

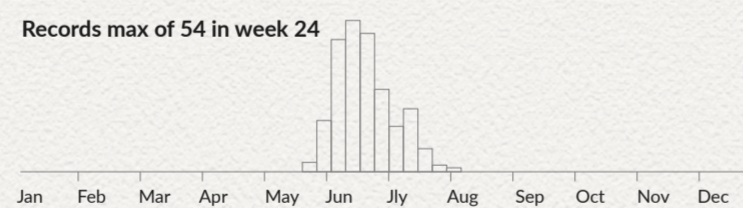
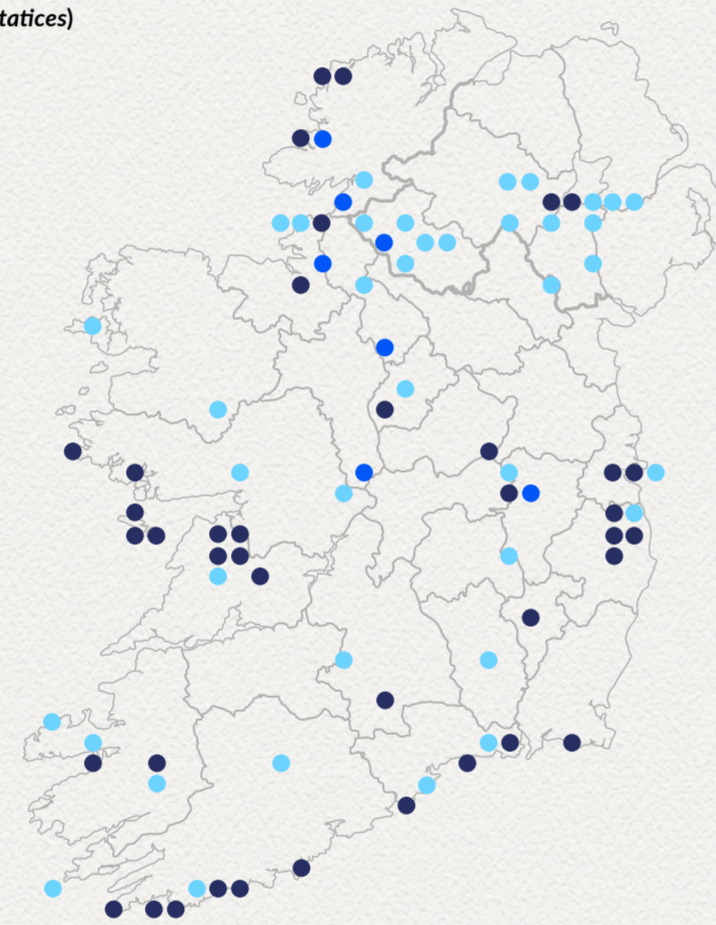


Protecting the rare Forester

The Forester (*Adscita statices*) is a fabulous green-blue, jewel-coloured day-flying moth that is on-the-wing from late May until the end of July. It can be found in a range of habitats from uncultivated damp grassland to fens and the margins of coastal wetlands. The larvae feed on Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) while the adults feed on the nectar of many species of flowering plant. It has undergone widespread decline because of habitat loss and change of land use.

The Forester moth is found across Europe. In Ireland, it is relatively widespread although very localised and is becoming increasingly restricted to coastal locations. In Northern Ireland, there is only one known breeding colony since 2020 although there is the possibility that it persists unrecorded in the western counties, particularly Fermanagh and Tyrone. The Forester is listed as Endangered in the Irish Macro-moths Red List (2016). It is listed as an NI Priority Species under the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

