All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Bringing Stakeholders Together

www.pollinators.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre
Documenting Ireland's Wildlife

Dr Úna FitzPatrick
Chief Scientific Officer, National Biodiversity Data Centre
Chair & Project Manager, All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

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BIODIVERSITY LOSS IS A HUGE PROBLEM

Ireland has ~31,500 species living within 117 habitats

- Of those habitats assessed only **15%** are in a good state
- Of those species assessed **17%** are threatened with extinction from Ireland

Decided to use pollinators as a vehicle to sell the biodiversity message to wide audiences

- ✓ Pollinators are an element of biodiversity that people understand & relate to
- ✓ Can be communicated as a clean & simple message
- ✓ Changes can be easily monitored
- ✓ Protecting pollinators has knock-on benefits for biodiversity generally

The plight of pollinators is typical of many components of our biodiversity

Ireland has **102** bee species

Honey bee

Bumblebees

Solitary bees

WILD POLLINATORS

One third of our 101 wild bee species are threatened with extinction from the island of Ireland

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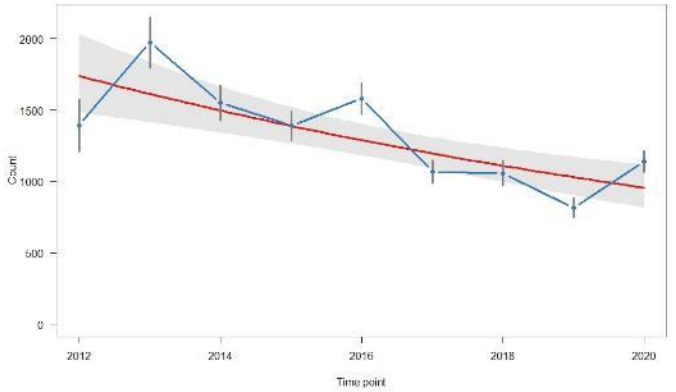
Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme



Abundance of common bumblebees has declined since we started measuring in 2012

If there is a problem, what do you do?

1. Decide if it's important
2. Critically assess the problem and how serious it is
3. Identify the causes
4. Collectively agree a positive way to address the problem
5. Identify **evidence-based actions** to help
6. Communicate these properly
7. Develop a partnership driven approach where possible
8. Track progress – is it working?

15-member Steering Group oversees the implementation which is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre

Juanita Browne

Kate Chandler

Ruth Wilson

Sarah Kelly

ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN
IMPACT TO DATE: 2015-

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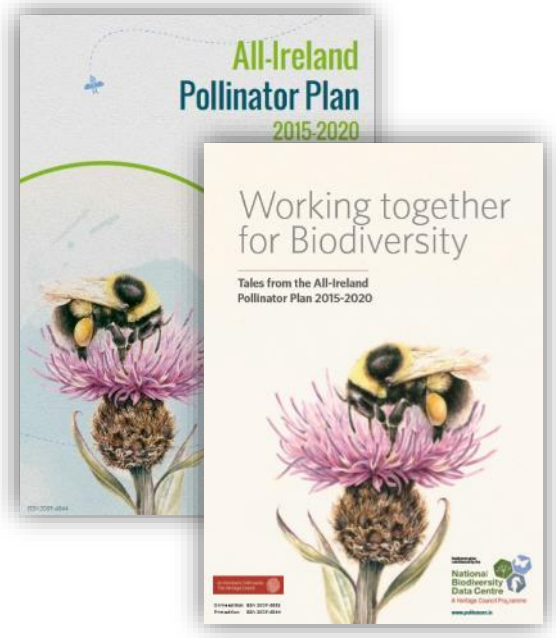
2015-2020: 81 **actions delivered**



100% of **Councils** have become partners and are taking actions on public land

Parks have become pollinator friendly through Green Flag award

ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN
IMPACT TO DATE: 2015-

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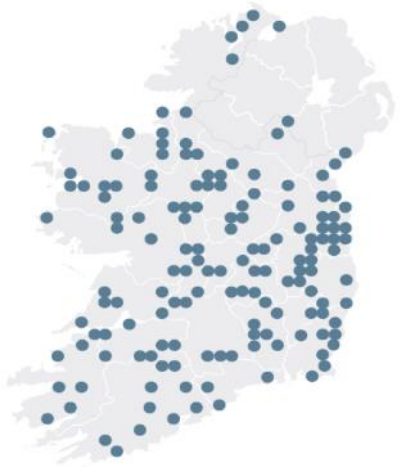
200+ **local communities** have become pollinator friendly through a special pollinator award

SuperValu TidyTowns

Local Authority Heritage Officer Programme



Research project (2019-2023) has created an evidence-based pollinator-score for **farms**

