caves. Photo: Ruth Wilson

[READ MORE](#)

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH US IN 2024?

There are various avenues through which you can increase your engagement with us in 2024.

Marketing & Communications

1. **Align your Biodiversity Marketing Communications with AIPP** through the [AIPP Abridged Comms Plan](#) which provides monthly pollinator themes/hashtags etc. The 2024 version will be available shortly.
2. **Follow us on social media** X/Twitter @PollinatorPlan & Instagram @allirelandpollinatorplan
3. **Share the AIPP [Business Supporters newsletter](#) with employees** OR invite them to sign up to the [AIPP Main newsletter](#) for themselves.
4. **Share the [Annual Review for Business Supporters](#) with key stakeholders** e.g., Board, Executive Team, Green Team, to highlight how your sector is supporting pollinators-biodiversity.
6. **Increase your understanding of biodiversity through the [Business for Biodiversity Ireland hub](#).**

'Value Chain'

As a business supporter you are following the [AIPP evidence-based guidelines](#) and the relevant [companion resources](#). You've also 'located' your site in relation to pollinators-biodiversity through [Biodiversity Maps](#). Consider refining your focus further by helping:

- **Employees** take pollinator friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#)
- **Community** take pollinator-friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#). Check out what's happening in your local area [Actions for Biodiversity](#). REMINDER: If sponsoring something within the local community ensure it elicits an AIPP evidence-based actions.
- **Suppliers** take pollinator-friendly actions: [READ MORE HERE](#)

Consider developing a 'Check before you buy' policy in relation to your supply chain to include:

- Peat-free compost (to protect a key pollinator habitat).
- [Provenance-Irish native trees](#) (N.B. A Blackthorn from Central Europe will flower at the wrong time of year for our wild bees).
- Eco-alternatives to pesticides - BUT continue to spot spray [invasive species](#).
- Pesticide-free bulbs/shrubs/trees.
- Due diligence re planting options which may have moved towards [invasive species](#) status and/or increasingly problematic.

'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, on actions which can be cost-neutral or low cost, and then add other biodiversity year on year.

- Why not start with your [car park](#) and reduce mowing in surrounding grassy areas? Or consider a [sensory garden](#) or [mini orchard](#) for your business site? You might focus specifically on understanding how to support one of our rare pollinators such as the [Large Carder Bee](#)?
- REMEMBER choose an alternative action to sowing [wildflower seed mixes](#) (a horticultural action) and [honeybee hives](#) neither of which is a biodiversity action.
- **Working with invasive species?** Review advice on how to manage and map (GIS) [HERE](#).
- **No physical site?** No problem; consider [communication actions](#) in which your business can participate across employees, community and suppliers.



[READ MORE](#)

ABOUT THE ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN

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 3rd [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.

We are grateful 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.



An initiative by

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD



Business for
Biodiversity

EMPLOYEES CAN SUBSCRIBE TO THE MAIN AIPP NEWSLETTER
[HERE](#)



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