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## Business Supporters Newsletter: August 2024

Dear All

We are delighted to welcome the following companies/organisations as business supporters of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP): Deloitte, PM Group Ireland, CIE Tours, 20FIFTY Partners, B Braun Medical Ltd., Leonardo Hotels, Dutch Organic Bulbs, AV Star Systems Ltd.

### August & early Autumn

- [JOIN THE IN PERSON Wild Bee Festival 17-18 August 2024 in Galway](#)
- Review pollinator-friendly planting ideas for Autumn in the [Top Ten guide](#). Check [www.invasives.ie](http://www.invasives.ie) to verify an ornamental plant/shrub you may be considering has not moved to invasive species status e.g., *Rhododendron*, *Fuchsia*, *Butterfly Bush* (Buddleia) etc.

### Setting your 2025 Sustainability (incl. biodiversity/ nature) budget?

- Review the **sponsorship** table Page 24 of [Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#) guidelines and [companion resources](#).
- **Greener procurement:** review [Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#) for ideas and [companion resources](#) when specifying for projects.
- Review [Business Scoring for Pollinators Checklist \(Pages 33-35\)](#) to 'weight' actions for 2025.
- Considering actions around your [car park](#) and keen to [assess their effectiveness?](#)
- Consider simple geographic-based actions to support the [Large Carder Bee](#) (coastal areas), [Shrill Carder Bee - Roscommon, South Galway or The Burren](#)), [Great Yellow Bumblebee - Mullet Peninsula/Belmullet, Co. Mayo](#).

- Follow the [wind and solar guidelines](#) if considering for your business site.

## ESG//BIODIVERSITY-RELATED STAKEHOLDERS

- **Business for Biodiversity (BFBI)** - Keen to explore the emerging nature/biodiversity reporting structures and types of approaches to nature-positive, check out the national platform [Business for Biodiversity Ireland](#) which is [providing webinars, knowledge, learning](#) and Communities of Practice opportunities for businesses. For more information contact [lucy.gaffney@businessforbiodiversity.ie](mailto:lucy.gaffney@businessforbiodiversity.ie)
- **Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI)** - Seeking EESG guidance, [BITCI's Business Working Responsibly Mark \("The Mark"\)](#) is Ireland's *Environmental, Economic, Social and Governance* (EESG) standard. Third-party verified by the [National Standards Authority of Ireland](#), it is the standard for sustainability that fosters a culture of continuous improvement, ongoing accountability, and leadership.

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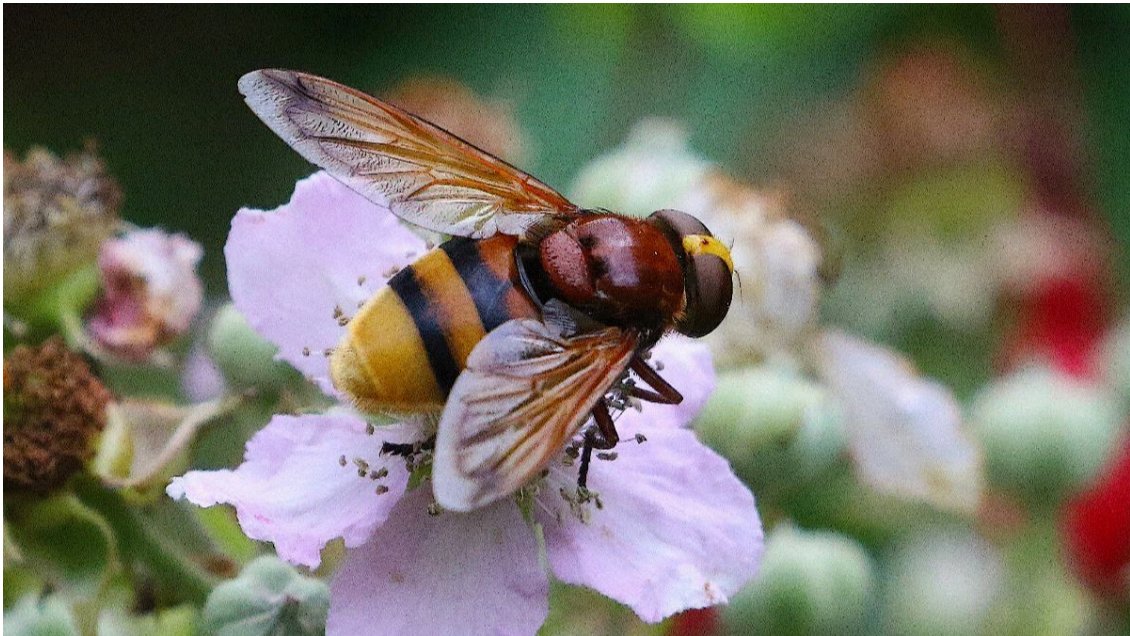
## POLLINATOR WATCH: can you find more populations of this rare hoverfly?