Protecting Farmland Pollinators

eip-agri
AGRICULTURE & INNOVATION

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

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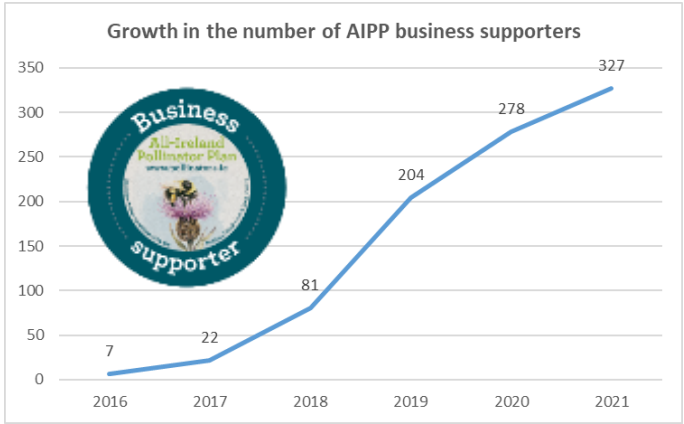
400+ business supporters



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IMPACT TO DATE: 2015-

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Schools have become pollinator friendly

More people are engaging with nature

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Number of people recording wild bees increased by **300%**

Irish Pollinator **Research** Network established 2017

EIGHT pollinator PhDs have been completed by students who are part of the network in 2023

Regarded as a **success story internationally**

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Ten lessons learned so far

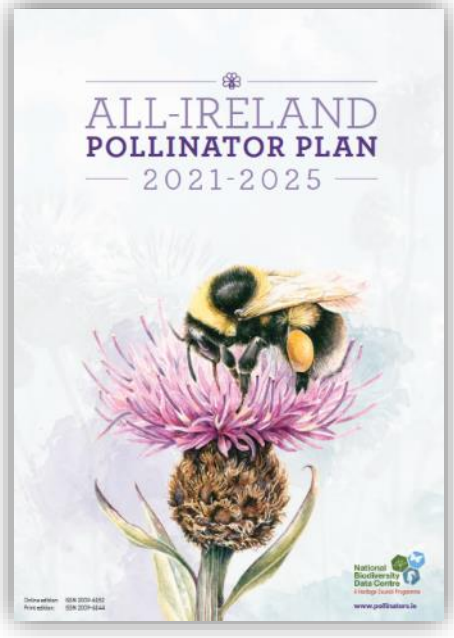
HOW CAN WE PROTECT POLLINATORS IN IRELAND?

- ✓ Need interconnected networks of good quality semi-natural habitats
- ✓ Need farmland to be managed in a way that allows nature to coexist with the farming business
- ✓ Need rest of the landscape to be managed in a way that is biodiversity friendly

1. Collectively agree a realistic framework

- ✓ All-Ireland
- ✓ Cross-sectoral Steering Group
- ✓ Development involved public consultation

✓ **81** actions



✓ **186** actions

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

2. Plan your core message carefully – it should be clean and simple

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If you want to help implement the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan it is important to think about how your site can provide

food, shelter & safety

✓In doing this you start to help protect biodiversity generally

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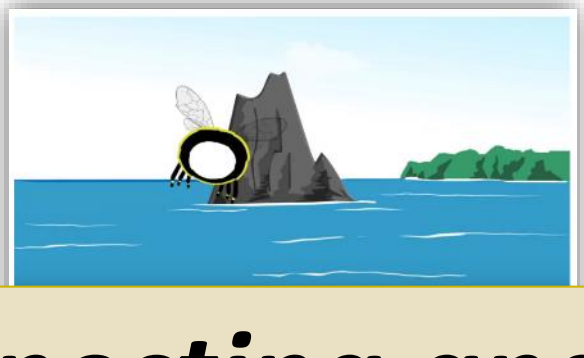
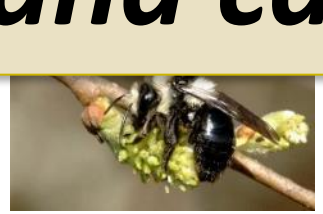
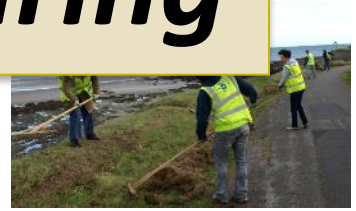
3. Messaging should be positive, constructive & celebrate the biodiversity we have



Connecting and caring





4. Solutions should be evidence-based and carefully tailored to the target audience

- ✓ Actions are all evidence-based
- ✓ Relevant sectors feed into development
- ✓ Communication is tailored each time

- ✓ Lots of **options**
- ✓ Positive - all actions are pragmatic & low cost
- ✓ **Free and easily accessible**

