One Hundred Tales of Hope

Stories of pollinator conservation from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan
www.pollinators.ie

Implementation coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre

An tIonad Náisiúnta Sonraí Bithéagsúlachta
National Biodiversity Data Centre

Foreword

It is a huge privilege to write this after ten years of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. When we drafted an initial idea and brought together a Steering Group to develop the first All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020, we had no idea what it would become.

We're old enough to have witnessed first-hand the slow disappearance of biodiversity over our own lifetimes. To younger generations, what we see now is their normal. If you don't know what has been lost, what incentive is there to act? We cannot forget what is at stake, and what an island that supports abundant pollinators should look like.

Many positive things have happened over the last five years. We've witnessed people not only taking action but thinking about how to join up with other actions in their local areas to create ecological corridors. A vibrant research community has developed in universities, with their work ensuring that the AIPP remains evidence based. Many new sectors have come on board to help, and the AIPP continues to be recognised as leading the way in Europe, with many other countries interested in replicating our approach. Thankfully, structured national pollinator monitoring schemes were funded and put in place from 2022, allowing us to properly assess the impact of the AIPP into the future.

Despite all the progress, we must face the fact that pollinators remain in difficulties. As we take stock after the first decade, there are many lessons and things we can do better. Seeds of change have been planted, but they need to be defended, nurtured and protected, and we need to plant many more.

To the Steering Group, we thank you for your skill, drive and endless enthusiasm in guiding this initiative, and for all the friendships that we have made. The island-wide approach has been a huge positive, allowing us to share experiences and ideas across jurisdictions and make much more progress than we could have individually.

Implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, who have been instrumental in its success. The National Biodiversity Data Centre is a programme of the Heritage Council. We are very grateful to the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, who provided funding and have made the second phase possible. We thank the excellent team of three AIPP Officers within the National Biodiversity Data Centre, who have engaged across sectors and supported partners in successfully delivering the current AIPP.

We've also been incredibly fortunate. Many times, over the last ten years, people have crossed paths with the AIPP at a time when we've needed them most – from the Steering Group members, to project officers, to local champions, to those with new ideas they've been willing to share, and for that we are very grateful.

The new EU Nature Restoration Regulation calls on Member States to improve pollinator diversity and reverse the decline of pollinator populations by 2030 and thereafter achieve an increasing trend. This is a hugely ambitious target for any jurisdiction, but thanks to the AIPP we have a fighting chance. The AIPP was always intended to be a journey towards a better long-term future for our insect populations, and together with the Steering Group we are developing a more ambitious Plan for 2026-2030.

Steering and overseeing a plan is the easy bit. It's the actions on the ground that make the difference. Often, helping biodiversity calls on us to manage land in a different way than we're used to, sometimes in the face of local opposition. The people who have implemented changes across the island are the ones who deserve all the credit. It has been shown in every sector and in every corner of this island, people do care and that we can come together to make changes for the better. This booklet showcases a tiny fraction of the thousands of people who have made the AIPP 2021-2025 a reality.

Helping pollinators isn't just about returning biodiversity and the financial, climate, health and other benefits it brings. It creates social connections as we work together, and it returns inspiration as we create spaces where can stop for a moment and see the wonder and beauty of nature in our daily lives.

Pollinators are in a much better position than they were ten years ago, but the AIPP will ultimately only be a success if in 10, 20 and hundreds of years from now, this island is buzzing with healthy honey bees and we have diverse, healthy and stable wild pollinator populations, providing us with the services on which we are so dependent. By continuing to work together, we can make this a reality.

Dr Úna FitzPatrick
(National Biodiversity Data Centre)

Prof. Jane Stout
(Trinity College Dublin).
All-Ireland Pollinator Plan founders

Introduction

Across the island of Ireland, pollinators are in decline. We have over 100 wild bee species on our island, with one third threatened with extinction. This is largely due to a loss of habitat like species-rich grassland, native hedgerows and trees – vital sources of pollen, nectar, and shelter - as well as pests and diseases, pesticides, and climate change.

Though small, pollinating insects are essential for the health of our environment and the success of industries such as agriculture and food production. They are worth millions to our economy and help pollinate many fruits and vegetables we grow at home.

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan was established in 2015 to tackle pollinator declines, becoming one of the first of its kind in Europe. It is a voluntary framework bringing together different sectors across the island to create a landscape where pollinators can survive and thrive. As a shared plan of action, it is about working strategically and cohesively, so that collectively we can take steps to reverse pollinator losses and help restore populations to healthy levels. Implementation of the AIPP is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, and it has an island-wide steering group who provide oversight.

The first phase of the AIPP achieved widespread support from over 100 governmental and non-governmental organisations. It was a shining example of effective North-South cooperation, with both jurisdictions coming together to work within a common framework. As a result of this collaboration, all 81 actions were achieved. The second phase of the AIPP (2021-2025) was even more ambitious, building on the success of the first phase with 186 actions across 6 objectives:

1. Making farmland pollinator friendly
2. Making public land pollinator friendly
3. Making private land pollinator friendly
4. All-Ireland Honeybee Strategy
5. Conserving rare pollinators
6. Strategic coordination of the Plan

Within each objective, targets were set and actions identified to help achieve it. Responsibility for delivering the 186 actions is shared among the supporting organisations.

From the beginning, a core ethos of the AIPP has been about explaining what wild pollinators need, and what simple, cost effective and evidence-based actions each sector can take to help. These are all freely available at www.pollinators.ie

The past five years have seen the AIPP go from strength to strength. Support has grown across all sectors, from local authorities to businesses, farmers to gardeners, community groups to schools, sports clubs, faith communities, and individuals. Since 2023, all 42 local authorities and councils on the island of Ireland have signed up as Council Partners to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, voluntarily agreeing to consider the AIPP's recommendations when developing policies, plans, and management decisions. Their land covers thousands of hectares of parks, urban green spaces, roundabouts, roadside verges, and residential areas and has led to innovative work to tackle challenges like large-scale meadow management and pesticide reduction. Transport Authorities across the island have similarly embraced the Plan and made changes to our road, rail and waterway networks to better support pollinators.

Farmers have embraced pollinator-friendly activities. Significantly, a new pollinator-friendly scoring system has been created for farms, a result of the 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators' EIP research project (National Biodiversity Data Centre, 2019-2023). New online training courses have developed, and more farmers are managing their land to protect native flowering hedgerows, leading to benefits for biodiversity.

The AIPP's Business Supporter network has continued to grow, with over 400 businesses from a range of sectors. Ranging from small independent businesses to large corporates, the AIPP encourages evidence-based actions across this network, encouraging pollinator-friendly actions on their land, through staff activities and sponsorship.

And our local communities have transformed. All over the island of Ireland, manicured green spaces are now mini meadows. Close-cropped hedgerows now burst with spring blossom. Pesticide-drenched borders are now sunny celebrations of Dandelions. At the heart of this work, passionate volunteers are transforming the way their landscapes are managed for pollinators and for people. Some of these groups have won prizes for their hard work, recognised in special pollinator awards. Group Water Schemes, GAA Clubs, healthcare sites and churches are all managing land for biodiversity through national environmental schemes. Schools are transforming unused grassy areas into blooming meadows, and outdoor classrooms provide fertile spaces for learning and biodiversity. Even our most urban areas are creating pollinator pitstops for city-dwelling pollinators with containers and roundabouts full of nectar-rich plants, and community gardens bursting with nature in our biggest cities.

We've also worked to highlight the plight of our most threatened pollinator species from the Large Carder Bumblebee to the Forester Moth. One of the success stories of this phase has been the number of local communities who have adopted the Large Carder Bumblebee and have come together to create new habitats for this rare bee in their local areas.

We would like to thank our funders, without whom the second phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan could not have happened. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine funded our Farmland Pollinator Officer position, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service funded our Communities and Engagement Pollinator Officer. The Business Pollinator Officer was co-funded by Bord Bia and the National Parks and Wildlife Service from 2021-2023, and by the National Biodiversity Data Centre in 2024-2025. We also express our thanks to the Heritage Council, which provides oversight of the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

But the biggest thank you must go to every single person who has taken action for pollinators and embraced our recommendations over the past five years. The success of the AIPP now and in the future, is entirely down to you. We still have a long way to go before our landscape is fully pollinator-friendly, and the next phase of the AIPP will be even more ambitious, bringing us ever closer to our goal. But it is also important to celebrate success and acknowledge how far we have come. This booklet, published to mark the end of the second phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, celebrates the positive changes already made by so many, and gives us hope for the future.

Pollinator numbers may still be in decline, but local populations are increasing where actions are being taken to help them. If we have learned anything over the past five years, it is this: what we are doing is working - we just need to do more of it.

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Team, National Biodiversity Data Centre
Dr Úna FitzPatrick
Kate Chandler
Sarah Kelly
Ruth Wilson

Content

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan team: promoting pollinator-friendly actions

The National Biodiversity Data Centre oversees implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Within the Centre, the 2021-2025 Plan was managed by Úna FitzPatrick who oversaw the work of a team of three project officers: Kate Chandler (Communities and Engagement Officer), Ruth Wison (Farmland Officer), and Sarah Kelly (Business Officer). An all-island Steering Group provided oversight and advice on the Plan. We thank them all sincerely for their continual enthusiasm and support. It is important to acknowledge that, while the team provides a critical role in communicating the best evidence-based actions and helping share knowledge across all sectors, it is the people on the ground who make the real changes. We thank the thousands of people, across all sectors, who have changed the way they manage land to help pollinators, often in the face of local opposition: the success of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is entirely down to you.

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New pollinator resources

One of the goals of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is to promote evidence-based actions to different sectors. Between 2021 and 2025, we published 60 new resources to help people learn more about pollinators and how to help them. These included how-to guidelines, rare species guides, videos and online courses. They covered a wide range of topics: meadow management, pollinator-friendly actions for schools, rainwater planters, sensory gardens, celebrating hedgerows and reducing pesticides. Two of these resources: Businesses: Actions to Help Pollinators and Local Communities: Actions to Help Pollinators were updated from Phase 1, with new scoring systems added to help track progress. All resources are available to download for free from pollinators.ie.

New online courses for schools and community groups

The National Biodiversity Data Centre launched two free online courses in Phase 2 of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. **Managing School Grounds for Biodiversity** is aimed at school caretakers and groundskeepers and was developed in collaboration with the Department of Education. As well as tips on pesticide alternatives, plant lists and biodiversity-friendly mowing, the course includes practical advice on how to build raised beds, make a pollinator-friendly rainwater planter, plant native trees and grow fruits and vegetables. **Managing Local Communities for Pollinators** is aimed at local community groups who want to transform their area for biodiversity and draws on the existing AIPP community guidelines to provide practical tips for communities of all sizes, rural and urban. Hundreds of people have enrolled on these courses so far, evidence of how much interest there is in transforming our landscapes for pollinators.