The Hornet Plumehorn (*Volucella zonaria*) established in Britain in the 1940s. It was recorded for the first time in Ireland in July 2023 at Churchtown in Co Wexford.

There are around 180 different species of hoverfly in Ireland. They are important pollinators of plants and crops, the second most important after wild bees. Many hoverflies are regarded as the 'Farmers friend' for an important reason, as some of their larvae have an appetite for aphids.

The Horney Plumehorn is a very large hoverfly and can be recognised by its yellow and black banded abdomen, where the upper band is chestnut in colour. If you think you have spotted it, please take a photograph, and send to us for confirmation.

In Britain, *Volucella zonaria* occurs in a range of habitats, but can be especially frequent in suburban settings with existing good populations of Common and German Wasps. The larvae develop as scavengers and larval predators in social wasp nests. In Britain, it occurs from May to November, but peaks in August. PIC: David McAdams.



**GUIDE hoverflies in the genus Volucella (pdf)**

**SUBMIT hoverfly sightings**

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**TO DO THIS MONTH: Check if your bee hotel is being used. If not, consider moving it to a new location**

Now is the perfect time to check if your bee box has been used this year. These boxes are mainly used by two types of solitary bees - leaf cutter bees and mason bees. Leaf cutter bees cut circular pieces of leaves and use them to line the cells in the nest. The Red Mason bee lines the cells of its nest with mud. Check if any of the cavities in your nest box are closed off with pieces of leaf or with mud. If there are all still empty, it hasn't been used this year.

In that case, it's worth storing it indoors over winter, and planning to move it to a new location next spring. The more flowers there are around your nest box, the more likely it is to be found and used. Remember, only a very small number of species use bee hotels. Creating areas of bare soil for mining solitary bees, will potentially help much greater numbers of species.



**Ideal size for a solitary bee nest box**

- You'll know your bee box/hotel is being used if the cavity entrances have been closed off with pieces of leaf or mud. If it's not being used, consider moving it to a new location
- They should be placed 1.5-2m off the ground in a sheltered south or east facing location
- They must be close to food sources – solitary bees don't fly far!
- These boxes only target a small number of our cavity nesting solitary bees. Don't forget that 80% of our solitary bees nest in bare ground which is even easier to create by scraping back vegetation!
- Larger bee boxes or insect hotels will attract predators and are more likely to harbour disease

## REVIEW how to designate nesting sites in 2025

### Don't mow just yet - August seeds feed next year's bees!

Our 'Don't Mow, Let it Grow' meadows are coming towards the end of their cycle for this year. For many of us with longer-flowering meadows, there can be a temptation to mow now as the meadow begins to look dead and less tidy.

Hold off if you can! From mid-August many plants will be producing seed, ready to drop into the soil for next year. If you give them a chance to do this, you'll reap the rewards next year. It's always good to try to leave the meadows into September before you mow for the year.

Note that local authorities, and those with large areas of meadows to manage, may begin cutting earlier for logistic reasons.

Remember, when you do cut - you should **remove the cuttings** to gradually reduce the soil fertility and give next year's wildflowers a chance to compete with the more dominant grass species. [1400 species of invertebrate are supported through reduced mowing as opposed to 40 species of insect through a 'pollinator mix'](#) (See comparison table Page 6 of [Creating and restoring meadows in local communities and in gardens](#)).



## GUIDE: Creating and restoring meadows in local communities and gardens (pdf)

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### ANNUAL REVIEW 2024: It's nearly that time of year again.

Thanks to all who made contact in the past few weeks re the AIPP business supporters Annual Review submission for 2024. The deadline is 30 September 2024.