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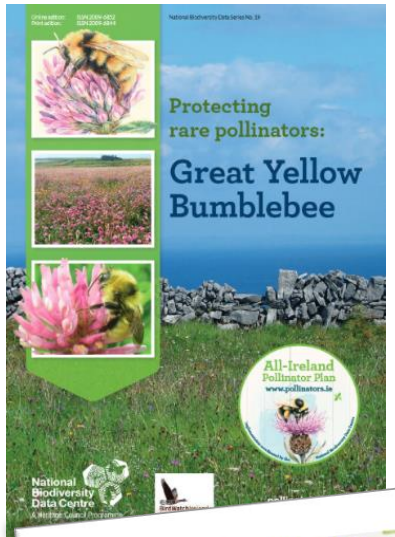
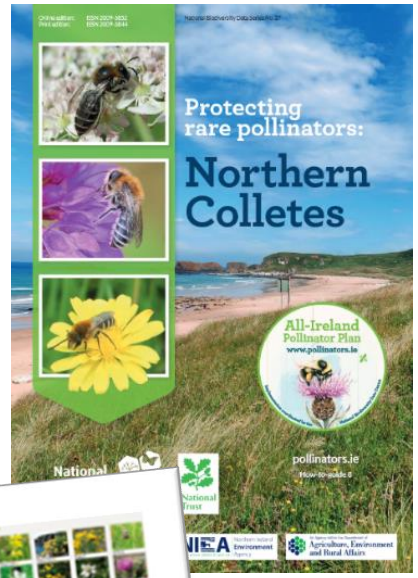
How-to-guide series

Series on rare & threatened species

2019

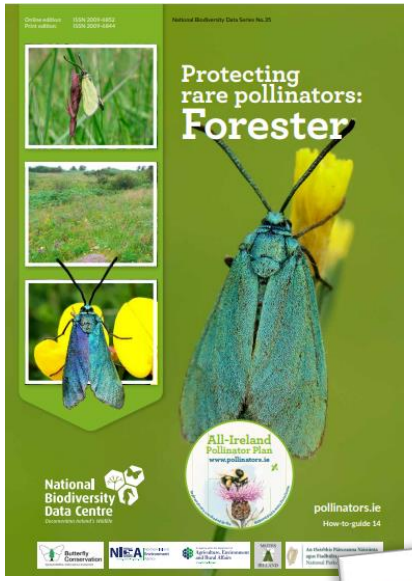


2022



2022

2024



2024

5. Information has to be easily accessible – free and using appropriate channels

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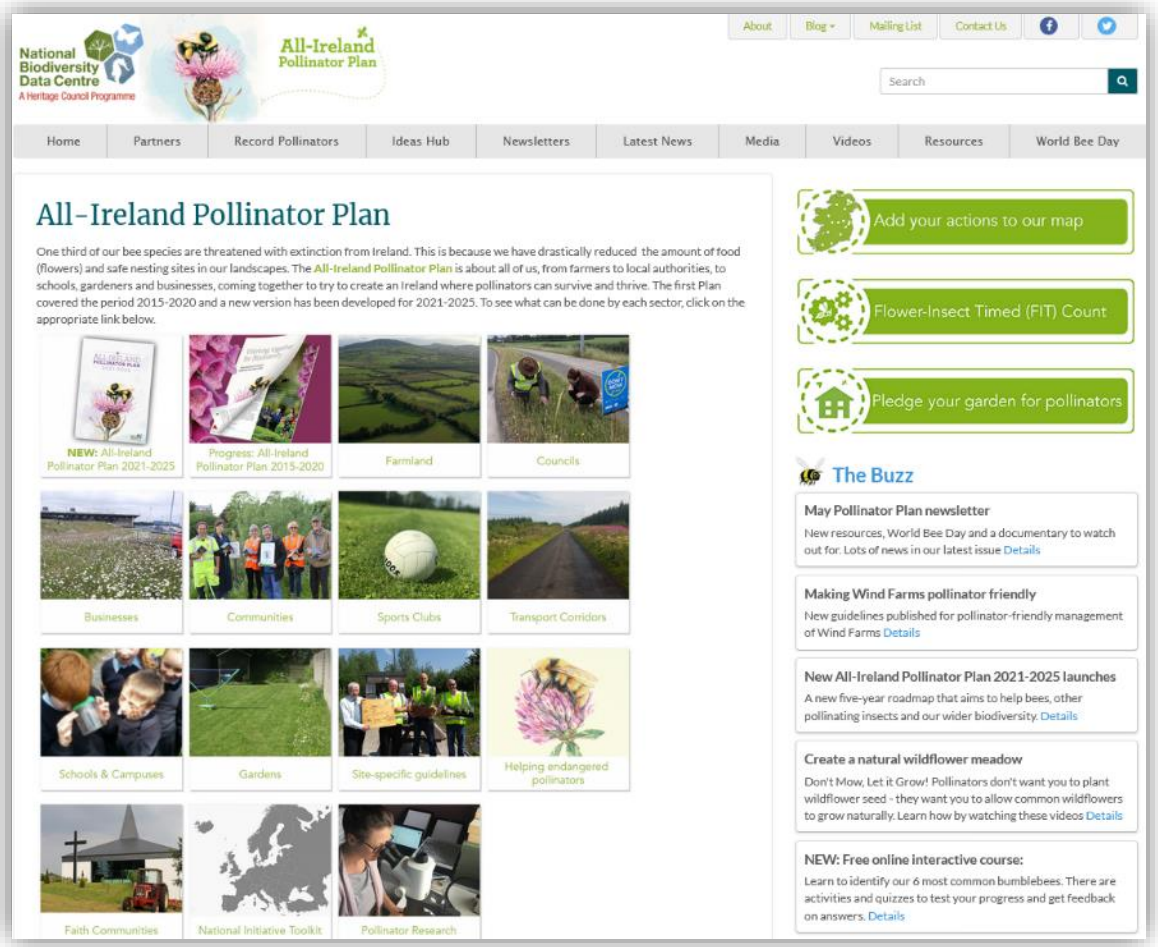


