



© Patrick Doran

Welcome to the first issue of the Protecting Farmland Pollinators Newsletter!

This newsletter aims to provide you with monthly updates on the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, highlighting progress and actions being taken across the island for pollinators, focusing on the work of farmers and the wider agricultural sector.

In early July, the new phase of the **All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2026-2030)** was officially launched at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. This phase of the Pollinator Plan is more ambitious than the last. To find out more about this next phase, [click here](https://www.pollinators.ie).



In this issue:

- Find out about the progress made to date during previous phases of the AIPP.
- Take a look at the 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators' work package (one of ten within the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2026-2030) and meet the Farmland Officers working on its delivery.
- Learn about the Farmland Pollinator Tool, which will be released in next month's issue.
- Consider hedgerow management as hedge-cutting resumes across the island.

www.pollinators.ie
www.biodiversityireland.ie



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine





Supporting farmers in taking action to protect pollinators is a key aspect of the Pollinator Plan.

Since the beginning of the AIPP in 2015, the most significant progress made to farmland has been the delivery of the European Innovation Partnership project, Protecting Farmland Pollinators (funded by DAFM).



Flowering Permanent Pasture

This project saw 40 dedicated farmers work in collaboration with researchers to take actions for pollinators on farmland using a novel, results-based scorecard approach.

The experiences and data collected during the EIP have shaped the development of an evidence-based 'Farmland Pollinator Tool' - a central component to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2026-2030.

Additional Progress Includes:

- ✓ Progress on monitoring, with a network of farmland sites included in the National Pollinator Monitoring Schemes.
- ✓ The establishment of a national citizen science 'Farmer Moth Monitoring Project' by the NBDC in 2025 (EIP, funded by DAFM).
- ✓ A Pollinator Plan Farmland Officer position was funded by DAFM from 2021-2025, enabling continued engagement with the farming community.
- ✓ The Irish Pollinator Research Network has gone from stride to stride, with completion of many PhD projects as well as participation in projects at both national (e.g. PROTECTS) and EU levels (e.g. PoshBee), expanding the evidence base as well as engaging directly with the farming community through "Living Lab" workshops (e.g. FarmBioNet, RestPoll).





During this phase of the AIPP, there are 4 key ambitions for farmland. These are:

1 Rollout of the 'Farmland Pollinator Tool' to allow farmers to self-assess how friendly their farmland is for pollinators.

"We hope the farmland pollinator tool will provide farmers with a simple, evidence based way of assessing how pollinator friendly their farmland is, allowing farmers to identify the small actions which can be implemented and make a big difference."

2 Support farmers in their efforts in making their farms pollinator friendly.

"The Pollinator Plan Farmland Officers will be available to support farmers in their efforts to protect pollinators, by providing advice, through farm visits, farm walks, attending events, and through the creation and provision of resources."

3 Promote the role farmers are playing in protecting pollinators.

"We hope to highlight all the great work being carried out on farmland across the island for pollinators. One such way this will be delivered is through AIPP Accreditation for Pollinator Friendly Farmland."

4 Advice on actions for pollinators within Agri-environment schemes.

"We will promote actions for pollinators within Agri-environmental schemes to ensure that these schemes can provide financial rewards to those farmers who chose to take action for pollinators."

We would like to thank all those who have taken action to protect farmland pollinators during previous phases of the Pollinator Plan...



... particularly all of the dedicated farmers who continue to champion pollinator-friendly farming!

www.pollinators.ie

www.biodiversityireland.ie



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine





During this phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has funded two Farmland Officer positions. The role of the Farmland Officers is to support the delivery of the 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators' work package, the aims of which have been highlighted in the previous newsletter article.



Patrick Doran

Patrick joined the NBDC in February 2026, to support the delivery of the Protecting Farmland Pollinators work package. Patrick has a farming background, being from a mixed beef and tillage farm in Co. Wexford. He has also worked in the environmental sector as a conservation ranger and ecologist supporting landowners with meadow restoration, heathland recovery and conservation grazing projects.

"The Pollinator Plan aims to promote simple, low cost actions, which can make a big difference to pollinators. I have seen first hand at home on the farm the impact these actions can make, from creating solitary bee nesting habitat, to maintaining small areas of grass margins. In my role as Farmland Officer, I look forward to supporting farmers in their efforts to implement actions for pollinators."



Pat Fitzmaurice

Pat started as Farmland Pollinator Officer in April 2026. His role is to support and engage with farmers and landowners to become pollinator-friendly under the farmland actions in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Pat has a background in Environmental Science, in farmer and community engagement and has worked previously with the Corncrake LIFE Project as Community Engagement Officer.