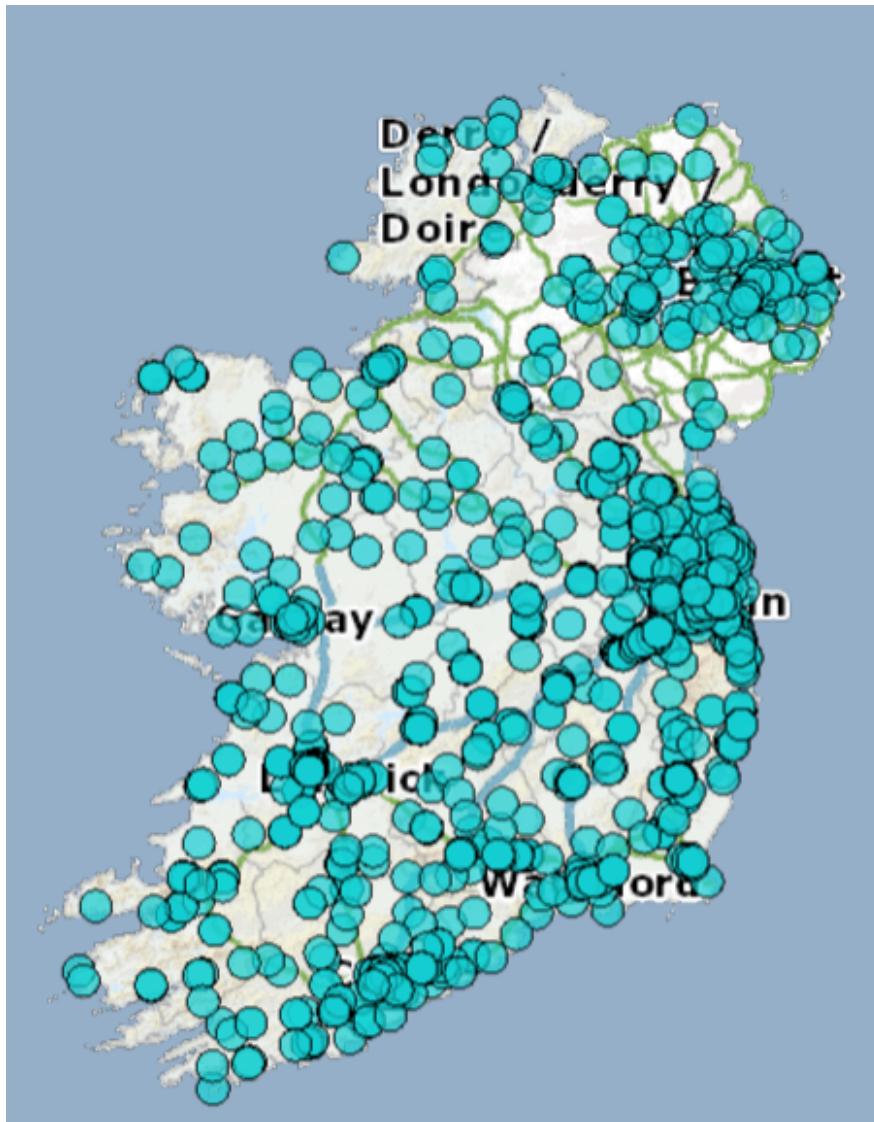
#### Written submissions (mandatory)

- This year the written submission will be via Microsoft Forms and the link will be issued within a separate AIPP newsletter and also available on [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie) in the next couple of weeks.
- The format is similar to previous years: Which on site actions did you take? Which communication and governance actions did you take? Which actions are you considering for 2025? This year it will be a total of 300 words across the three answers.
- We will ALSO ask you which actions you delivered with Tick Box answers required. These tick boxes align with the evidence based actions in [Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#). This will help AIPP present statistics on actions delivered by AIPP business supporters.

#### Mapping on Actions for Pollinators GIS (mandatory)

- In the meantime you can be mapping via [Actions for Pollinators GIS](#) in advance of the the written submission link.
- Remember if you are mapping the same action as last year please click SUBMIT otherwise the system won't register it.
- Do consider uploading your logo (Add Image), and include the date of mapping.
- If it is a garden on your business site please indicate the sector as 'Business' and add CompanyX (Garden) 2024 as the Site Name.

**Need any help mapping/accessing your GIS account?** Email Sarah Kelly [skelly@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:skelly@biodiversityireland.ie)



Map on Actions for Pollinators GIS

**REVIEW** previous years of AIPP Annual Review business supporters

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### **NEW BLOG: Revival of the Bee Orchid**

Irish meadow orchids are specially adapted to attract pollinators like bees, moths and butterflies and are characterized by their intricate and often colourful flowers. The Bee orchid *Ophrys apifera*, one of Ireland's rarer meadow orchids which belongs to the *Orchidaceae* family, typically flourishes in 'nutrient-poor', less managed, grassy areas, where competition from other plants, such as grasses is low.