6. Work together as much as possible

Trying to create a societal shift in how we manage the landscape

Use existing networks/partnerships to encourage implementation and roll out

Green-Schools An Taisce

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

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Heritage Officer network

SuperValu TidyTowns

Origin Green IRELAND An initiative by Bord Bia Irish Food Board

GIY Grow it Yourself IRELAND

eco congregation Ireland

TII Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

GAA

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland

Origin Green IRELAND An initiative by Bord Bia Irish Food Board

Green Flag Award

Translink Ulster in Bloom

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Irish Garden Plant Society

bloom by Bord Bia

Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail

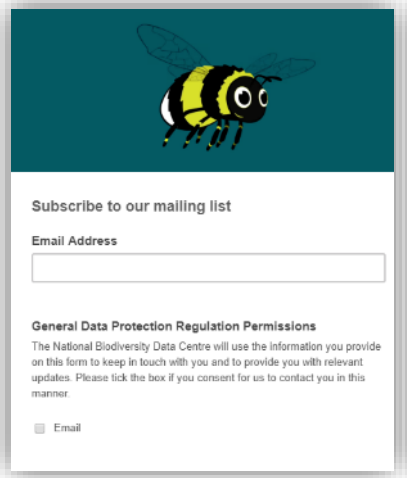
Translink

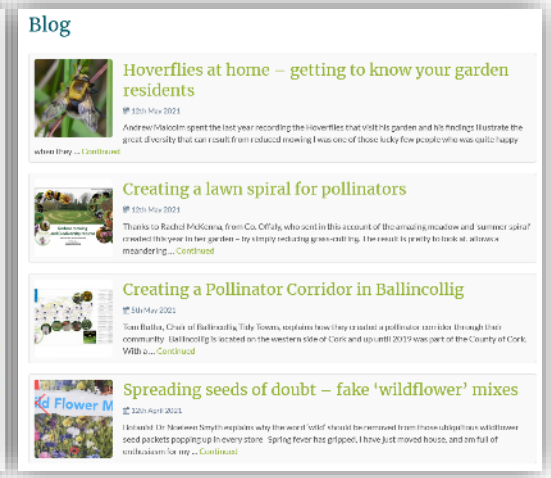
Department for Infrastructure www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

7. Continuously exchange knowledge and learn from each other

Be open to evolving, adapting and learning

- ✓ Monthly newsletter
- ✓ Social media
- ✓ Knowledge exchange events
- ✓ Regular knowledge exchange blogs





Resources were always intended to be living documents

2024 updates: Local Communities, Businesses

Self-assessment tool to:

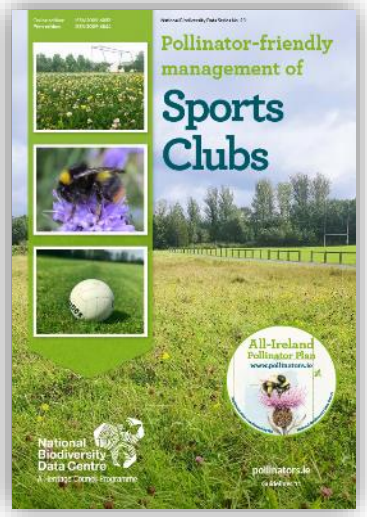
- ✓ Understand how important one action is compared to another
- ✓ Annually track progress
- ✓ Have a 'pollinator-friendly' threshold to aim for