"I look forward to engaging with farmers and landowners at various agricultural events and through the Farmland Pollinator Tool, helping them measure and adopt pollinator-friendly farming practices".

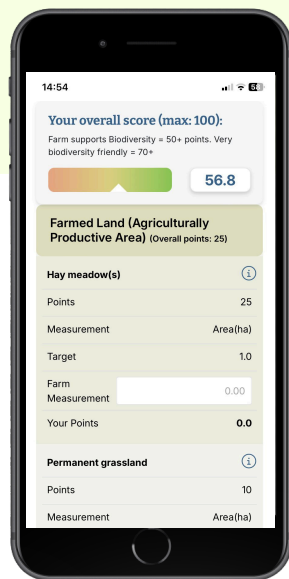


To contact the Farmland Officers email: farmland@biodiversityireland.ie



In next month's issue, we will be releasing the Farmland Pollinator Tool; an evidence-based scorecard, which will allow you to self-assess how pollinator friendly your farmland is, using an easily interpretable score (out of 100).

- The tool is easy to use, and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.
- The scorecard assesses 24 actions for pollinators.
- To complete the scorecard, you will be asked to provide 'farm measurements' e.g. the area or length of various features.
- The scorecard is divided into four sections which encompass the whole farm:



Farmed Land

Hedgerows & Other Field
Boundaries

Other Habitats & Non-
Farmed Areas

Farming practices:
Pesticides & Artificial
Fertiliser

Understanding Your Score:

- Evidence shows that farms which score 50+ support pollinators.
- Farmland with a scores 70+ points is considered to be very pollinator friendly.

If you score 70+ points, you may be eligible for Pollinator Friendly Farmland Accreditation

If you would like to score your farm sooner, or would like more information, get in touch with the Farmland Officers using the email below:



farmland@biodiversityireland.ie

www.pollinators.ie
www.biodiversityireland.ie



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



September marks the start of the hedge-cutting season. Between now and 28th of February farmers and contractors across the island may be seen cutting and maintaining hedgerows.

Hedgerows are undoubtedly one of the most important farmland habitats for pollinators and wider biodiversity, and management decisions, particularly in regards to cutting frequency, can hugely impact the value of hedgerows to our native wildlife.

Managing Hedgerows for Pollinators

- Aim to cut hedgerows on a 3-year cycle, cutting one-third of the hedgerows on the farm each year. By cutting in rotation, you ensure that some of the hedgerows on the farm will always provide floral resources for pollinators.
- Where ground conditions allow, aim to manage hedgerows between Nov-Jan. Outside this period, pollinators may still be active and depending on late-flowering species. For example, ivy is a valuable flowering resource for pollinators in Autumn.
- Where possible, allow some hedges to grow as tall as possible, side trimming only. If not feasible, aim for a minimum height of 2.5m from ground-level or above the bank.
- Leave at least one hawthorn or blackthorn to mature into a full-grown tree within each hedgerow.
- If planting winter cover crops, leave some uncultivated grass margins around hedgerow bases, which can provide valuable hibernation sites for queen bumblebees and other overwintering insects.



Hawthorn flowers on 2 year old growth, this hedgerow has been managed on a 3+ year cutting rotation, and provides pollinators with an abundance of flowers in springtime.



Elder flowers on 1 year old growth, managing hedgerows on a two year rotation will ensure this shrub flowers supporting pollinators.



Overgrown hedgerow / treeline which has been side trimmed only.

www.pollinators.ie
www.biodiversityireland.ie



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



As part of our monthly newsletter, we will highlight **two species** which may be found on your farm. If you find these species on your farm, we encourage you to **submit your records** to us at the NBDC using this [online recording form](#).

These data can then help us track the abundance and distribution of different species, and how this is changing in response to climate change and land use.

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)

Irish name: Feoras

ID Tips:

- Bright pink 4-lobed capsule fruits in the autumn, which open to expose the orange seeds.
- Twigs green and square, especially when young.
- Flowers are delicate green-white clusters that appear from May to June.
- Leaves are oval in shape.
- Grows to a height of 6 to 9m.



© Patrick Doran

Common Carder Bee (*Bombus pascuorum*)

Irish Name: Bumbóg Charda Choiteann

ID Tips:

- The most commonly seen bumblebee.
- Medium-sized bumblebee, queens can be 17mm in length.
- Very variable, but the only bumblebee with a ginger thorax and tail, with some black hairs on the abdomen (these can be in a banded pattern or not).
- In the autumn the ginger appearance may fade to and look pale or washed out.



© Patrick Doran

www.pollinators.ie

www.biodiversityireland.ie



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

