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Business Supporters Newsletter: October 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: The Culinary Food Group, New Century Engineering Ltd., Red Rock Developments, Ballintubbert Gardens & House, Member First Credit Union, Chemifloc Group, CPI Technology Ltd.

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, 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 surrounding grassy areas? REMEMBER choose an alternative action to [wildflower seed mixes](#) (a horticultural action) 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 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.

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 one of our newest bee species

The Ivy Bee (*Colletes hederæ*) was first spotted at the Raven Nature Reserve in Wexford in 2021. It's a solitary bee with an autumn flight period, to match the flowering of its favourite plant - Ivy. In 2022, it expanded its range as far north as Brittas Bay in Wicklow. In the last few days, it was spotted at St Mullin's in Co Carlow! Please keep an eye out, especially in areas near the East and Southeast coast.

The Ivy Bee is quite large and has very distinctive bands of white on the abdomen. To make it a little easier, most of our solitary bees have completed their life cycles now, although there will still be hoverflies, wasps, and honeybees on the wing. If you think you've spotted this bee, submit your record to the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Please attach a photograph if it's from a new location. PIC: Jonathan Derham.



SUBMIT: solitary bee sightings

THANK YOU: To ALL who have submitted an Annual Review report and mapped for 2023!

We have started the process of pulling together all your wonderful reports and there are some brilliant evidence-based actions being delivered by many businesses across the island, including a noticeable increase in monitoring through weekly [Flower Insect Timed \(FIT\) Counts](#).

Missed the deadline?

As a Business Supporter we do require you to report to us annually (by 30 September) 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.

- If you have missed the deadline there is still time to submit **BY RETURN**.

- PLEASE send your Annual Review questionnaire as a Word doc. to skelly@biodiversityireland.ie and include confirmation of mapped actions on Actions for Pollinators (GIS) biodiversity-accountability portal.

NOTE: 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: Sarah Kelly - skelly@biodiversityireland.ie



READ MORE: [Annual Review for Business Supporters 2022](#)

TO DO THIS MONTH: Seeds we do encourage you to plant!

Now is the perfect time to collect and plant seeds from our native trees. Good seed to plant are Rowan, Hawthorn and Elder berries. The flowers from these native trees are a valuable food source for our pollinators in the spring. Collecting and growing seeds from healthy trees in Ireland is the best way to ensure that local trees can flourish, and gaps are restored with native species. While it doesn't directly support pollinators, Oak is an incredibly important tree for biodiversity. A great action just now, is to pick up some acorns if you're out on a walk, and find somewhere suitable to plant them locally. It might take a while for these acorns below to grow into the majestic Oak they came from, but all good things start somewhere! If everyone reading this planted just one acorn, the collective impact would be substantial.



READ MORE: [Growing native trees from seed](#)

IDEA 2024: Habitat development around your business site for the Large Carder Bee or the Great Yellow Bumblebee

If you are considering a project for 2024 why not consider sponsoring habitat development for one of our rarer bees in conjunction with a local Tidy Towns group?

The *Large Carder Bee* is generally rare in most locations on the island but does remain widespread. It is currently found in greatest density in coastal areas where flower-rich dunes, grasslands or machair (low lying grassy plane) remain. It also occurs on flower-rich bogs and heaths. Uniquely in Ireland, it can be found in urban environments, particularly in areas where there are large meadows in urban parks. Read more about Sustainable Skerries increasing the abundance and range of this beautiful bee in just two years! If you are 'adjacent' to these types of areas review the simple step guidelines here: [Protecting rare pollinators: Helping the Large Carder Bee](#) in your local community and the companion information within [How-to-guide: Creating and restoring meadows in local communities and gardens](#).

The Great Yellow Bumblebee is currently only found on the west coast, primarily on floral-rich coastal grasslands, such as machair. If you are 'adjacent' to these types of areas, review the simple step guidelines here: [Protecting rare pollinators: Great Yellow Bumblebee](#) and the companion information within [How-to-guide: Creating and restoring meadows in local communities and gardens](#).

Why not start by checking with us if they are in or adjacent to your area (email skelly@biodiversityireland.ie)? Or you can have a look on [Biodiversity Maps](#) to see for yourself. If you are considering supporting either of these bees for 2024 onwards, don't forget to consider participation in the monthly [Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme](#) (March to October). This scheme takes you from beginner stage (a day course) to identification, and has lots of supports to help. Try our simple, free online course to start your journey [How to Identify, Monitor and Record Common Irish Bumblebees](#).