ACTIONS	Maximum score	Yearly score
A: Identify and protect existing areas that are good for pollinators	15	
1: Protect existing sources of food and shelter		
Create a map showing existing areas that are already good for pollinators and biodiversity e.g. native flowering trees, hedgerows, and wild areas.	2	
Have a plan to protect these existing areas for biodiversity.	5	
Find out which pollinators have already been spotted in your local area using Biodiversity Maps. If you have rare species e.g., Large Carder Bee, follow the Pollinator Plan's specific guidelines for protecting these species.	3	
Have an ecologist conduct a biodiversity survey in your local area and provide tailored advice for managing it.	5	
B: Reduce mowing of grassy areas	20	
2: Create a long-flowering m		
Manage at least one long-flo across more than one locatio		
3: Create a short-flowering n		
Manage at least one quarter meadows.		
4: Let the Dandelions Bloom		
Manage at least half of all gra bloom in spring - first grass c flowered.		
C: Pollinator-friendly plantin		
Native planting:		
5: Maintain or plant a native		
Manage an existing or new n		
6: Plant native pollinator-frie		
Maintain or plant native local (1 point per 10 trees/shrubs)		
Ornamental planting:		
7: Plant an orchard of flower		
Create at least two orchards trees.		
8: Include po baskets		
Mix pollinato baskets.		
9: Plant polli		
Ensure at lea		
10: Plant orn		
Ensure at lea and planted in appropriate lo		
11: Plant pollinator-friendly perennials		
Create at least three beds of pollinator-friendly perennials, each at least 4m².	3	
D: Provide wild pollinator nesting habitat	5	
12: Provide nesting habitat for bumblebees		
Area of long grass left as nesting sites for bumblebees and other insects (1 point per 10m2)	2	
13: Provide nesting habitat for mining solitary bees		
Manage at least 10 bare areas of soil, each with an area of at least 50cm².	2	
14: Provide nesting habitat for cavity-nesting solitary bees		
Drill holes in untreated wooden blocks or put small bee hotels in appropriate locations close to food sources		
E: Reduce or eliminate		
avoided.	2	
pollinators in your local area	10	
18: Promote the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan resources in your community.	1	
19: Run one biodiversity event or engagement project in your community each year.	2	
20: Work with the local authority and other groups to connect areas of suitable habitat – identify potential ecological corridors.	5	
21: Put up signage.	2	
G: Tracking progress and receiving recognition	10	
22: Log your 'Actions for Pollinators' on the online mapping system	5	
23: Submit annual Flower-Insect-Timed (FIT) Counts	2	
24: Take part in the Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme	3	
TOTAL POINTS	**100**	

Scoring system to assess how pollinator friendly (out of 100)

8. Try to communicate in the best way possible

- ✓ **Peer-to-peer**, where possible
- ✓ Try to communicate **active messages** – lots of different ways to help
- ✓ Try to deliberately reach **new audiences**



green club GAA

Causeway Hospital becomes first healthcare site to support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Need biodiversity actions, not token greening

Need interconnected networks of habitats and we need to seriously look at pesticide use

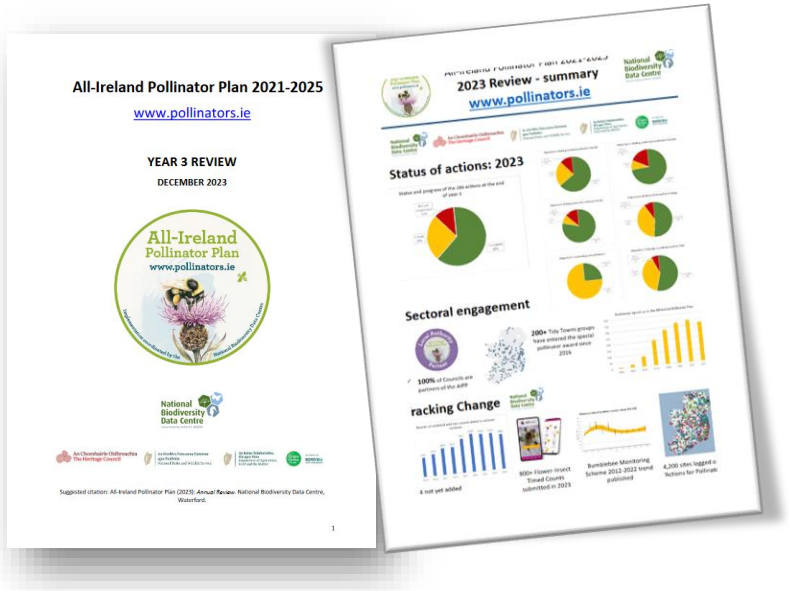
- ✓ Requires transformative change
- ✓ Need to take evidence-based actions for biodiversity, not the ones humans like best
- ✓ Need to avoid spending money where the positive impact would have been greater by doing less
- ✓ Not about gardening nature – need to get to a landscape where biodiversity can coexist with minimal human support

The benefits to biodiversity, climate, and to human health & well-being would be huge

9. Manage in an open and transparent way – give recognition to those helping

Together we can make a difference **- no one is being asked to go it alone**

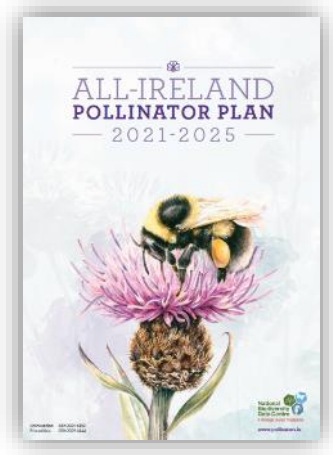
- ✓ Annual reviews
- ✓ Supporter frameworks
- ✓ Awards
- ✓ Pollinator champions



https://pollinators.ie/aipp-2021-2025/annual-reviews/

10. Track progress – people want to know what they are doing is working

1. Track implementation of the actions in the Plan



Those who have responsibility for actions have to report their progress once a year