Find out more about this courses at learn.biodiversityireland.ie

Supporter network continues to grow

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan maintains a 'Supporter network' of community groups, charities and organisations who endorse the AIPP and agree to take specific actions on their sites. There are currently 87 members of the Supporter network including schools, universities, community groups, group water schemes and national bodies. Supporters submit voluntary reports on their actions for pollinators every year, revealing a wide range of work ranging from citizen science to sensitive site management. The diversity of this group, covering many different sectors, shows how support for pollinators is becoming embedded in all corners of our society.

Beekeeping associations working together

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 brought together a Honey Bee Strategy Steering Group. The group was made up of representatives from Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations, Irish Beekeepers' Association CLG, the Institute of Northern Ireland Beekeepers, the Ulster Beekeepers Association, the Native Irish Honey Bee Society, the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine. It proved to be a valuable forum to collectively discuss issues around honey bee health and future risks from pests and pathogens such as Foulbrood or Asian Hornet. *Apis mellifera mellifera* is the subspecies of the Western Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) that would have naturally occurred in Ireland. Today across the island, beekeepers keep various subspecies of the Western Honey Bee, and these can hybridise. The Native Irish Honey Bee Society was established to help preserve *Apis mellifera mellifera* and promote its conservation. Beekeeping associations have continued to promote the AIPP and evidence-based actions to their members.

An internationally recognised Pollinator Plan

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan was one of the world's first national strategies taking a unique, holistic approach to engage all of society on pollinator conservation. Since its establishment in 2015, the AIPP has attracted global recognition and has advised people in many countries across the EU and further afield who want to replicate our approach. The ethos of the AIPP is to be entirely open to sharing knowledge, expertise and resources for others to adapt and use. The AIPP was founded by Dr Úna FitzPatrick (National Biodiversity Data Centre) and Professor Jane Stout (Trinity College Dublin). In 2022, Úna was awarded The Royal Entomological Society Insect Conservation Award, an international award that recognises outstanding contribution to the conservation of insects. In 2024, Jane was appointed President of the Royal Entomological Society.

Plean Bee documentary tells the story of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

In 2021, an Irish language documentary, *Plean Bee*, explored the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan's efforts to reverse pollinator declines across the island of Ireland. It was screened on World Bee Day (20th May) by TG4 and is still available on their player. Produced by Derry filmmaker Deaglán Ó Mocháin, *Plean Bee* includes stunning close-up footage of native pollinators and tells the story of how the AIPP has made great strides towards reversing declines by engaging with Irish society. It features gardeners, farmers, community and sports groups, businesses, councils and other landowners who, through their actions, have made Ireland more pollinator friendly. In 2021, *Plean Bee* was nominated for TV Show of the Year by Gradaim Chumarsáide an Oireachtais.

World Bee Day: An annual celebration of bees

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan celebrates World Bee Day on the 20th May every year. This international celebration is a chance to spread the word about the importance of bees and how we can help them. Between 2021 and 2025, the AIPP marked World Bee Day by releasing new resources including rare species guidelines, video talks, online courses, and a suite of resources celebrating native meadows and their value to pollinators.

No Mow May campaign in collaboration with An Post

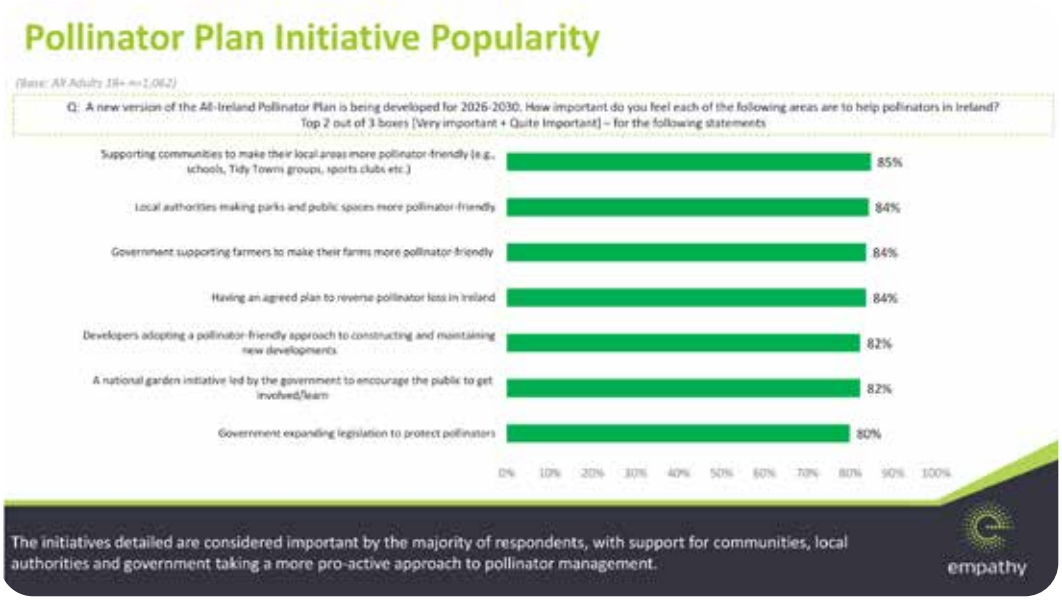
In 2023, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan partnered with An Post on a nationwide campaign for No Mow May. 'Join the buzz to save the bees' postcards were distributed to 2.3 million homes in the Republic of Ireland, inviting everyone to put away the lawnmower during May to let native wildflowers grow. The campaign had a huge response, with significant media coverage and more people than ever taking part in No Mow May. It also helped raise awareness of pollinator-friendly actions generally, with a surge in visits to the AIPP website and social media channels.

Wild Bee Festivals take place every year

The Wild Bee Festival is an annual event coordinated by the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, aiming to raise awareness of pollinators in local communities. The first Wild Bee Festival took place in Skerries in 2022 in collaboration with Fingal County Council and Sustainable Skerries. Since then, the festival has gone from strength to strength, visiting different parts of the island with visits to Tralee in Co. Kerry (2023), Galway City (2024), and Abbeyleix in Co. Laois (2025). The festival is a highlight of the year, featuring talks, walks and workshops with a strong focus on local communities. Skerries and Tralee have kept the buzz going by holding their own annual Wild Bee Festivals. We would love to see more wild bee festivals popping up all around the country!

The public want more pollinator conservation!

In April 2025, the National Biodiversity Data Centre commissioned a national poll within the Republic of Ireland. Reaching a representative spread of 1,062 adults, the poll was developed in collaboration with qualitative researcher Christine Mullan-Jensen and run by research company Empathy. The poll found that 47% of people are currently taking action to protect pollinators in Ireland, and 67% want to learn more about the AIPP. It also revealed which actions people are already taking, or are willing to take, in their gardens. The most popular action was reducing or eliminating the use of chemicals (76%), followed by planting pollinator-friendly flowers (75%), and reducing mowing to encourage wildflowers (68%). A massive 97% of the public think that small actions in every garden would collectively impact Ireland's biodiversity. Importantly, 84% of the public feel that having an official plan is important for reversing pollinator loss. Over 80% of those surveyed also support a range of other government actions to help pollinators. The results of the poll reveal enormous public support for pollinator conservation, both at the individual and national levels.



Pollinator-friendly farms - a new scoring system

From 2019-2023, the National Biodiversity Data Centre was privileged to work with an amazing group of 40 farmers based around Co. Kildare on a research project called 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators'. Managed by Saorla Kavanagh, it was supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine through European Innovation Partnership funding. In collaboration with the farmers, we developed an evidence-based scoring system to assess a farm's pollinator-friendly performance. The scoring system also helped identify simple actions to improve the score without impacting productivity. Since the project ended, we've simplified the scoring system, making it an easy-to-use tool for farmers. Based on management decisions around hedgerows, meadows, pesticide use, and non-farmed areas, a farm can be scored out of 100. A farm scoring over 50 is supporting pollinators. We hope to promote this to all farmers in the new All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2026-2030.

Farmers monitoring moths

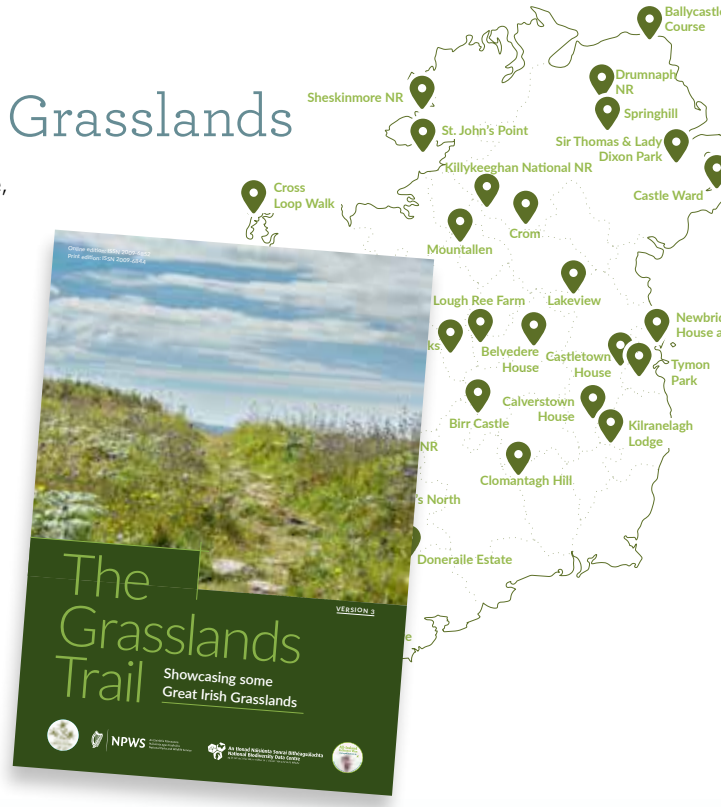
Armed with plastic buckets sporting LED lights, and sensors to turn on in the dark, farmers have been working with the National Biodiversity Data Centre to count moths on their farmland. Thanks to funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, two successful pilots in Kildare (2022) and Donegal (2023), have led to the Farmer Moth Monitoring Project, which is now being rolled out nationally. Once every fortnight from April to September, farmers put out a bucket trap before it gets dark. Moths are attracted to light and will investigate the bucket trap. In the morning, the farmers photograph any moths inside before releasing them unharmed. The photos are sent to the NBDC who identify each moth and track the data. Moths are extremely important nocturnal pollinators. They are in trouble due to habitat loss, but also through light pollution. In 2023, the AIPP was delighted to work with the Mayo Dark Sky Park and MothsIreland to produce an evidence-based guide to helping moths in communities and gardens.

Protecting nature at a Wexford farm

The Poole family look after a 103-acre farm in Wexford. They believe that farming and nature go hand in hand and have allocated more than 20% of their farm space for biodiversity. Their extensive mature hedgerows are cut every three years, allowing a variety of native plants to thrive like Hawthorn and Holly. A two-metre margin is left at the base of the hedgerow, creating a food source for pollinators and bumblebee nesting habitat in tussocky grass. They are just one example of the many farmers who have embraced nature, and have hedgerows bursting with insects, birds and wildlife.