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National Biodiversity Data Series No.28



Protecting rare pollinators: Helping the Large Carder Bee in your local community

**National
Biodiversity
Data Centre**
A Heritage Council Programme



sustainable
skerries

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



pollinators.ie
How-to-guide 9

REVIEW: Sustainable Skerries and the Large Carder Bee

NEW RESOURCE: Short guide on Traditional Orchards and Fruit Trees for Pollinators

We are delighted to release a new free resource on Traditional Orchards and Fruit Trees for Pollinators. It was developed in collaboration with Elaine Bradley & Cillian Boyd from the Irish Seed Savers Association, and is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

In the past, small orchards were a feature of many farms across the island of Ireland, providing traditional varieties of apples, pears, plums and damsons. This guide will help you create and manage traditional orchards and fruit trees for pollinators on the farm, garden or other areas of land.



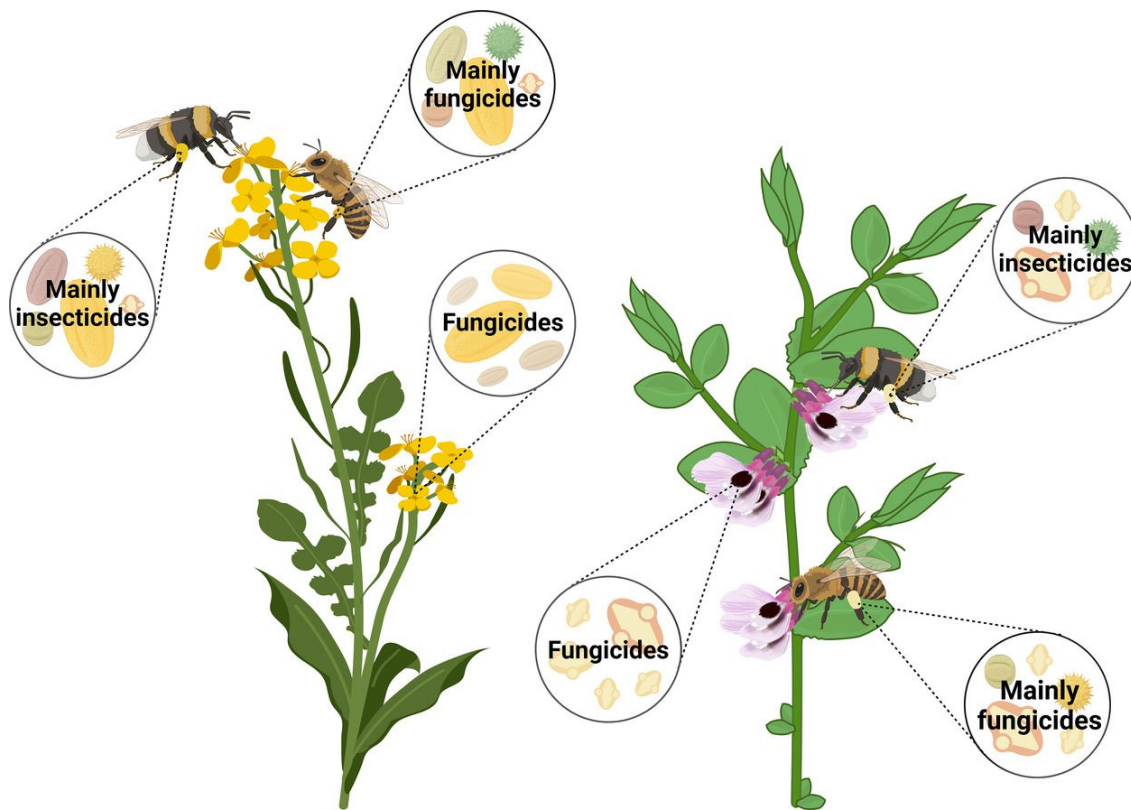
DOWNLOAD THE GUIDE

RESEARCH: Latest research finds honey bees and bumblebees are exposed to pesticides in different ways on Irish farmland

This research was conducted by Dr Elena Zioga at Trinity College Dublin. In 2020, a study across farms in the southeast, assessed if honey bees and bumblebees are exposed differently to pesticides through pollen. It also identified the source of this pesticide contamination.

The study found that crop pollen was only contaminated with fungicides, honey bee pollen was mostly contaminated with fungicides, while bumblebee pollen had mostly residues of neonicotinoid insecticides. It also found that most pesticides detected had not been applied recently in the sampled fields.

The findings highlight the likelihood of widespread exposure to a variety of pesticides from different pesticide groups (fungicides and insecticides). Importantly, it shows that honey bees and bumblebees appear to encounter pesticides in different ways, and that we shouldn't rely on honey bee studies to understand how our wild pollinators are impacted.



READ MORE

MEASUREMENT 2024: Include weekly Flower Insect Timed (FIT) Counts

Many businesses will have sustainability plans for 2024 well underway. Consider, within your plans, inviting your Green Team/Biodiversity Champion(s) to deliver weekly Flower Insect Timed (FIT) Counts (via phone App) as part of the biodiversity measurement and monitoring for next year.