2. Track creation of pollinator habitat/resources

Publicly available online mapping system: https://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie

3. **Track changes in pollinators within the landscape**

National Pollinator Monitoring Schemes, launched 2022

Citizen Science initiatives: groups/individuals can track the impact of their own actions

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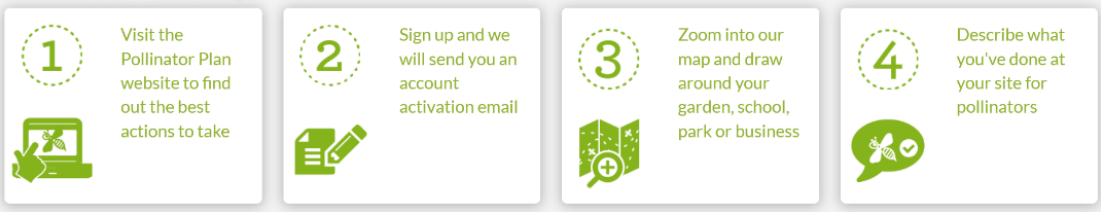
PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE GIS-BASED MAPPING SYSTEM ALLOWS ALL ACTIONS TO BE LOGGED

https://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie



--- Site type ---

--- Attribute name ---

SHOW ALL

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Site Details

Site Name	Kilmacthomas
Date	23/06/2023
Type	Local Communities (including Tidy Towns)
Area	184 m2
B. Reduce mowing	Area managed as long-flowering meadow-1 grass cut & lift/year (m2) - 15

CLOSE

Site Details

Site Name	Carroll's Cross
Date	30/09/2022
Type	Businesses
Area	58870 m2
A. Protect existing pollinator habitats	Length of existing flowering hedgerow protected (m) - 132
B. Reduce mowing	One third of all grassy areas mown under a pollinator friendly regime-5 cut and lifts/year (m2) - 2000
C. Pollinator friendly planting	Pollinator friendly perennial bed planted (m2) - 64
D. Provide nesting habitats	Length of native hedgerow planted/managed for pollinators (m) - 630 (tree's/ditches around the wetlands)
F. Raising awareness of pollinators	Number of other pollinator friendly guidelines/leaflets distributed - EnvironmentalWeek 2022
H. Other	Works are being planned to develop wildflower areas for late 2022/early 2023.

CLOSE

Site Details

Site Name	Maypark Garden
Date	09/02/2017
Type	Gardens
Area	258 m2
B. Reduce mowing	Area where Dandelions are allowed to bloom- first grass cut delayed till mid-April (m2) - 30 Area mown every 6 weeks to allow Clover to bloom (m2) - 30 Area managed as long-flowering meadow-1 grass cut & lift/year (m2) - 5
C. Pollinator friendly planting	SPRING-flowering pollinator friendly plants/trees/shrubs - Berberis, Broom, Crocus, SUMMER-flowering pollinator friendly plants/trees/shrubs - Catmint, Lavender, Wallflower, Laburnum, Oregano, Currants, Raspberry, Tomato, Apple, Thyme AUTUMN-flowering pollinator friendly plants/trees/shrubs - Ivy
D. Provide nesting habitats	Area of earth bank or bare soil created for mining bees (m2) - 0.5 Plant stems left standing (type) - Raspberry Number of holes drilled in wood - 5
E. Reduce pesticide use	Insecticide use eliminated Herbicide use eliminated
F. Raising awareness of pollinators	Junior Pollinator Plan promoted (number of children reached) - 5
G. Tracking progress	Garden pollinator records submitted to data centre