Celebrating Great Irish Grasslands

In collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the AIPP launched an initiative to celebrate semi-natural grasslands. The 'Grasslands Trail' is a booklet detailing a network of public and private grasslands spread across the island of Ireland. All the sites are managed sensitively with nature conservation and grassland diversity in mind. Each site has a profile in the Grasslands Trail booklet to give a flavour of its unique grassland, from orchids to rare breed cattle, small patches of habitat to vast meadows. You can visit some sites to experience up close what great Irish grasslands should look like. There are currently 30 sites in the Grasslands Trail, of which 11 are farmland meadows or pastures. It's hard to overstate the importance of this habitat for pollinators and the extent of its loss in Ireland. This initiative is intended to raise the profile of semi-natural grasslands and celebrate the people who maintain these important sites.



New online courses for farmers

In 2024 and 2025, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan launched two new online courses for the pollinator-friendly management of farmland. '**Pollinator-friendly Farming**' and '**Farmland Pollinator-friendly Hedgerows**' explain in detail how farmers can protect and enhance important habitats like native hedgerows and field margins for the benefit of pollinators and the farm. Since launching, over 640 people have enrolled on these courses. Both courses were supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Five years of the Festival of Farmland Biodiversity

The Festival of Farmland Biodiversity is a virtual celebration, organised by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, that takes place every May to encourage biodiversity-friendly actions on farmland. The festival has a particular focus on raising awareness of protecting native flowering hedgerows, and the types of species that they support. As well as sharing farmer-written blogs, biodiversity surveys and running webinars and an online photo competition, past festivals have involved guided walks of farmland where pollinator and biodiversity-friendly actions have taken place. The Festival began in 2021, and encourages farmers and growers, organisations and businesses to participate.

Kildare farmers turn to natural pest control

Tillage farmers Michael and Norman Dunne in in Owenstown, Maynooth, have a 400-acre farm growing winter wheat, beans, spring barley, oats and spring wheat. They have a small stream that runs through the farm with a wonderful wetland margin filled with naturally-occurring native plants such as Greater willowherb, Meadowsweet and Bramble. The farm no longer uses insecticides to treat aphids, having moved to a regenerative agriculture system. This has resulted in increased soil fertility, biodiversity, water retention and cleanliness and soil carbon sequestration. The Dunnes save their own seed and inoculate the seed with biological feeds and root enhancing natural products. This approach, along with encouraging natural pest control insects like hoverflies, parasitic wasps and ladybirds, has allowed this tillage farm to go insecticide free. Many other farmers are also exploring how to reduce or eliminate their use of pesticides.

Beef and tillage farmers go organic in Offaly

Ken Gill runs an organic beef and tillage farm in Co. Offaly. He converted to organic practices in 2015 and has been impressed with the financial and production benefits. Ken values the native species-rich hedgerows on the farm, especially as shelter for the cattle and the grass. The hedgerows were previously kept well-trimmed but are now left to grow high and wide. Ken still makes sure the hedgerows are maintained on a 3-year rotation to keep a wide hedge base. Under the ACRES agri-environment scheme he has planted another 500m of new native species-rich hedgerows. 5,600 organic farmers are currently participating in DAFM Organic Farming Scheme, with 248,000 ha of land being farmed organically. This represents a tri-fold increase since 2020.

All councils sign up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

As of April 2023, all 42 councils on the island of Ireland have signed up as Council Partners to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. By becoming Council Partners, councils voluntarily agree to consider the recommendations of the AIPP when developing their policies, plans, and management decisions. Council-managed land includes thousands of hectares of parks, urban green spaces, roundabouts and roadside verges. This commitment by every local authority marked a significant milestone in transforming our landscape for pollinators. All councils now submit a mandatory annual report on their activities for pollinators, which reveal a huge variety of actions including creating large areas of naturally restored meadow, pesticide reduction plans, and community education and engagement.

Pollinator-friendly parks celebrated in Green Flag Pollinator Awards

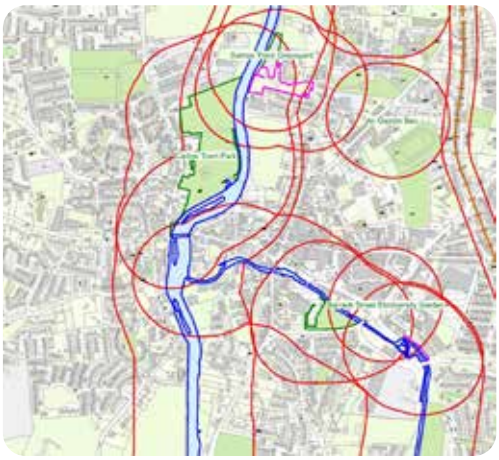
Green Flag Pollinator Awards for parks are now run annually across the island. These awards reward and encourage pollinator-friendly actions in parks. The Green Flag Award is the international quality benchmark for public green spaces. In Northern Ireland, the Green Flag Pollinator Award is administered by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and includes awards for community gardens and council sites. In the Republic of Ireland, the Pollinator Award is jointly run by An Taisce Environmental Education and the National Biodiversity Data Centre, scoring the pollinator-friendly management of town parks, country parks, walled gardens and community spaces against the recommendations of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Marvellous meadows in South Dublin

South Dublin County Council created their own Pollinator Plan 2021-2025. Their Plan included an ambitious target of creating 139 hectares of meadows in various sites across South Dublin. As of 2025, the council is managing 190 hectares of long-flowering meadow across 198 sites, and 20 hectares of short-flowering meadow across 53 sites. This totals an impressive 210 hectares of meadows mapped and managed, exceeding their target by over 50%.

South Dublin County Council have a cut-and-collect framework in place. Their meadows are cut and lifted by a contractor and the grass cuttings are used as fodder. Local native wildflower seed is collected from the meadows using brush harvesting and sown in less established sites. Ongoing surveys and monitoring shows year-on-year improvements in the council's pollinator-friendly meadows.

Carlow's Pollinator Foraging Network



In April 2023, Carlow County Council adopted their County Carlow Green Infrastructure Strategy, which contained a novel approach to managing urban pollinator foraging networks. The approach is based on the policy: 'No pollinator in County Carlow's towns and villages will have to travel more than 200 metres in order to find a food source (green space of a minimum size, that is managed for biodiversity).' This principle resulted in the production of a pollinator foraging map identifying areas of food and shelter for pollinators. This was trialed in Carlow town, with a view to replicating it in all other towns and villages. The map has allowed the council to see the true extent of pollinator-friendly habitat, while also prioritizing filling the gaps and creating a joined up network of areas that are managed for pollinators, rather than creating 'islands' of biodiversity.

Derry City & Strabane's Pollinator Plan

Derry City & Strabane District Council launched their own Pollinator Plan for 2021 – 2025. As part of this, the council worked on a knowledge exchange project with Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council to extend the 'Don't Mow Let It Grow' initiative to the Derry & Strabane District. As a result of this work, the council created 30 hectares of wildflower meadows across 34 parks and cemetery sites. Although, the primary benefit of this change in grassland management is for pollinators, there are secondary benefits. Reducing grass cutting from an average of 15 times a year to only once a year has reduced the council's carbon emissions by 2 tonnes per annum.

Belfast's Buzzing

A two-year partnership project between Buglife, Belfast City Council, the National Trust and other organisations has restored 16 hectares of wildflower habitat across public sites in Belfast. This has increased the area of available flower rich habitat for pollinating insects, creating habitat corridors and stepping-stones which are helping insects move across the urban landscape. Activities have included sowing locally sourced seed from nearby meadows, sowing Yellow Rattle to help suppress grass growth, and scything with community volunteers. This work has supported threatened species including the vulnerable Buff Mining Bee (*Andrena nigroaenea*) and the endangered Red-tailed Cuckoo-bee (*Bombus rupestris*).

Residential meadows in Galway City

Galway City Council have worked with local residents to transform closely-cropped grass into thriving meadows. The council maintains 13.76 hectares under a 'no mow' policy in the open spaces around the city and has a policy to expand the meadow areas every year. The residential meadows are performing beyond expectations, with more wildflowers appearing every year. The trend is catching on, and in some areas, these activities are being adopted by neighbouring communities who want to see a wildflower meadow established in their open space. As well as helping pollinators, these residential meadows have had health and wellbeing benefits for Galway City residents, providing green and healthy open spaces to enjoy.

Seed Harvesting in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council conduct large-scale seed harvesting in local meadows and areas of conservation grazing. The seed is then stored and used locally for projects and to create more wildflower meadows. The locally-sourced seeds are also distributed to local communities and businesses. Developers in the county are required to re-use local soil and seed and incorporate natural meadows and pollinator initiatives in their development design.

Leaving the Long Grass Grow in Kilkenny

In 2023, Kilkenny County Council ran 'Leave the Long Grass Grow', a Creative Ireland funded project in collaboration with Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, highlighting the importance of native hedgerows and leaving wild areas for nature. The project combined biodiversity action with artistic workshops reflecting on and celebrating Kilkenny's biodiversity. Other events included a panel discussion on the importance of native plants in maintaining healthy ecosystems, and workshops where local people were encouraged to take part in helping pollinators. Leave the Long Grass Grow is a great example of how pollinator conservation can be creative, involving people with different interests and hobbies.

Native Trees Instead of Tees in Lisburn

Since 2024, participants in Lisburn and Castlereagh's annual half marathon have been given a choice between a T-shirt and having a new native tree planted in McIlroy Park, Lisburn. The scheme has been a success, and a total of 1,500 native species will be planted within McIlroy Park by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

Protecting historic graveyards in Offaly

Historic graveyards are hugely valuable for biodiversity due to low levels of human activity and minimal intervention over many years. These areas can be havens for pollinators, with nectar-rich wildflowers and bare earth for mining bee nesting. Offaly County Council are recognizing and caring for these important spaces by reducing mowing at six medieval burial grounds in Co. Offaly. This will help native wildflowers grow, enhancing and respecting these historic spaces. Each site has its own sensitive management plan, with details on mowing schedules, machinery used, and any signage present.

Trees and bee hotels in Roscommon

Roscommon County Council is running several pollinator conservation projects in collaboration with Ballyleague Men's Shed. These include an 'Orchards Perfect for Pollinators' & 'Planting Trees for Pollinators' programme, which was supported by the Roscommon County Council Housing Accommodation Caretaker. With the support of local community groups, bee hotels built by the Men's Shed have been put up around the county, accompanied by signage so the nesting habitats can also be used as educational tools.

Sligo Is Buzzing radio campaign

In May 2023, Sligo County Council ran a four-week radio campaign to raise awareness of pollinators and actions that people can take to help them. Many local authorities ran similar radio campaigns, which featured interviews on biodiversity issues, and over 100 adverts and infomercials on local radio stations. Topics included 'don't mow let it grow', hedgerows, pollinator-friendly herbs, reducing pesticide use, and trees for pollinators.