Read this lovely blog from Sarah Kelly, our Agri-business officer, on how this beautiful native orchid has been appearing on business sites across the island as they change their grass (meadow) management to become more biodiversity friendly. PIC: John Fogarty



**BLOG: Bee orchids - 'the canary in the cage'**

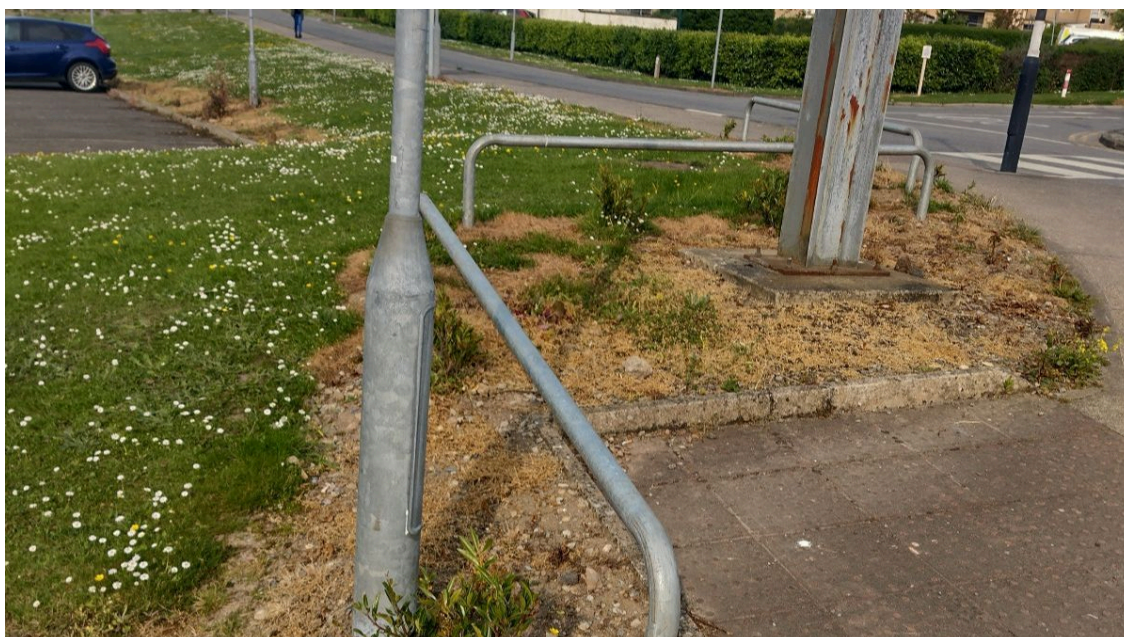
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**SHORT SURVEY: help us understand more and less  
helpful alternatives to herbicides**

We want to better share knowledge on the use of herbicide alternatives and wondered if you would tell us about your journey through this short survey?

If you've tried to move away from the use of Glyphosate or other herbicides, we'd be very grateful if you could share your experiences of alternatives using this Survey Monkey form.

Huge thanks to all those who have already shared information with us. The survey will remain open until mid-September.



## REVIEW & SUBMIT short herbicide survey

### TRACK ON YOUR BUSINESS SITE: Can your employees help by carrying out Friday FIT Count


Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts) are an important way that you can help us monitor pollinators.

- Download the free FIT Count App, watch a 50x50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit.
- You can carry out a FIT Count anywhere, and on any flower, but where you can, please use one of our 15 target flowers.
- In August, its especially useful to carry out FIT Counts on Knapweed or Ragwort.

In 2023, 673 validated FIT Counts were submitted by 126 different volunteers. The average number of insects per FIT Count was 9. Why not try one where you are to see how your site compares?

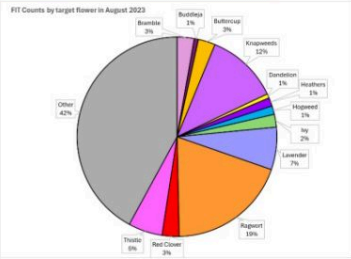
For those interested, the National Biodiversity Data Centre also runs a Garden Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, where you can count the number of butterflies visiting your garden.