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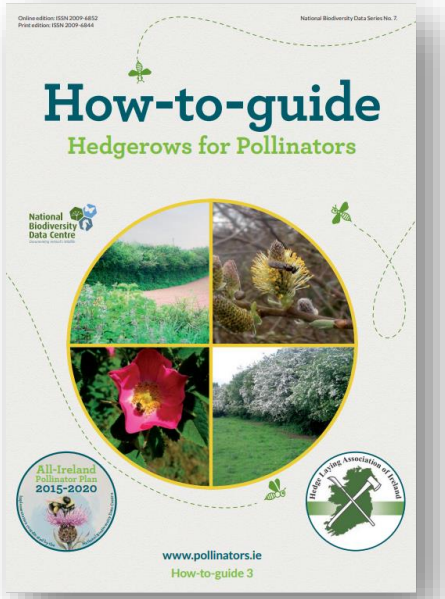
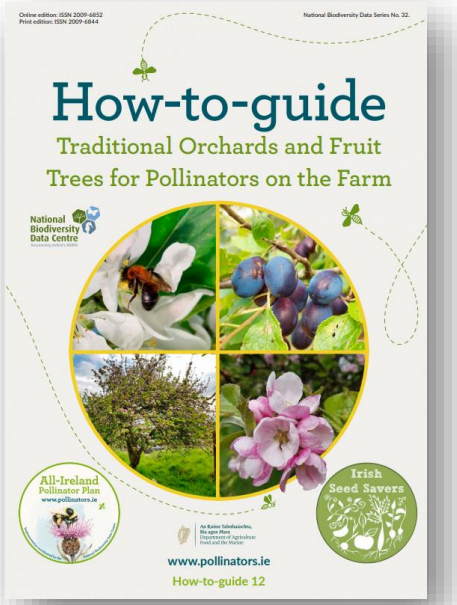
All-Ireland
Pollinator Plan
www.pollinators.ie
Implementation coordinated by the
National Biodiversity Data Centre

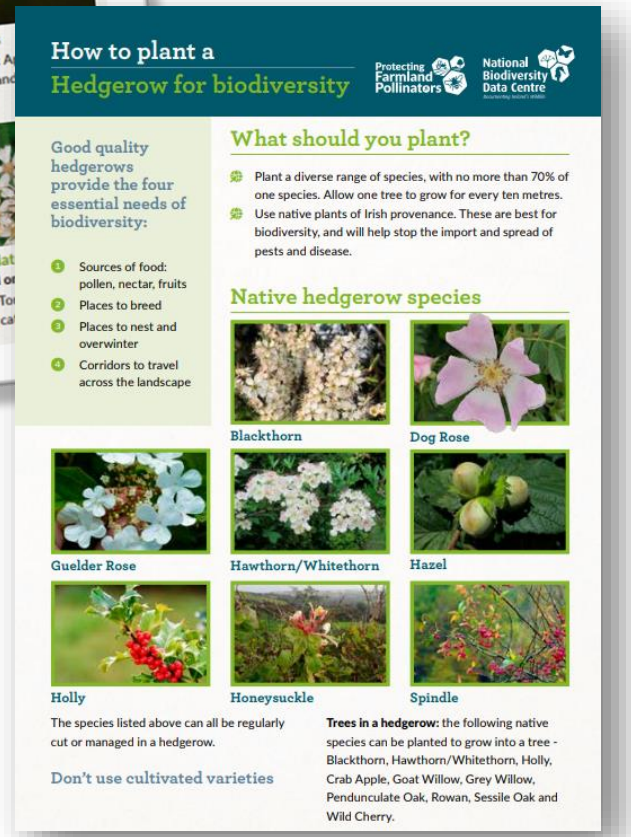
FARMLAND

https://pollinators.ie/farmland

https://pollinators.ie/farmland





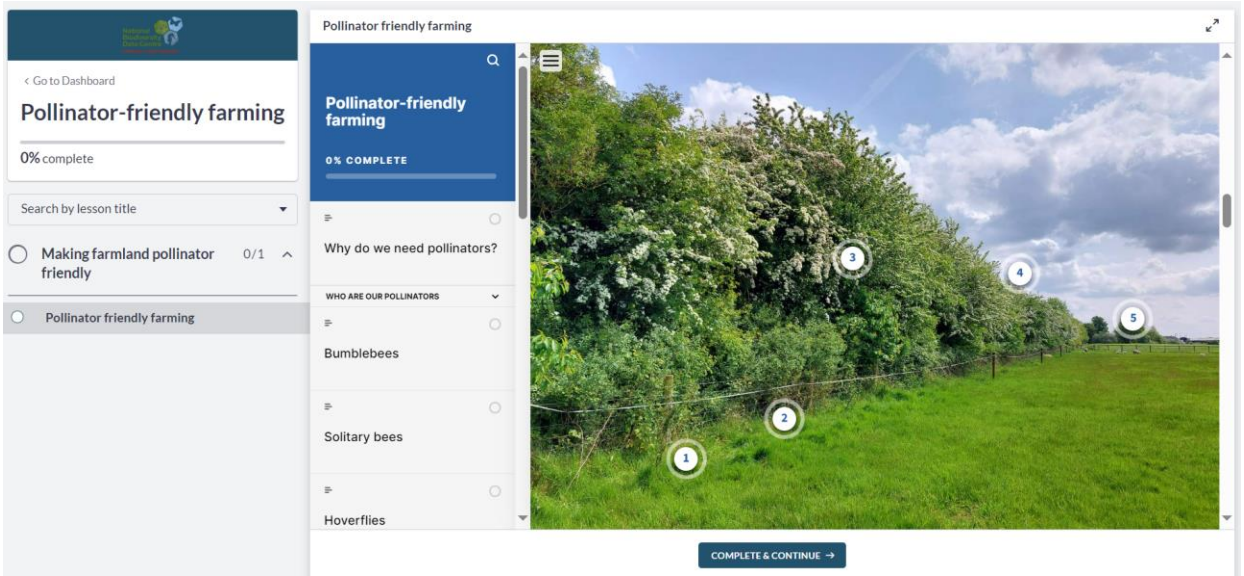


Pollinator-friendly farming

Welcome to this course for farmers, farm advisors and agricultural students, as part of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, implemented by th...