Streamstown Pollinator Trail

In 2025, Westmeath County Council launched a new Pollinator walking trail in Streamstown along the Old Rail Trail Greenway, with the support of Streamstown Tidy Village. The trail highlights the vital role bees play in our environment and how we can help protect them, taking in various pollinator-friendly habitats along the route and supported by posts with illustrations of native pollinators. QR codes link to websites where people can find out more about bees in Ireland and how they can help them at home.

ESB transform sites for pollinators

"Thanks to our engagement with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, ESB is endeavouring to make pollinator action a keystone of our strategic approach to biodiversity. During this phase of the AIPP, ESB Networks published its first Biodiversity Strategy 'Networks for Nature'. This includes an action to support management practices at relevant sites to improve nectar resources for pollinators, whilst promoting the retention of pollinator-friendly habitats and the development of physical features which support them. This has been exemplified by pro-pollinator landscape management activities at the National Training Centre in Portlaoise. Large areas of the expansive training field are now managed as long-flowering meadows, accompanied by AIPP informative signage for our staff, apprentices and visitors. ESB's Sustainable Leadership Plan, published in 2024, presents our goal to be 'nature positive' by 2030. We have set ourselves the target of implementing pollinator action plans for all our operational sites."
– Geoff Hamilton, ESB.

Gas Networks Ireland supports biodiversity

"Gas Networks Ireland has developed an ambitious Biodiversity Action Plan and has embedded biodiversity in our Sustainability Strategy. We have created a network of pollinator-friendly areas across our above-ground installations and offices by reducing grass cutting, maintaining hedgerow and stone walls, creating bee banks and planting over 21,000 native Irish trees over the last five years, as well as orchards in two of our offices. We have conducted baseline biodiversity surveys at 54 sites, with landscaping plans created for each site. We are implementing recommendations to improve and create habitats on-site. We have developed 'Landscaping for Biodiversity Guidelines' for Gas Networks Ireland sites, and the 'Carbon TreeSearch Tool' and 'Compensatory Habitat Design Tool' to use scientific calculations to reduce impacts of development on biodiversity. Through sponsorship, we support the annual biodiversity booklet in the Irish Examiner, biodiversity murals in primary schools and annual biodiversity events and training for staff and families."
- Ronan Walsh, Gas Networks Ireland

Helping biodiversity across Ireland's transport network

"Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is proud to support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, embedding biodiversity and pollinator friendly practices across Ireland's transport network. Our new projects ensure that pollinators are considered at the project planning and design stage. For example, in the Luas Finglas project we have ensured that pollinator-friendly planting has been prioritized in our landscape strategy. Our landscaping standards and guidelines prioritize pollinator-friendly planting, and we work closely with contractors to ensure maintenance practices protect and enhance biodiversity. Along our motorways, changes in mowing in line with the AIPP have resulted in the emergence of swathes of native wildflowers such as Primroses and Cuckooflowers. TII is committed to the sustainable stewardship of landscapes associated with transport infrastructure, integrating biodiversity considerations into design, construction, and ongoing maintenance."

- Eimear Fox, Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Department for Infrastructure Northern Ireland improve landscape for pollinators

The Department for Infrastructure NI have taken many significant actions to improve the land they manage for pollinators in Northern Ireland, including a Roadside Verge Management Policy developed in partnership with Ulster Wildlife which has reduced mowing frequency to allow native flora to flourish. They have also embedded biodiversity obligations in contracts for major schemes, with required planting of native trees and hedges. They have also trialled non-chemical weed control methods including mechanical, biological, and manual techniques, and have delivered training for staff on pollinator-friendly land management.

Pollinator-friendly railways and stations

Iarnród Éireann and Translink have done significant work to improve their land for pollinators. In the Republic of Ireland, Iarnród Éireann's work has included creating solitary bee nesting habitat at Castlebar Station, installing pollinator-friendly plant boxes at Howth DART Station in partnership with Howth Tidy Towns, and creating a naturally restored meadow at Ennis by reducing mowing. In Northern Ireland, Translink's 7-year Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2030 includes 'Positive Action for Pollinators' as one of its themes. The aims of the plan include implementing pollinator recording initiatives and setting aside areas of their landholdings for pollinator-friendly management. Work has already begun, with 30,000 native woodlands planted and Flower-Insect Timed Counts carried out on the Belfast-Newry line.

Helping pollinators in nature reserves

Nature reserves across the island of Ireland are becoming more pollinator-friendly thanks to the work of the NPWS and NIEA. Management practices on NPWS sites include hedgerow planting, scrub control, bracken control, reduced mowing regimes, low intensity grazing, some marginal areas are also left uncut to provide winter cover. Larger projects include the tree planting and the restoration of coastal dune habitats, which will benefit pollinators. Ballycroy Visitor Centre (Wild Nephin NP) and Killarney House Gardens (Killarney NP), both NPWS visitor centres, have applied for the Green Flag Pollinator Award. AIPP actions by NIEA regional teams include creating wildflower areas for pollinators at Roe Valley CP, Scrabo CP, Castle Archdale CP, Quoile CP and Peatlands Park; tree planting and hedge management for pollinators at Roe Valley CP (including Orchard), Ness CP, Crawfordsburn CP and Peatlands Park; and continued pollinator friendly management of established wildflower areas.

Group Water Scheme sites become pollinator-friendly

In the previous phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, a guideline was developed in collaboration with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes on how to help pollinators on Group Water Scheme sites. Since then, many Group Water Schemes have taken action to help biodiversity, with 14 officially joining the Pollinator Plan Supporter network in the period 2021-2025. Nationwide, 22 GWSs nationwide have adopted a motion at board level to become biodiversity friendly, appointing a person responsible for biodiversity enhancement. Others have signed agreements to end the use of pesticides. Biodiversity action plans have been created for 36 schemes, and a dedicated biodiversity category has been established in the Group Water Scheme Excellence Awards to reward pollinator-friendly actions.

National Trust Meadows: Better, Bigger, More and Joined

"The National Trust looks after a diverse range of habitats and species across Northern Ireland. Through managing land within our care, we aim to enhance and restore a healthy, natural environment. Our management approach is based on the Lawton principles of Better, Bigger, More and Joined. We maintain and enhance existing priority habitats through conservation grazing and traditional hay meadow management. Between 2015 and 2025 we have created/restored over 900 hectares. The area of pollinator-friendly grassland created or under restoration is 279 hectares. We are transitioning former lawns to wildflower meadows through a late cut and lift and where necessary, stitching in local provenance yellow rattle to suppress vigorous grasses. With support from the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs Environment Fund (2021-2025) we have purchased machinery to manage, create and restore meadows. We began a monitoring programme in 2024 to track progress in meadow restoration efforts."

– Melina Quinn, National Trust

Restoring Green Spaces in National Museums Northern Ireland

National Museums Northern Ireland are part of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Supporter network. As part of their commitment to the AIPP, they take part in 'No Mow May' and 'Let it Bloom June' at the Ulster Folk Museum and Ulster Transport Museum, leaving nearly eight hectares of meadow uncut to support native wildflowers. Working with The Conservation Volunteers, they have restored green spaces across our museum sites, involving volunteers and visitors in activities like native tree planting and creating willow walkways. A long-flowering meadow at their Cultra site has shown a significant increase in biodiversity. Further short- and long-flowering meadow areas are being identified and mapped, as well as the mapping and creation of new nesting sites for pollinators.

Celebrating buzzing communities in the Tidy Towns Pollinator Awards

The Tidy Towns Local Authority Pollinator Award runs as a Special Award in the annual Supervalu Tidy Towns awards. It is administered by the Local Authority Heritage and Biodiversity Officer network and the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Towns are judged against All-Ireland Pollinator Plan recommendations, and the entry form aligns with the actions covered in the guideline 'Communities: Actions to Help Pollinators'.

The standard of entries has been consistently high, with eight prizes in total of €1,000 each. These include an overall winner, and a large and small-town winner within each of the four Tidy Towns regions. In 2021 an award was introduced for best newcomer, to encourage Tidy Towns groups who are starting on their journey. From 2021-2025, 124 Tidy Towns groups have entered the Pollinator Award, with many groups applying year after year and demonstrating significant improvement in their actions. €47,000 in prize money has been given or pledged to Tidy Towns groups during the phase 2021-2025, which is funded by the Local Authority Heritage and Biodiversity Officer network.

Helping urban pollinators in Raheny

In Dublin City, Raheny Tidy Village Group is a shining example of how urban areas can be managed for pollinators. Winners of the Tidy Towns Local Authority Pollinator Award 2023, their work is grounded in a deep understanding of their local biodiversity, and a whole-community approach. One of their most impressive activities has been the creation of extensive areas of naturally restored meadows in public areas and private gardens. In consultation with Dublin City Council, 'no mow' areas were designated around Raheny, with contractors given maps to show exactly where these areas were, ensuring everyone was on the same page. In the churchyard, Pyramidal Orchids appeared for the first time because of reduced mowing.

Joining the dots with the Blarney Street Pollinator Pathway

After the Covid lockdown, a group of neighbours in north inner city Cork came together to create an urban pollinator pathway. The idea behind the Blarney St. Pollinator Path was simple: make the longest chain of pollinator gardens along the longest street in Ireland. Working with a local graphic designer, Cork City Biodiversity Office and Blarney St and Surrounding Areas Community Association, the group created eco-friendly window stickers (pictured, by AaRoss Designs) and organised door-to-door visits to get all 300 neighbours on board. The ask was simple: pick a place in their gardens, mow less, spray less pesticides, and proudly put up the window sticker to show support. This is a great example of how pollinator initiatives can be simple, and don't have to take place in areas of much green space.

Community meadows in Abbeyleix

Abbeyleix Tidy Towns in Co. Laois run several creative initiatives for encouraging local meadows. The Lawn Art competition runs every year during No Mow May, when residents are invited to let their grass grow and mow shapes in their mini meadows. Beautiful patterns and shapes have sprung up around the town as a result of this competition, including butterflies, spirals and Celtic crosses. But their efforts aren't limited to May: Abbeyleix is home to stunning short and long-flowering meadows, including the fields beside St Michael & All Angels Church of Ireland where orchids have appeared thanks to reduced mowing. The Tidy Towns group has also piloted a meadow management scheme, where residents are encouraged to choose a patch of grass to mow less, and the Tidy Towns provides expert advice and a cutting and grass removal service.

Creating ecological corridors in Sneem

Sneem Tidy Towns in Co. Kerry have created a carefully managed network of pollinator-friendly habitats around the town. By joining the dots between community areas, businesses, private gardens, and the community garden, they have created a wide array of habitats of all sizes. Their work has included restoring meadows, planting native pollinator-friendly trees and mini-orchards, and eliminating pesticides.

Eliminating pesticides in Athboy

Pesticides are harmful to pollinators and human health. One of the best actions for biodiversity is to stop using them altogether, but this can sometimes be a challenge in areas where certain plants need to be removed. Athboy Tidy Towns in Co. Meath have been working hard to eliminate pesticides in the town and encourage other members of the community to do the same. With the help of a LEADER grant, the Tidy Towns purchased a Foamstream Machine in 2020, which is stored by Meath County Council and used in public areas. This has had mixed results, but the group are determined and have trialled other alternatives, whilst celebrating native wildflowers like Dandelions and trying to change the perception of 'weeds'.