**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.

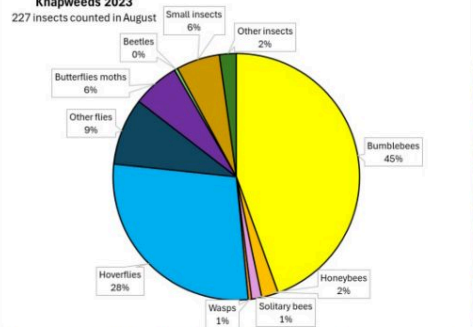




**August** Target Flower for August: This month please try to carry out FIT Counts on **Ragwort or Knapweed**. Other target flowers are Bramble, Buttercup, Buddleja, Heathers, Hogweed, Ivy, Lavender, Thistle, White Clover, Red Clover and White Dead-nettle.

**August 2023**  
 Total number of FIT Counts **145**  
 Average Insects/FIT Counts **14**



**Knapweeds 2023**  
 227 insects counted in August



Based on the 2023 data, bumblebees were by far the most common visitor to Knapweed in 2023

Bumblebee on Knapweed (Michelle Larkin)

FIT Count website & link to App

Garden Butterfly Monitoring Scheme

## POLLINATOR NOTICEBOARD: August 2024

RESOURCES - BLOGS - WEBINARS - EVENTS etc.

- [JOIN THE IN PERSON Wild Bee Festival 17-18 August 2024 in Galway](#)



- **Read Kate Chandler's** [Pollinators in August » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#).
- **Check out the new** [AIPP business supporters case studies](#).
- **Why you should consider an** [ALTERNATIVE action to honeybee hives](#).
- **Why you should consider an ALTERNATIVE action to sowing/gifting wildflower seed mixes.** **READ** [Dr Noeleen Smyth's article on the issues with wildflower seed mixes](#).
- What to choose after earthworks instead of a wildflower seed mix? [REVIEW Page 10 Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#)

### POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY IDEAS

- Identify AIPP pollinator-friendly [procurement \(tendering/specifying\) and sponsorship](#).
- How [pollinator-friendly is your car park](#) (Page 31)?
- Develop an [ecological corridor](#) with business neighbours in your business/technology park.
- Create *\*thematic\** places for pollinators - [sensory garden](#), [herb garden](#) or [moon garden](#) as part of a [biodiversity walking trail](#).
- **Geographic-based actions:** [Shrill Carder Bee - Roscommon, South Galway or The Burren](#)), [Great Yellow Bumblebee - Mullet Peninsula/Belmullet, Co. Mayo](#), and [Large Carder Bee - coastal areas across the island](#).

### POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- [Reduced mowing/ meadows](#). Establishing a meadow after construction works? [Review the advice on Page 10 of Businesses: actions to help pollinators](#).
- [Native hedgerows](#), [Nesting habitat](#), [Orchards](#), [Solar Farms](#) and [Wind Farms](#).
- [Top Ten Guide](#), [Pollinator-friendly planting code](#), [Planting/Management on New Developments](#)

### TRACK/MEASURE/MONITOR

- Engage your [value chain with AIPP evidence-based actions](#) and set simple SMART targets.
- (Self)-[Score your business](#) (Page 33-35) on its pollinator-friendly actions.
- MAP EARLY, MAP OFTEN - add pollinator-biodiversity actions to [Actions for Pollinators \(GIS\)](#).
- Identify which biodiversity is on or 'adjacent' to your site via [Biodiversity Maps](#).
- [Track and measure what's happening to pollinators on your site](#) in a scientifically robust manner e.g., FIT Counts (entry level App) and Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme (intermediate level).
- Map, track and manage invasive species via [www.invasives.ie](#)
- Healthy meadow indicators: [Track/record rare bee orchids on your site](#).

### TOOLS/CONTACTS

- Align social media messaging with the [AIPP abridged Comms Plan](#).
- Invite colleagues/Green Team to sign up to the [AIPP business supporters monthly newsletter](#).
- **Discover what's happening in your area** via [Action for Biodiversity](#) (e.g. Local BAPs) and your local [Biodiversity Officer](#).
- Seek support from Business in the Community Ireland with their [Business Working Responsibly Mark \(ESG\)](#) - including nature.
- Join with others on the ESG/CSRD biodiversity journey with [Business for Biodiversity Ireland \(BFBI\)](#).



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## Green Team, Biodiversity Champions, employees keen to receive the AIPP newsletter direct to their inbox?



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