Why is it important: There are concerns that the numbers of pollinating insects such as bees and flies are declining, but here at the National Biodiversity Data Centre we need much more data to be able to track changes in abundance. Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Count) are designed to collect new data on the numbers of flower-visiting insects.

How to take part: FIT Counts are very simple – you watch a 50cm² patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit and then submit your data online. The scheme runs from April to September. Your location can be anywhere e.g., business site, garden, farm, park, school. Doing this across various action sites and then repeating through the year and across future years will show you the impact of management changes on insect numbers and diversity.

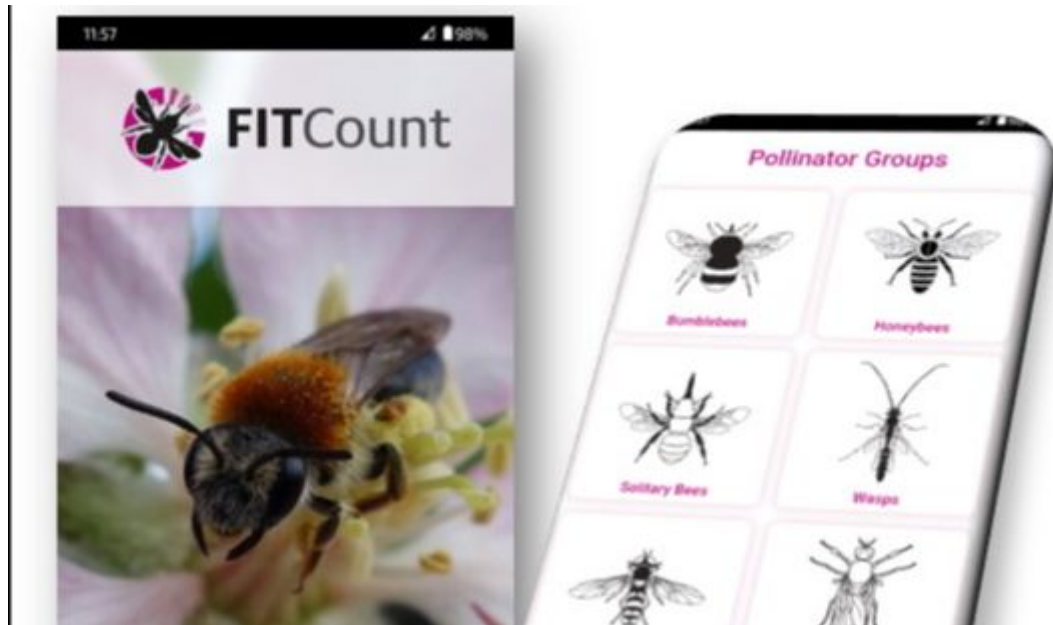
Requirements: None, suitable for Green Team/Biodiversity Champion and all employees (gardens). You don't need to identify the insects to species level, but only to tally within broad groups e.g., bumblebee, butterflies & moths, wasp, beetle. Target flowers include: Buttercup, Dandelion, Hawthorn, Bramble, Lavender, Hogweed, Knapweed, Ragwort, White Dead-nettle, White clover, Red Clover, Buddleja, Heather, Thistle, Ivy.

Time commitment: 10 minutes plus 5 minutes to input data online.

Difficulty level: Easy. No experience necessary.

Keen to track other biodiversity on your site(s)? Review other National Biodiversity Data Centre formal monitoring schemes with approved methodologies [HERE](#).

IDEA: If sponsoring a project e.g. an orchard for a school, consider including FIT Counts as part of the 'sponsorship package'.



[READ MORE](#)

IN OTHER NEWS: Green Flag for Parks pollinator award winners 2023

The Green Flag for Parks Awards are coordinated by An Taisce and recognise Ireland's best public parks and gardens. Within this competition, there is a special Pollinator Award, jointly run by An Taisce and the National Biodiversity Data Centre, assessing pollinator-friendly management of parks and community spaces against the recommendations of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

This year Green Flag Pollinator Awards went to:

- Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco & Activity Park, Co. Kerry (Overall winner and best Town Park)
- Castletown House & Parklands, Co. Kildare (Best Country Park/ Demesne)
- Ballyglunin Station, Co. Galway (Best Community Garden)

Three further parks were highly commended for their work: Tymon Park in South Dublin, Ballycroy Visitor Centre, Wild Nephin National Park in Co. Mayo, and St. Anne's Park in Dublin City.

Congratulations to the winners, they have all carried out a fantastic range of actions to support pollinators on their sites! The photograph below shows the overall winner - Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco & Activity Park.



READ MORE

Employees can subscribe to the main AIPP Newsletter via this link



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