Oranmore's Dispersed Urban Orchards

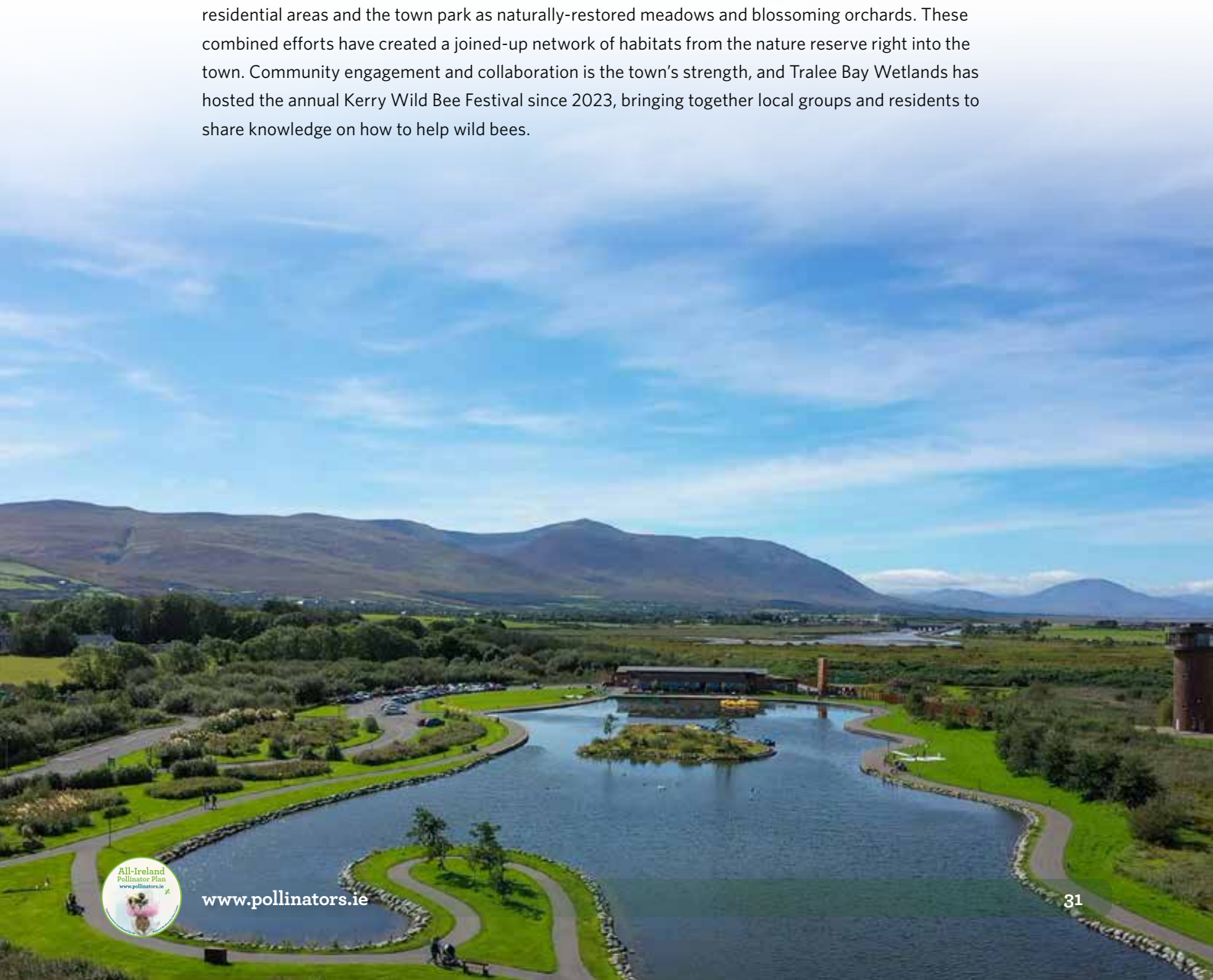
Following the success of 'dispersed' urban orchards in towns like Monaghan, Oranmore in Co. Galway launched their own project in partnership with Active in Age Oranmore. Rather than large areas of orchard, dispersed orchards are dotted around a community, creating a network of pollinator-friendly blossoming trees. This makes them a perfect fit for urban areas where larger-scale planting projects may not be possible. Oranmore Tidy Towns planted native apple trees in several housing estates, which are now being cared for by local residents who eventually will be able to enjoy their fruit.

Creating a Biodiversity Community Garden in Newtownabbey

In Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, Monkstown Village Initiative created a beautiful biodiversity-friendly community garden. An array of native pollinator-friendly trees like Willow and Hawthorn grow in the garden, as well as fruit trees like apple, pear and plum, providing a vital source of nectar for hungry pollinators. Elsewhere the garden is bursting with nectar and pollen-rich perennials, annuals, and bulbs. Some wild corners are left for pollinator nesting habitat, and a creative gambion seating area provides plenty of options for cavity-nesting bees to shelter. The whole garden is run organically with no pesticides. The group won the Green Flag Community Pollinator Award in 2024, administrated by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Joining up habitats in Tralee

In Tralee, Co. Kerry, different groups have come together to create a joined up network of habitats for pollinators and biodiversity. At the edge of Tralee Bay, the Eco and Activity Centre has planted native trees and an early-flowering willow sculpture, building on the adjacent habitat of the Tralee Bay Wetlands Special Area of Conservation. Further into the town, Tralee Tidy Towns have carefully managed residential areas and the town park as naturally-restored meadows and blossoming orchards. These combined efforts have created a joined-up network of habitats from the nature reserve right into the town. Community engagement and collaboration is the town's strength, and Tralee Bay Wetlands has hosted the annual Kerry Wild Bee Festival since 2023, bringing together local groups and residents to share knowledge on how to help wild bees.



Returning Churches to Nature

In March 2023, the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference agreed that parishes would return 30% of church grounds to nature by 2030: "Parishes are asked to expand their circles of solidarity, to protect and care for biodiversity and creation on 30% of their grounds, and to care for this as a haven for pollinators and biodiversity, that can be enjoyed by the whole community." The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan resource: Faith Communities: Actions to Help Pollinators has been a key resource in helping all faith communities to take simple, evidence-based actions. All over the island, people have come together to share knowledge and begin their journey of transforming their grounds for nature.

Pollinator-friendly churches thrive in Clare

Inspired by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 'Returning to Nature' initiative, Clare County Council's Biodiversity Officer led a project to help twelve churches manage their grounds for biodiversity. A pollinator plan has been developed for each church and pollinator signage installed to raise awareness of new management methods, including turning close-cut lawns into wildflower meadows bursting with native plants. The churches have also planted pollinator-friendly fruit trees and bulbs.

Church of the Three Patrons Biodiversity Garden

In Rathgar, Dublin City, the Church of the Three Patrons created a biodiversity garden. Inspired by Pope Francis's encyclical "Laudato Si" ('care for our common home'), the group planted trees with the help of the organisation Pocket Forests. No artificial fertilizers, herbicides or insecticides are used in the garden. Instead, the group take a preventative approach, laying cardboard to suppress any unwanted plants where needed. Posters highlight the importance of Dandelions, Ivy and Nettles, stimulating interesting conversations with passers-by. Volunteers of all ages and experience help in the garden, including students working towards their Gaisce President's Award

Maynooth Community Church '100 Day Challenge' for pollinators

Maynooth Community Church launched a '100 Day Challenge' for pollinators in 2025. The church started an ambitious programme of pollinator-friendly planting, supported by Peter Cuthbert. Church members of all ages helped sow nectar rich plants like Phacelia, Nepeta, Bidens and Bacopa, as well as create a herb garden featuring plants like Borage, Chives, Oregano, Rosemary, Sage and Thyme. The results were extraordinary, with up to 100 bumblebees making an appearance on Day 65. Plans are in the works for an autism-friendly garden, an orchard, a native tree nursery and a 'garden of serenity'. The work of the Community Church proves how quickly biodiversity responds when we provide the right kind of food and shelter.

Department of Education supports new online course for schools

In 2025, the Department of Education in the Republic of Ireland collaborated with the National Biodiversity Data Centre to launch an online course: Managing School Grounds for Biodiversity which is aimed at school groundskeepers and caretakers. From pesticide alternatives to plant lists, biodiversity-friendly mowing tips to ideas on getting the school community involved, the course offers information for any school wanting to manage their grounds for nature, no matter their size, space, or previous experience.

Laois Education Centre's Biodiversity Demonstration Garden

The Laois Education Centre in Portlaoise has created a beautiful Biodiversity Demonstration Garden. Surrounding the main education centre building, the garden showcases different ways schools can help pollinators in their grounds. With installations like a fruit and vegetable garden, meadows, a bare earth bank for mining bees, and a pollinator-friendly perennial bed, all possibilities are represented regardless of a school's space. The demonstration garden aims to inspire visiting teachers and school staff, who can pick up tips from the signage to take back to their own schools.

More schools leave Pitches for Pollinators

Every year over the summer holidays, schools are invited to take part in 'Pitches for Pollinators'. This campaign aims to help pollinators by leaving school pitches unmown over the summer, allowing wildflowers to emerge. These flowers like Dandelions, Clovers and Birds-foot Trefoil provide a vital source of nectar and pollen and will grow naturally if we reduce mowing. During term time, pitches and grassy areas are regularly mown giving children important areas to play. But from the end of June to mid-August when the pitches aren't in use, schools have been joining in the effort to mow less and feed hungry bees.

Scoil Bhríde's outdoor classroom

Scoil Bhríde in Midleton, Co. Cork is buzzing with life! Thanks to the hard work of teachers and students, they have transformed their school grounds for biodiversity, creating naturally restored wildflower meadows, introducing fruit trees, planting bulbs with the children and creating a bee bank and sensory garden. The children love to run along the mown paths that wind through the meadows, spotting new wildflowers that appear year on year. They are particularly proud of their new outdoor classroom which was sponsored and created by the local branch of business AbbVie. As well as providing a place to learn in nature, the outdoor classroom features biodiversity murals and artwork. The school organised a competition for children to illustrate a native Irish flower, and the resulting artwork sits proudly on the outdoor classroom walls.

St. Joseph's School, Castlebar create new meadow

St Joseph's Secondary School in Castlebar, Mayo started a meadow-making project inspired by the National Biodiversity Data Centre's video 'Creating Meadows for Biodiversity'. They selected an area, reduced mowing and prepared the ground to sow Yellow Rattle seed. When the time came to collect the grass, they raked hay from the site - "a good workout, good for our wellbeing, sociable and took a number of days to complete!" They have also collected wildflower seeds such as Knapweed and Red campion, and have identified Dandelion, Buttercups, Knapweed, White clover, Red clover, Birds-foot trefoil and Thistle. In areas outside the meadow they identified Ivy, Hawthorn, Bramble, Ragwort and Knapweed. When the meadow gets well established in the coming years, they hope to save fresh seeds for other schools or community projects that also want to establish a meadow. The school are also taking the opportunity to collect data with Flower-Insect Timed Counts – a cross-curricular activity that takes in Science, CSPE, DCG, Geography, and Climate Action, Sustainability and Global Citizenship!