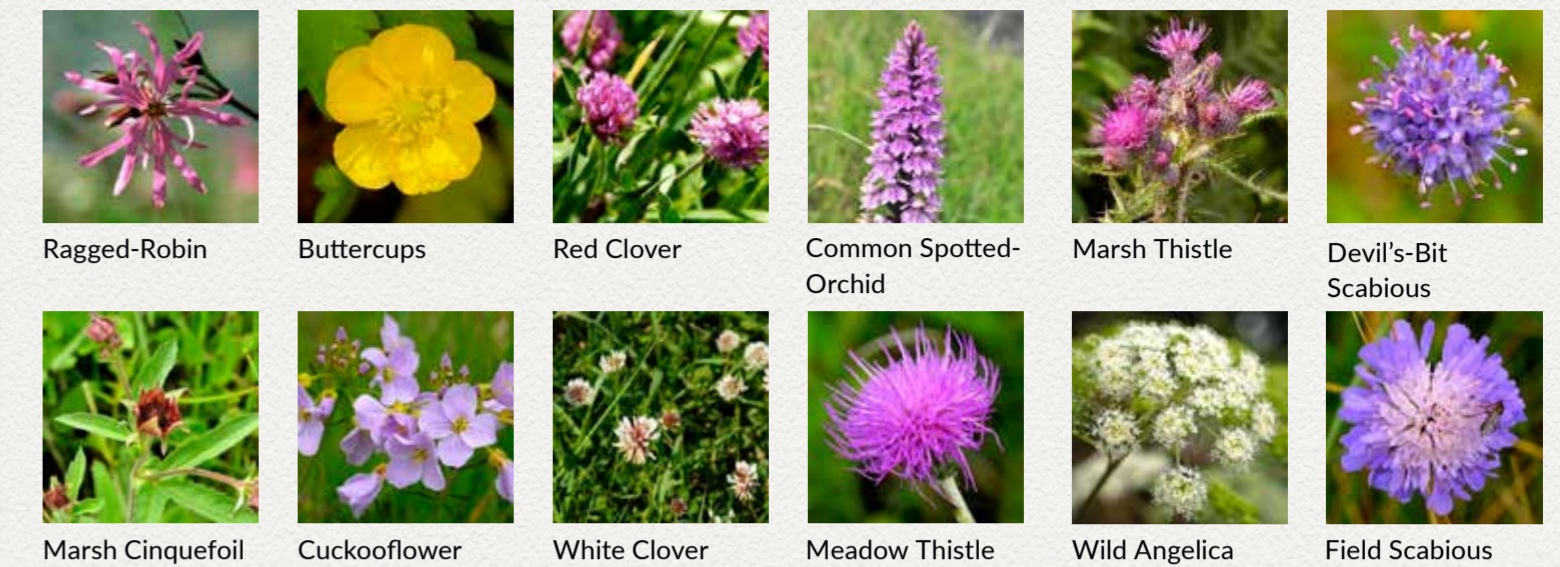
54,002 Forester (*Adscita statices*)
 Status: Scarce
 IUCN: Endangered
 Earliest: 25 May (1896)
 Latest: 04 Aug (2022)
 Last Recorded in 2023
 730 Individuals
 287 Records
 86 10km Squares
 ● 2010 to date
 ● 2000 to 2009
 ● Pre-2000
 Updated 29 Feb 2024



Identifying the Forester Moth

The Forester is a very striking and unmistakable day-flying moth. It's a relatively small species with metallic green-blue forewings, with a wing length of between 11-15mm. The males are slightly larger than the females and both sexes like to fly in warm sunny weather. It is rarely seen in large numbers and despite its eye-catching colouration, it is difficult to find and elusive.

Native plants that provide nectar for the adult Forester moths



Ecology & lifecycle of the Forester

The Forester has only one generation or brood per year. Adults can be seen from mid-May through to July, with a few individuals occasionally recorded in early August. Adults are more active in warm, sunny weather, though can sometimes be found on flowers when it is cloudy.

Once mated, the female will lay her eggs in small batches on the larval host plant, most commonly on Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) but also on Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex*

acetosella). At first the newly emerged larvae feed by mining tunnels in the leaves. Later when more developed, they feed externally on the lower leaves of the foodplant, initially by creating 'windows' in the leaves from beneath, and later by making holes right through the leaf. The larvae overwinter low down in the vegetation. They emerge in spring and continue to feed until May, when they pupate in a white spindle-shaped cocoon, spun near the ground, and concealed by vegetation.



Find out more

To find out more about the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, and to download a Guideline document 'Protecting rare pollinators: Forester', see

www.pollinators.ie/helping-endangered-pollinators/



What the Forester needs:

Suitable habitat

The Forester needs sufficient areas of damp meadows, fens, dune slacks, and the margins of coastal wetlands where its food plants grow.

Overwintering sites

Forester overwinters as a larva low-down in vegetation, typically in tussocky areas with a good thatch layer on the ground. The maintenance of a medium-tall sward with abundant Sorrel is essential for it to safely complete its lifecycle.

A supply of nectar for the adult moths

Adult moths need abundant nectar plants during the flight period, from mid-May through to the end of July.

