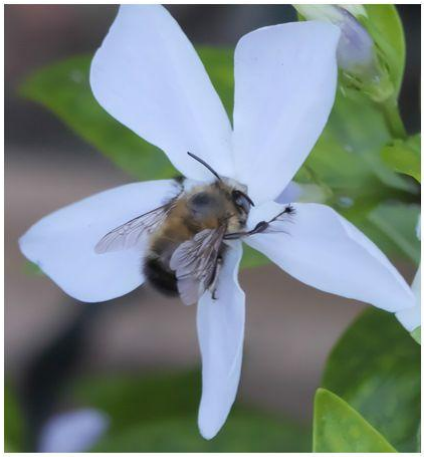
Newsletter: March 2026

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is a framework bringing together different sectors across the island of Ireland to create a landscape where pollinators can survive and thrive. Its implementation is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

To spot this month: keep an eye out for the Hairy-footed Flower Bee

This species was first spotted in March 2022 in Harold's Cross in Dublin City. It is a large solitary bee, but can look like a bumblebee. The males and females can be different to each other. The female can resemble a small black bumblebee with distinctive orange hairs on the hind leg. In Britain, it shows a preference for Lungwort. Males have light brown/ginger hairs all over their body and cream markings on their face. They also have distinctive long orange hairs on their middle legs and feet, which is where the species gets its name. Their quick darting flight motion is a good way to tell them apart from bumblebees. Keep an eye out and send a photo if you think you find any new populations this spring!



Hairy-footed Flower Bee Male

Hairy-footed Flower Bee Female

Submit your solitary bee sightings

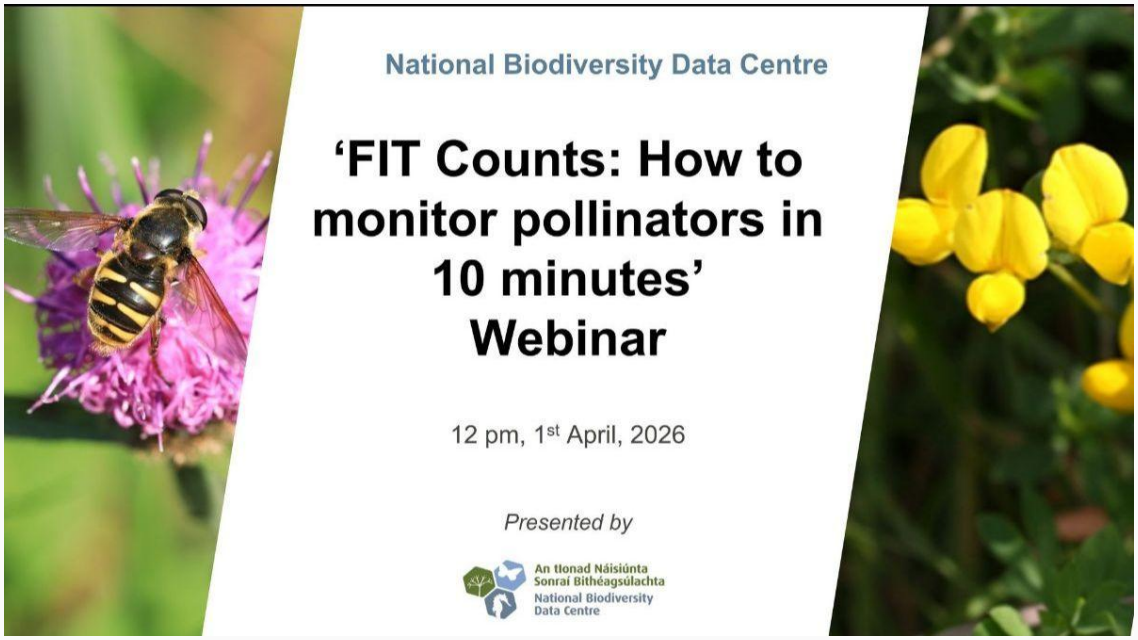
Information on the species in Britain

Free webinar: Flower-Insect-Timed Counts

As flowers begin to bloom and more insects emerge, it’s the perfect time to get ready for the busy recording season ahead. The National Biodiversity Data Centre is running a free webinar on **1 April at 12pm** on Flower-Insect-Timed Counts (FIT Counts), which will give you everything you need to get started with 10-minute pollinator monitoring.

Discover how you can play a vital role in monitoring insects in your garden, local park, or anywhere you find a patch of flowers. The session will cover how FIT Count surveys work, what data is collected and why it matters, how your counts contribute to understanding pollinator trends, and practical tips on how to recognise different insect groups.

Whether you're completely new to insect recording or looking to build your recorder skills, this webinar will give you everything you need to get started.



Register for free

New solitary bee course

The National Biodiversity Data Centre has recently launched a new online course on Ireland's leafcutter bees, mason bees, sharp-tailed bees and wool carder bees. Ireland is home to over 100 different bee species, most of which are solitary. Unlike bumblebees or the Honey Bee, these bees do not form colonies, instead they choose to nest solitarily. They are important pollinators and many of them are among our most widespread and familiar solitary bees.

The course includes tips on where to find these solitary bees, how to identify them as well as an overview on submitting records on the National Biodiversity Data Centre's Citizen Science Portal. With more citizen scientists recording solitary bees, we can build a more accurate picture of how these important pollinators are faring. The value of citizen science has already been demonstrated with the discovery of the Wool Carder Bee (*Anthidium manicatum*) and several other solitary bees on the island of Ireland over the past 10 years, all thanks to you!

Many of our solitary bees are starting to emerge, so now is the perfect time to enroll in the course and improve your identification skills. The course is completely free and can be accessed on the National Biodiversity Data Centre's online learning platform

Enrol for free

Happy National Tree Week!

National Tree Week runs from the 8th-15th March this year. It's the perfect time to remember why these beautiful plants are so important for pollinators. Many species, like Willow and Blackthorn, are vital sources of nectar and pollen, blooming early in the year when other sources of food are scarce.

Planting native trees is a popular activity, and a great way to create ecological corridors by joining up other habitats, but remember: Right tree, Right Place, Right Space.

Right Tree: Choose local provenance, native trees to prevent diseases, and so that your tree is genetically suited to your area.

Right Place: We need a mosaic of habitats to support biodiversity, not just trees. Avoid planting in places that are already valuable for nature, such as species-rich grassland.

Right Space: Think about what will happen to the tree in the future: how tall will it grow? Will it produce fruit that will fall? You want your tree to last a long time, so make sure you pick a suitable space for it.

Find out more in 'Planting Trees for Pollinators', a resource produced with the support of the Tree Council of Ireland, the Native Woodland Trust, and Trees on the Land.

Planting trees for pollinators

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