SETU Carlow establishes new meadows

The South East Technological University's Carlow Campus designated five areas as long-flowering meadows, cutting only at the end of September. They watched the meadows evolve and result in numerous meadow grasses and wildflowers, with many butterflies, bees and other insects. Despite initial concerns about potential weed growth near the pitches and the possibility of seeds blowing onto them, the campus encountered minimal weed growth, and the pitches were unaffected. They are now planning on expanding these meadow areas, helping more native wildflowers to grow on campus. This work is also taking place in other universities, creating a network of pollinator-friendly campuses across the island of Ireland.

Making Trinity pollinator-friendly

"Trinity College Dublin has long been a proud participant in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, actively enhancing our campus with ornamental meadows, no-mow zones, and pollinator-friendly planting. We've grown food on campus, supported regenerative agriculture, and installed nest boxes to boost pollinator habitats. Our catering team is working to include pollinator guidance on menus, while students and staff have contributed through biodiversity programmes and on-site surveys, strengthening citizen science efforts. In addition, we have hosted school groups, held public workshops and talks, contributed to art installations and shows, and spread the message about the importance of pollinators far and wide. Trinity is committed to fostering a pollinator haven and driving Ireland's nature-positive future."

- Professor Jane Stout, Trinity College Dublin

Maynooth Campus 'Living Lab'

National University of Ireland Maynooth is a 'living lab'. The campus boasts 20 acres of long-flowering meadow which are cut by a farmer in September, and over a kilometre of native flowering hedgerow. The university's biologists conduct ecological surveys around the campus to generate baseline data and create learning opportunities for the students. Elsewhere, pollinator-friendly shrubs and perennials fill the campus flower beds, and pollinator-friendly planting is part of all new landscaping designs.

Bulb planting at Queen's University Belfast

Queen's University Belfast has supported hungry pollinators emerging from hibernation by planting 7,500 pollinator-friendly bulbs that bring colour to the campus as well as early nectar and pollen. Over 7,000m^2 of grassy areas on the campus are managed as long-flowering meadows, and a biodiversity 'hot spot' zone in University Square features pollinator-friendly plants, creating an important pitstop in this key central area.

Creating a wild garden at Dr Crokes GAA

As part of the GAA Green Clubs programme, Dr Crokes GAA Club in Killarney transformed a neglected area beside the main stand into a wildflower meadow. They reduced mowing in the area, created new signage, and identified wildflowers that emerged, including Dandelion, Clovers and vetches. Each wildflower was dedicated to a young member of the club who researched the details of the plant and submitted a report with photos and received a certificate of recognition to be put on the club's social media.

Protecting pollinators in the rough

The meadows at Ballycastle Golf Club in Co. Antrim were created with golf in mind, but they also form a species-rich grassland habitat. These meadows are beautiful in the summer, full of wildlife and are free to maintain, with a local farmer taking the species-rich grass to feed his cattle. The sandy, nutrient-poor soils on the golf course create ideal conditions for many wildflowers and have helped the meadows develop quickly. There are wonderful displays of wildflowers throughout the season, from early Dandelions to Eyebright, Harebell, and late flowering Devil's-bit Scabious (the larval food plant for Ireland's only legally protected butterfly species, the Marsh Fritillary). Not all golf courses can replicate the work at Ballycastle, but each one can make small changes to better support biodiversity by sensitively managing areas of the course. Many golf courses across the island have done just that and are playing a role in supporting the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Mullingar Shamrocks build a biodiversity walking trail

Mullingar Shamrocks GAA Club in Co. Westmeath created a biodiversity walking trail along the River Brosna and the Royal Canal, which takes in several areas of pollinator-friendly habitat including a bee bank. The club installed signage highlighting these habitats along the trail, and a new mural designed by tattoo artist Cowboy Davies. Two wildflower areas beside the club burst with Dandelions, Buttercup and Birds-foot Trefoil, and the sensory garden created with Mullingar Men's Shed is full of sweet-smelling and delicious pollinator-friendly herbs like Chives, Oregano, and Thyme.

Launch of the GAA Green Clubs Programme

Hundreds of GAA Clubs across the island of Ireland have been transforming their grounds for pollinators as part of the GAA Green Clubs scheme. The Programme is structured around the themes of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel & Transport and is designed to promote sustainability awareness and action in GAA clubs and communities.

The Green Club programme started in 2021, initially running as a two-year pilot with 30 clubs who established Green Teams and took action under one of the themes. Since then, the scheme has expanded to involve hundreds of clubs, many of whom have taken action for biodiversity. Their work includes reducing mowing at the edge of pitches, protecting and planting native trees and hedgerows, and planting pollinator-friendly plants in club colours. The National Biodiversity Data Centre is one of the Green Club expert partners, and helped develop the online toolkit with evidence-based actions for biodiversity. The toolkit is available for any club to access regardless of whether they are taking part in the Green Clubs programme.

‘Don’t Mow, Let it Grow’ at Causeway Hospital

In 2021, Causeway Hospital in Coleraine became the first healthcare site to officially sign up as a supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Managed by Northern Health & Social Care Trust, the hospital introduced a ‘don’t mow, let it grow’ approach to the grounds, creating large areas of long-flowering meadows and attractive grounds for patients, staff and visitors to wander in. Led by nurse Donna Rainey and Grounds Manager Bamber McKay, the work has been a huge success, with many native wildflowers appearing including orchids, as well as bees, butterflies, and other insects.

New guide: Pollinator-friendly management of healthcare sites

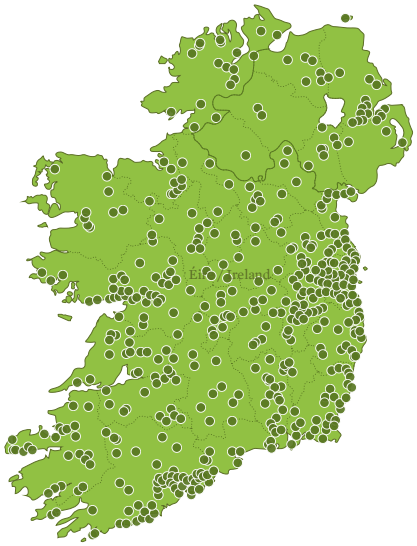
Biodiversity and human health are closely linked. A growing body of research reveals that natural environments have a huge impact on human health and wellbeing. Pollinators are at the heart of healthy environments, and wild bees are responsible for pollinating many of the fruit and vegetables that support a nutritious diet. In collaboration with the HSE, a new guide was launched in 2025: ‘The Pollinator-friendly Management of Healthcare Sites’. Highlighting connections between biodiversity and human health and wellbeing, the guide contains actions healthcare sites can take for pollinators, such as creating small sensory gardens for patients and staff and planting mini orchards or herb gardens. The guide includes case studies from healthcare sites where this work has already taken place and highlights the benefits of biodiversity to physical and mental health.

Peamount Healthcare Green Therapy & Biodiversity project

Through the Green Therapy and Biodiversity Project, Peamount Healthcare in Co. Dublin transformed the green space on the campus for biodiversity and for the health and wellbeing of the residents, staff and visitors. Native trees of Irish provenance were provided by Trees on the Land and planted in 2023 by Microsoft volunteers. A further 80 fruit and nut trees were planted to create three new orchards, providing a supply of fruit and nuts for the hospital and 'Meadows' café. Around two hectares of lawn have been transformed into species-rich meadows. Mown grass paths meander through the grasses and wildflowers, encouraging residents, staff and visitors to spend time in nature.

1,000 Gardens added to Actions for Pollinators

As of 2024, over 1,000 gardens across the island of Ireland have been added to 'Actions for Pollinators' - an online mapping system that allows everyone - gardeners, councils, businesses, local communities and schools to register the actions they have taken for pollinators and put their pollinator-friendly locations on the map. These 1,000 gardens represent a huge variety of outdoor spaces, large and small. Regardless, each one is being managed to protect pollinators with actions such as reducing mowing, eliminating pesticides, protecting native trees and hedgerows, choosing pollinator-friendly plants and creating nesting habitat.



Orchids appear in gardens for the first time

During this phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, there have been many reports of orchids appearing in private gardens for the first time as more people choose to mow less. Lawns that previously were mown every week are now being cut once every six weeks or even once a year, giving these precious plants a chance to flower.

Extensive bulb planting at Hillsborough Castle & Gardens

The staff at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens in Co. Down have taken some great actions for pollinators, including planting 6,000 Grape Hyacinths for an early source of nectar and pollen, and 2,000 Crocuses for pollinators when they emerge from hibernation. They have also created large meadow areas, which are becoming more species-rich every year.

Business supporter network continues to grow

The AIPP business supporters network has continued to grow year on year since 2018 and now has over 400 business supporters from a range of sectors, many with multiple sites.

Key publications include the new guidelines Businesses: actions to help pollinators (2024) which includes a simple scoring system, Business parks for pollinators (2025), and Car parks for pollinators (2023). Annual reporting on pollinator-friendly actions is mandatory for business supporters, with businesses who fail to report being removed from the supporter network to safeguard the integrity of the scheme and prevent greenwashing. The National Biodiversity Data Centre is also a founding member of the Business for Biodiversity Ireland platform which supports companies in their evolution towards 'nature-positive'. We are grateful to funders during this phase including Bord Bia Origin Green, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Creating a biodiversity walking trail at Astellas, Kerry

Astellas Ireland have taken careful steps to manage their Kerry site for biodiversity, creating several long-flowering meadows and a Biodiversity Walking Trail, which takes visitors and employees past a mining bee sand bank, pollinator friendly planting, log piles, solitary bee hotels, and bat boxes. Ivy and Bramble are protected near the mining bee nesting sites to provide a natural food source for pollinators close to where they nest. They have also mapped the native trees, conducted regular surveys of meadow species and are now removing invasive species on site.

Mondelez transform lawns to meadows in Coolock

Since 2020, the Mondelez site in Coolock, Dublin City, has evolved from manicured parkland to a more natural site, with over eight acres of land transformed from mown lawn to specific pollinator-friendly managed meadow. Over 12 acres in total are managed as long-flowering meadows with one cut and lift a year. Significant resources have been assigned to improve site biodiversity with the planting of 60 native trees and 6,000 native shrubs. A staff garden has also been added, with an additional 17 native flowering trees.

New meadows and woodland walkways at Cabra Castle Hotel

Cabra Castle Hotel is set on 100 acres of rolling parkland. In 2020, the hotel decommissioned a 9-hole golf course and started managing it for nature. 40% of the grassland is now managed as a long-flowering meadow, managed sensitively with no pesticides or chemical fertilisers. Native wildflowers including the Marsh Orchid have returned, along with many pollinators, moths and butterflies such as the Meadow Brown, Painted Lady, and Marsh Fritillary. Native trees and hedgerow species like Rowan, Blackthorn, Holly and Willow have been planted, and a 1km wooded walkway has been installed so guests can enjoy biodiversity.