Free

2024: online training course for farmers, farm advisors and agricultural students



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Protecting Farmland Pollinators

2019-2023

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Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

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Worked with a pilot group of 40 farmers to co-develop a **Farmland Biodiversity Tool**

Evidence-based whole-farm scoring system that identifies how pollinator friendly the farm is

Protecting Farmland Pollinators

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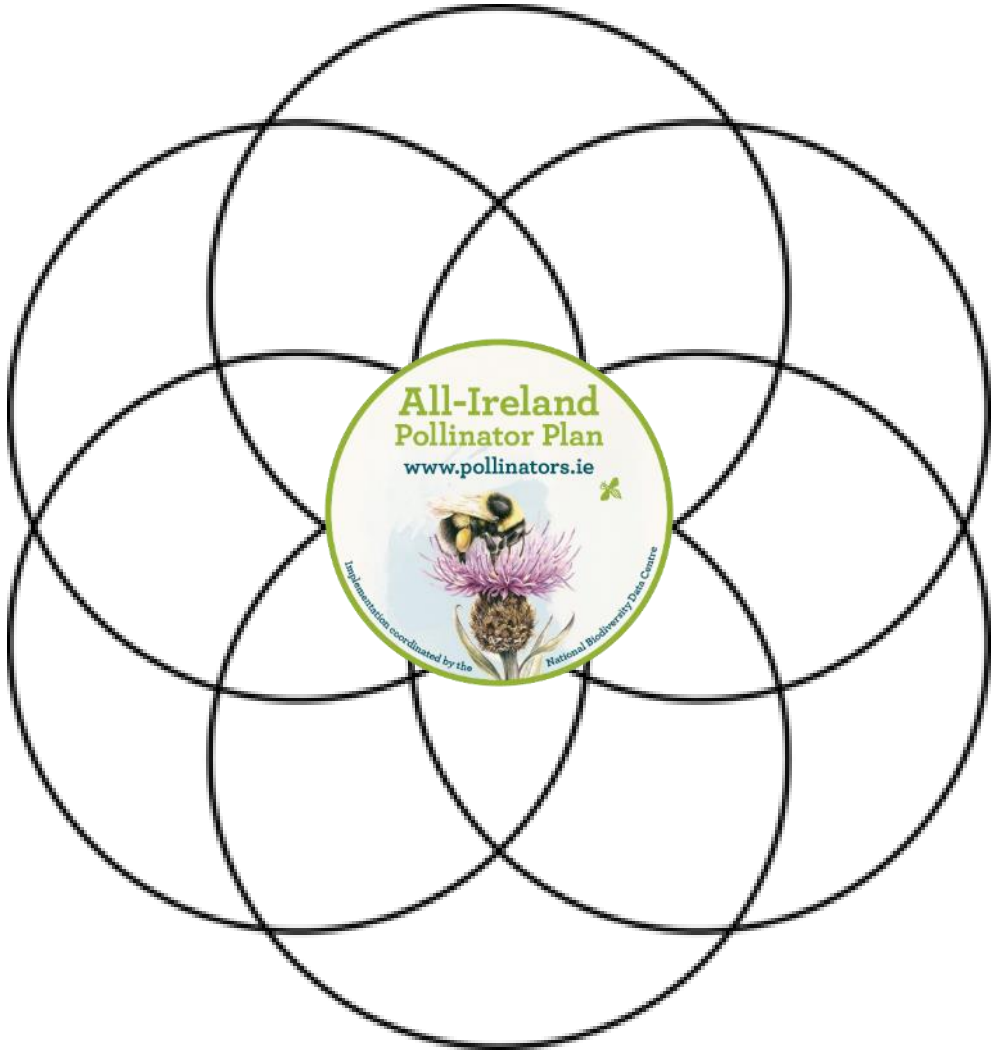
Score against actions

ACTION	POINTS
Hedgerows	25
Meadows & flowering pastures	20
Reductions in pesticide use	20
Non-farmed areas	10
Native trees	5
Margins/buffer strips	10
Wetlands habitats	10
TOTAL	**100**



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Lots of small actions, taken together, can begin to solve big problems

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THANK YOU

National Biodiversity Data Centre
Documenting Ireland's Wildlife
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council
An tSeirbhís Páirceanna Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúlra
National Parks and Wildlife Service
An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Origin Green IRELAND
An initiative by BORD BIA IRISH FOOD BOARD