Housing developers support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Residential developers have committed to incorporating pollinator-friendly actions into their plans for new developments. Many have joined the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan business supporter network, including Cairn and Glenveagh. Their work includes planting native hedgerows, reducing mowing and pesticide use, and choosing nectar and pollen rich plants for ornamental displays.

A mosaic of habitats at Servier, Arklow

Servier has been based on its 60-acre site in Arklow, Co. Wicklow site for almost 40 years. On-site habitats supporting bees (and all wildlife) include native hedgerows, some of which are ancient hedgerows dating back to the 1700s. 14,000 native Irish trees have been planted, and the site is also home to eight acres of long-flowering meadows, a mature orchard containing apple, plum and cherry trees and a 100m² vegetable garden. Pesticides have been eliminated almost entirely, except for when treating invasive species. Elsewhere, Servier has partnered with Gorey and Arklow Tidy Town committees, and recently sponsored Arklow Tidy Town's beautiful moth garden.

Establishing biodiversity baselines at Veolia sites

Veolia has developed ecological plans across several sites, starting with a biodiversity baseline for every habitat. They then established actions to protect and enhance these habitats, such as reducing mowing to create short and long-flowering meadows, planting pollinator-friendly perennial containers, and working with landscapers to protect native hedgerows. Bare earth banks and bee hotels provide shelter for solitary bees, and tussocky grass at the base of hedgerows provides nesting habitat for bumblebees. Veolia's work extends to the wider community - in 2024 they donated heritage apple trees to local primary schools along with an Orchard Care booklet.

Species on the edge - helping rare pollinators

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan has published five evidence-based guidelines on protecting rare pollinators. Each guide aims to raise awareness, encourage monitoring and promote site-based actions to protect these precious insects. A guide on the Great Yellow Bumblebee (2019) was published in collaboration with BirdWatch Ireland. A guide on the Northern Colletes solitary bee (2022) was produced in collaboration with the National Trust and Buglife UK. A guide on how to protect the Large Carder Bee (2022) in local communities was published in collaboration with Sustainable Skerries and Fingal County Council. A guide on the Forester Moth (2024) was produced in collaboration with Butterfly Conservation and MothsIreland. Finally, a guide on the Shrill Carder Bumblebee (2024) was published in collaboration with national experts. Production of all these resources have been supported by NPWS and NIEA.

Saving a rare bumblebee in Skerries

Sustainable Skerries are an inspirational group in the seaside town of Skerries in North Co. Dublin. They have done incredible work to protect the rare Large Carder Bumblebee (*Bombus muscorum*). Having discovered populations of the bee in their town, the group work tirelessly to raise awareness and create new habitat corridors. They have also collaborated closely with Fingal County Council, demonstrating the power of local communities and local authorities working in tandem. Within Skerries, they have set up numerous monitoring walks to track trends in their Large Carder Bee populations. Since they began these efforts in 2019, the results have been amazing: the bee has been spotted in many new locations including the town centre, and their work has inspired other communities across the island to protect our rarest pollinators.

Rare Species Move into Tramore

The rare Large Carder Bee also occurs in the sand dunes at Tramore, but has been in serious decline. A 2012 bumblebee monitoring scheme walk counted 36 bees, but by 2022 this was down to three. In recent years, work in Tramore has included developing a nature park on an old landfill site close the dunes which is now home to Skylarks and a large population of Bee Orchids. From 2021, wide grass margins along the nearby Estuary Road have been allowed to naturally regenerate into a long-flowering meadow cut once a year in September. A new monitoring walk in this meadow in 2022 found the bee outside the dunes for the first time. In 2023 it was the most common bumblebee observed, with 17 individuals counted! The Northern Colletes was also spotted in the meadow, a rare solitary bee that, like the Large Carder Bee, is listed as vulnerable on the European Bee Red List. It is remarkable that within a few years, this area of previously tightly-mown grass is supporting two rare pollinators. That's how easy it can be to help biodiversity by taking the right actions!

Saving the Great Yellow Bumblebee in Mayo

"The Great Yellow Bumblebee is Ireland's rarest bumblebee, with the only known viable population found on the west coast of Co. Mayo. Monitoring shows that Great Yellow Bumblebee numbers are low, with 78 recorded in 2022, 34 in 2023 , 17 in 2024 and 31 in 2025.
From 2021-22, The Great Yellow Bumblebee European Innovation Partnership (EIP) project ran as a one-year pilot, working with farmers on the Mullet Peninsula and Erris mainland to monitor bee populations and investigate how changes in farmland management could protect this vulnerable species. Since then, monitoring work and farmer engagement has continued under the LIFE on Machair Project. Belmullet Tidy Towns, who were instrumental in setting up the original project, continue their work in enhancing town habitats for pollinators and raising public awareness on pollinators."
- Karina Dingerkus, ecologist.

Rare bee depends on Ireland

The Northern Colletes (*Colletes floralis*) is one of our rare pollinators. This ground-nesting solitary bee is restricted to flower-rich coastal habitats such as dunes and machair. It is facing severe decline in Northern Europe, with Ireland currently holding up to 90% of the remaining populations of the bee in the Atlantic zone. The Northern Colletes is a solitary bee; each female excavates her own nest by making a small burrow into stable sand. Adults normally emerge from mid-June onwards and remain active until late August. They feed on a range of plants, but studies within Ireland show that the bee has a strong preference for flowers of umbellifers, especially Wild Carrot. Following a study by Buglife in Northern Ireland, the National Trust worked in partnership with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan to produce resources to help the Northern Colletes, including a new guideline document: Protecting Rare Pollinators: Northern Colletes (2022). The guideline highlights its distribution, ecology, lifestyle, and foodplants. It also outlines the threats and management recommendations necessary to ensure we can protect and retain the important populations of this very rare European species.

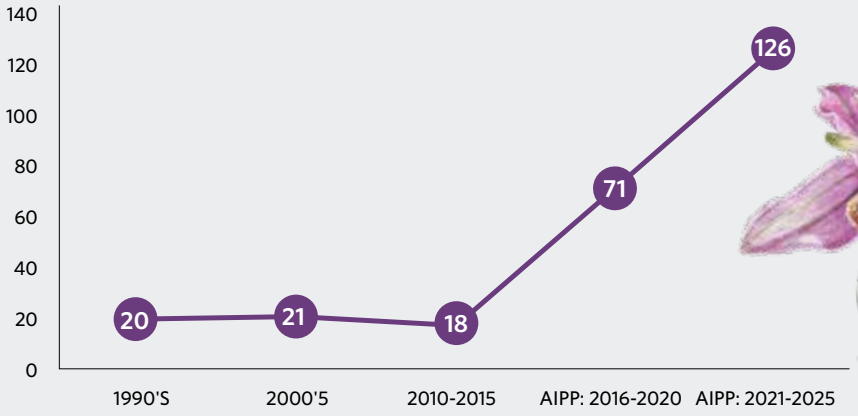
More recorders lead to pollinator rediscoveries

Over the past five years, an increase in recording efforts has led to several interesting rediscoveries. The Perkins' Mining Bee (Andrena rosae) was feared extinct in Ireland as it had not been recorded since 1977. In 2023, it was rediscovered in the village of St. Mullins, close to one of its old sites in Co. Carlow. It has since been seen at two additional sites nearby in 2024 and 2025. The Davies' Colletes Bee (Colletes daviesanus) is another solitary bee which hadn't been seen in Ireland since the late 1970s. In 2021, it was found at its original site at Ballyhornan, Co. Down and has been recorded there annually since. It was also seen for the first time in Co. Louth near Gyle's Quay in 2023 and 2024. Prior to 2021, the hoverfly Melangyna compositarum had only been recorded in Ireland once and was believed to be extinct here. It was spotted in August 2021 near Lismore in Co. Waterford - the first sighting in nearly 100 years. The following year it was spotted again, this time in Aughrim, Co. Wicklow. These results are thanks to the growing numbers of pollinator recorders who are carrying out valuable citizen science.

Returning Bee Orchids are Heralds of Hope

Bee Orchids are a stunning native wildflower and an amazing example of plant-pollinator coevolution. The plant emits a scent that resembles a female solitary bee, tricking males to attempt mating and pollinating the flower. Sadly, the right bee species (*Eucera longicornis*) doesn't live on the island of Ireland, so it is self-pollinated here. Bee Orchids rely on fungi to extract sufficient nutrients from the soil, making them vulnerable to pesticides. The National Biodiversity Data Centre typically receives sightings of Bee Orchids from around 20 sites each year. This increased to an average of 70 in the first phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2015-2020) and has risen again to 126 during the current phase. It's easy to help – don't mow let it grow, and you might see a Bee Orchid. If these precious plants are increasing, so are lots of other wildflowers and wider biodiversity. Together we are making a difference!

Average number of Bee Orchid records submitted to the National Biodiveristy Data Centre per year



Boom in bumblebee recorders

The number of bumblebee recorders has dramatically increased over the past five years, with over 100 people now regularly participating in the All-Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme. Within this citizen science scheme, these incredible volunteers walk a fixed 1-2km route once a month from March to October and count how many bumblebees of each species they spot. This scheme collects enough data to assess trends in eight of our most common bumblebee species and provides data that underpins the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Unfortunately, the most recent trend for 2012-2024 reveals that five of our most common bumblebee species are in decline. While we all wish it told a different story, there are positives. Thousands of actions are now taking place through the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and we will hopefully see the impact of this in coming years. Thanks to the efforts of the recorder volunteers, we can already see that pollinators respond quickly and positively where local communities have come together through the AIPP to create new habitats for bumblebees. One example of this is the excellent work that has taken place to monitor and protect the Large Carder bee, which is now recovering in some communities. This shows that things can be turned around, but urgent action is needed on large scales. The growth in bumblebee recorders helps us keep a close eye on these precious pollinators and become more informed about how they are affected by change, and what they need to survive and thrive.

National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme

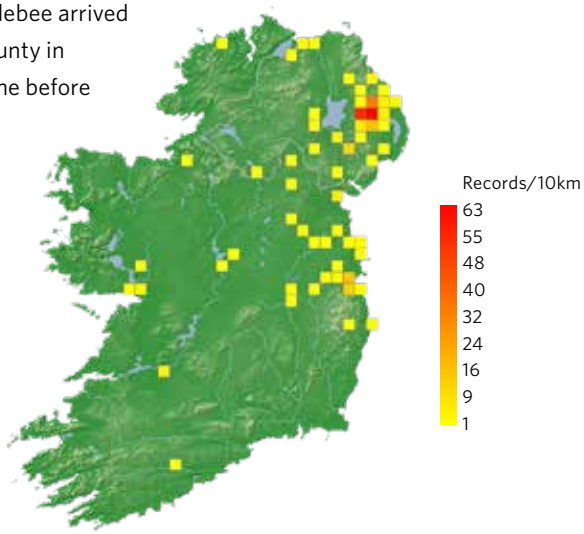
The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan has long called for a national monitoring scheme to underpin the initiative and provide essential data. In 2021, the EU published a national pollinator monitoring methodology for all Member States. Ireland went ahead of the curve in 2022 and became the first country to implement a national pollinator monitoring scheme (PoMS). Currently, 40 sites are monitored five times each year using a combination of pan traps, transect walks, flower-insect timed counts and floral surveys. In the Republic of Ireland, the scheme is managed by the National Biodiversity Data Centre and funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. It monitors bumblebees, solitary bees, hoverflies and butterflies. An equivalent scheme was launched in Northern Ireland in 2022 under the UK PoMS. Following the passing of the Nature Restoration Regulation into law in 2024, the EU have revised the methodology to ensure it is robust and will allow the calculation and reporting upon a Common Pollinator Indicator. This new scheme will be rolled out from 2027.

Flower-Insect Timed Counts reveal fascinating information

Launched by the National Biodiversity Data Centre in 2019, Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts) are simple surveys that allow anyone to monitor insects. To take part, download the free FIT Count App, watch a 50x50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes, and count how many insects visit. Collectively, FIT Counts provide fascinating information. They help us understand which habitats have the highest diversity of flower-visiting insects; what flowers are most important at different times of year, and which insects visit different flowers. For example, they show that Dandelions are important to a range of different insects, whereas Knapweed is particularly important to bees. They also help us understand the range of different insects visiting gardens, and how this varies by region. The Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) methodology was originally developed by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in the UK, who have generously shared their resources with us.

Tracking the Tree Bumblebee

Most of Ireland's bumblebee species nest on the surface of the ground or just underneath, often in longer grass. However, our newest arrival is different. The Tree Bumblebee nests above ground in holes in trees, or in empty garden bird boxes. It has been moving northwards in Europe as a result of climate change, and reached Britain in 2001. In 2017, it was first spotted in Ireland. Like many insects, it arrived on the island through two colonisation routes – one from Wales into southern Ireland and one from Scotland into Northern Ireland. After a slow start, it is now spreading rapidly and in 2025 was recorded in twenty-four counties. The Tree Bumblebee arrived naturally and is an excellent pollinator. Ireland is the only county in Europe to have an established Bumblebee Monitoring scheme before it's arrival, so we are in the unique position of being able to assess its impact on the other species over time.



Welcome to the island!
New bees arrive on our shores

The Irish Bee checklist was updated in 2024. There are currently 103 bee species in Ireland - 102 wild bees plus the Honey Bee. There have been some new arrivals in recent years: Wool Carder Bee (first spotted 2015), Tree Bumblebee (2017), Lathbury's Nomad Bee (2021), Blue Mason Bee (2021), Hairy-footed Flower Bee (2022), Ivy Bee (2022) and the Northern Sallow Mining Bee (2024). Some of these are natural arrivals due to our changing climate, some may have been imported through horticulture, and some are probably being spotted because of increased surveying effort. While new bees may be arriving, it is important to remember that many of our native bees are in serious trouble. The most recent Red List found that one third of our wild bees are threatened with extinction from the island of Ireland.

Hairy-footed Flower Bee arrives in Harold's Cross

Less than six months after the arrival of the Ivy Bee, another new solitary bee species was spotted in Ireland in 2022. The Hairy-footed Flower Bee (*Anthophora plumipes*) migrated from Britain and was first sighted by Mary Molloy in her garden in Harold's Cross, Dublin. Local group HXgrow have encouraged residents to manage their gardens for biodiversity, resulting in a great supply of food and shelter for pollinators in this urban neighbourhood. Mary Molloy said:

> *"We're really happy that the Hairy-footed Flower Bees have decided to make their home in Harold's Cross. HXgrow is a group of neighbours who have been working together planting for biodiversity over the last couple of years. It would be nice to think that the bees appreciated the effort. They are beautiful little bees and hopefully they are first of many."*

Irish Pollinator Research Network improves knowledge of pollinators

"The Irish Pollinator Research Network is an open network of pollinator researchers committed to building the evidence base for pollinator conservation and management in Ireland. The IPRN has grown tenfold since its inception in 2016 by four founding members. Across this phase (2021-2025) 76 scientific papers relevant to Irish pollinator conservation were published by researchers within the IPRN. Every year, the IPRN meeting maintains and stimulates collaborations between members and nurtures the feeling of community that is a real strength of the network. With expertise encompassing the fields of molecular biology, analytical chemistry, ecology and conservation, and social sciences, the IPRN can address problems and provide insights for pollinator conservation that go beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries." **- Prof Jane Stout, Co-leader of the Irish Pollinator Research Network**
Find out more about the IPRN and their research here: https://pollinators.ie/research/

Irish Research reveals the impact of pesticides on bumblebees

The pan-European PoshBee project found that bumblebees across European agricultural landscapes, including Ireland, suffer due to exposure to complex mixtures of pesticides. These "pesticide cocktails" adversely affect bumblebee colony growth and production of offspring, including new queens. Conducted across 106 sites in eight European countries, the research revealed that current pesticide use in agriculture continues to harm bees, signalling that more needs to be done to protect them. The study emphasised that risk assessments - typically evaluating pesticides individually - fail to capture real-world impacts on pollinators. The ground-breaking study, published in Nature in 2023, supports reduced pesticide use, and revised regulatory approaches that consider the combined effects of multiple pesticides to effectively protect bumblebee populations.

Irish research recommendations for bee hotel design

'Bee hotels' are popular with the public and farmers for supporting and monitoring wild bees, but their effectiveness is variable. Recent Irish research, led by UCD, TCD and Teagasc, tested trap nests - plastic pipes filled with cardboard tubes - in 16 Irish farms to see what affected their colonisation by cavity-nesting bees and wasps. While nests were used at nearly all sites, only 7% of 4,800 tubes were sealed, and just 4% produced bees or wasps. Three bee and two wasp species emerged, each preferring specific tube sizes. Results suggest that including a range of hole sizes (4-10mm diameter) improves success, and further research on materials and placement is ongoing to help enhance effectiveness of bee hotels for conservation and ecological monitoring.

RestPoll – contributing to pollinator research across the EU

RestPoll is a pan-European project that aims to permanently restore pollinator habitats in Europe and enhance their connectivity. Bringing together researchers, government ministries, industry, NGOs and land managers from 16 countries, the project takes a "living lab" approach, whereby experiments, research and innovation take place in real-life contexts, directly involving end-users. In Ireland, a network of farm sites, incorporating farmers who were involved in the Protecting Farmland Pollinators EIP project, are being surveyed to determine the effectiveness of conservation actions for pollinators and other farmland wildlife. In addition, the Irish team at Trinity College Dublin will lead on developing a 'toolbox' of pollinator restoration resources for different stakeholders across Europe.

Herbicide alternatives survey

Herbicides are potent chemical cocktails that can kill, harm and disorientate pollinators. Plants that are considered 'weeds' are often hugely valuable for biodiversity. We should learn to celebrate these native wildflowers, not remove them. However, sometimes plants need to be removed for health and safety or other reasons. In 2024, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan ran a survey on 'Pesticide alternatives', which received 82 anonymized responses and was completed by a range of different groups and individuals across the island of Ireland, including local authorities, community groups, landscape contractors and individuals. The aim of the survey was to gather information on herbicide alternatives currently being used on the island of Ireland, how effective they are, and the challenges of using them, focusing on five common pesticide alternatives: hot foam, steam weed control, weed burning, manual control, and organic sprays. The results of this survey do not constitute recommendations by the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, which must be evidence-based and backed up by science. But the lived experiences of herbicide alternatives on the island of Ireland can help people make more informed decisions when choosing alternatives to harmful chemicals.

Poll reveals public support for pollinators

In 2025, a poll commissioned by the National Biodiversity Data Centre revealed significant public support for pollinator-friendly actions. A nationally representative sample of over 1,000 adults were asked what actions they have taken or considered to help pollinators in their gardens. Nearly half of survey respondents reported reducing or eliminating pesticides in their garden, making this the most popular action for pollinators. 28% would consider doing this in the future, and only 7% have never done this and would not consider it. 45% of people planted pollinator-friendly flowers, 35% of people reduced mowing to encourage wildflowers, and 32% have planted or protected native hedgerows. These top three actions are a sign of how our approach to gardening has changed. More people are now thinking of environmentally friendly practices in their own spaces, avoiding chemicals and taking part in biodiversity action campaigns like No Mow May.

Funding secured for All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2026-2030

The National Biodiversity Data Centre was delighted to receive funding for delivering the next phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2026-2030. Implementation of the AIPP is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, and will be supported through funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Government of Ireland's Shared Island Fund, and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Funding includes €1.8 million from the Government of Ireland's Shared Island Fund. It will allow the next Pollinator Plan to build on the success of previous phases, and have a bigger and more ambitious vision for transforming the landscape across the island of Ireland for pollinating insects.

www.pollinators.ie

Implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Text: Kate Chandler, Úna FitzPatrick (National Biodiversity Data Centre). Edited by Kate Chandler.

With thanks to contributions by Ruth Wilson, Sarah Kelly, Owen Beckett, Molly Garvey, Blarney Street Pollinator Pathway and St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar.

Thanks to the following for photos: Abbeyleix Tidy Towns; An Taisce; Aoife Elizabeth Photography; Ballymun Biodiversity Action Group; Emily Basquille, St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar; Michael Bell; Juanita Browne; Tim Butter; Tina Claffey; Clare County Council; Joan Crawford, Mullingar Shamrocks GAA; Christine Doherty; Steven Falk; Fingal County Council; Eamonn Fitzgerald; Martin Fitzpatrick; Dave Goulson; Geoff Hamilton; Alf Harvey; Hedgerows Ireland; Irish Pollinator Research Network; Saorla Kavanagh; Paula Kearney; Niall Keogh; Brian Kerin, Veolia Osberstown & Blessington; Laois Education Centre; Michelle Larkin; Orla Maguire; Manifests Ireland; Martin Molloy; Miriam Mooney; National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme; Padraic Nolan, Mondelez Ireland; Roseanna O'Brien; Jessica O'Hara, SETU Carlow; Peamount Healthcare; Alan Poole; Melina Quinn; Raheny Tidy Village Group; Donna Rainey; RestPoll; Aaron Ross; Catherine Rowan; Scoil Bhríde Midleton; Liam Scott; Jane Sellers; South Dublin County Council; Colin Stanley; Jane Stout; Benjamin Thébaudeau; Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco & Activity Park; Ruth Wilson; Matt Woodhouse.

Suggested citation: All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025. National Biodiversity Data Centre Series No. 41, Waterford. December 2025.

Funding for design of this booklet has been provided by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Thanks to botanical artist, Shevaun Doherty, for use of her paintings in this booklet.

Design: Vitamin.ie

Implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Funding to assist implementation has been provided by the Heritage Council, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

National Biodiversity Data Centre

Beechfield House,
South East Technological University
West Campus,
Carriganore, Co. Waterford,
Ireland.
X91 PE03

www.biodiversityireland.ie

+353 51 306 240