



## Newsletter: April 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.

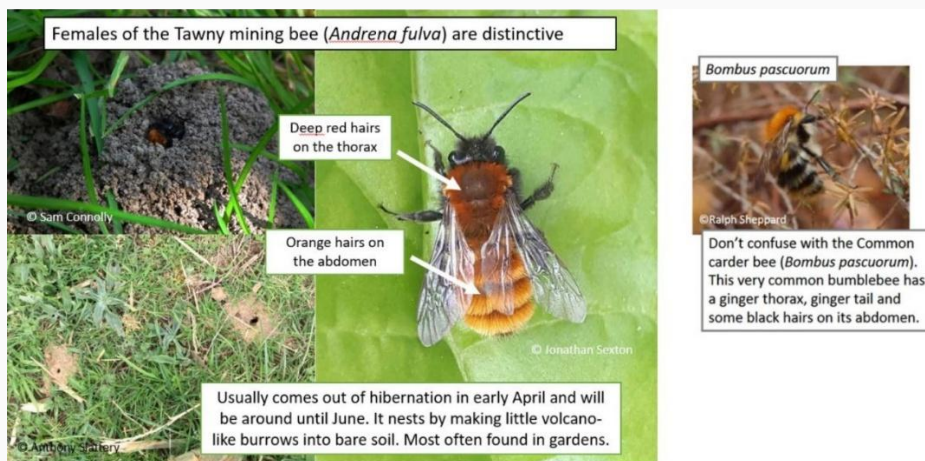
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### To spot this month: keep an eye out for the Tawny Mining Bee

This is one of our most distinctive solitary bees – look out for deep red hairs on the thorax and orange hairs on the abdomen. It usually comes out of hibernation in April and will be around until June. It nests by making little volcano-like burrows into bare soil and can be found in gardens.

The Tawny Mining bee (*Andrena fulva*) was thought to be extinct for 87 years in Ireland, before being rediscovered in 2012. It is now known from counties Down, Dublin, Wicklow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Kildare, Carlow & Waterford.

Can you help find more new populations?



[Submit your solitary bee sightings](#)

## Which food plants were most popular with wild bees in 2025?

Every year, the National Biodiversity Data Centre receives thousands of bee sightings. In 2025, 1,728 records were submitted, including information on what flower the bee was feeding on. A huge thank you to everyone who sent in foraging data as it allows us to get a sense of what flowers they prefer. This year's data again shows the importance of native plants and of simple actions like reduced mowing. Once again, Dandelions came out on top - evidence once again that this often overlooked native wildflower plays a vital role for hungry wild bees.

Find out more in the blog below, including a summary of which plants are key each month and how you can grow them.

(Below: a bumblebee forages on White clover. Pic: Cathal Noonan.)



[Read more](#)

## It's time for Flower-Insect Timed Counts again!

FIT Counts are an important way that you can help us monitor pollinators. They are a quick and easy survey that involves watching a 50cm x 50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit. Anyone can get involved, and you can carry out a FIT Count anywhere, and on any flower, but where you can, please use one of our 15 target flowers. In April, it's especially useful to carry out FIT Counts on Dandelion. You do need to wait until it's sunny and at least 13C though!

In 2025, 1,323 validated FIT Counts were submitted by 235 different volunteers. The average number of insects per FIT Count was 9. The most common insect group recorded were other flies followed by hoverflies then bumblebees. Gardens were the most common habitat where FIT Counts were carried out in last year. Visit the FIT Count website to download the 2025 newsletter and see the full results of the scheme. An app is available for Ireland that allows you to carry out a FIT Count and upload the results in one go.

**Pollinator monitoring: Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT Counts)**  
<https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/>  
 Watch a 50cm x 50cm patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit. This scheme runs from April until September.

**National Biodiversity Data Centre**  
Observing Ireland's Wildlife

**APRIL** Target Flowers for April 2026: **Dandelion, buttercups and white dead-nettle**

**April 2025**  
 Total number of FIT Counts 195  
 Average Insects/FIT Counts 8.2

**FIT Counts by Target Flowers in April 2025**

Target Flower	Percentage
Dandelion	62%
Other	31%
Hawthorn	4%
Buttercup	2%
Thistle	1%
Heathers	0%

**April 2025 628 insect visits to Dandelion**

Insect Group	Percentage
Other flies	32%
Small insects	27%
Hoverflies	24%
Bumblebees	5%
Solitary bees	4%
Honeybees	4%
Wasps	2%
Beetles	1%
Butterflies/moths	1%

Solitary bee on dandelion  
(Michelle Larkin)

Based on the 2025 data, other flies, small insects and hoverflies were the most common visitors to Dandelions in April

[Download Android app from Google Play](#)

[Download Apple \(iPhone/iPad\) app from the App Store](#)

### To do this month: Let Dandelions Bee!

This month will see the biggest bloom of Dandelions. These native wildflowers are vital sources of nectar and pollen. Records sent to the National Biodiversity Data Centre in 2024 showed that Dandelions were the most popular food source for wild bees. Help feed hungry pollinators this month and #LetDandelionsBee.

Reducing mowing even to once a month can help feed our hungry pollinators. By mowing less, you are giving native wildflowers a chance to pop up naturally. Over time this will result in pockets of species-rich grassland: a vital habitat providing food and shelter for pollinators. If you're taking part in No Mow May this year and you're worried about grass growth, cut your lawn before the end of April. This will ensure the height is manageable when it's time to mow again. Make sure you remove grass clippings to help wildflowers grow.

# Create a short-flowering meadow

By mowing just once a month, you can give native wildflowers and insect friendly grasses a chance to pop up naturally and help feed hungry wild bees. No seeds needed!



## April:

### #Let Dandelions Bee

 When you mow, make sure you remove grass clippings so wildflowers can grow.

## May:

### #No Mow May



## June:

### #Let it Bloom June



Be creative when you mow! Cut pathways, spirals, and shapes.



## July:

### #Help Them Fly July



## August:



If your grass gets too tall at any stage, trim it with blades raised high to save the wildflowers. Leave some corners to grow long.



Want to do more? Create a long-flowering meadow by cutting once a year in September.

Find out more at [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)

Photos: Steven Falk

[Create a short-flowering meadow](#)

## The NBDC is recruiting for Pollinator Monitoring Research Assistants - deadline 17th April

The National Biodiversity Data Centre is seeking to appoint two Pollinator Monitoring Research Assistants - one to ensure standardised monitoring across the island under the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, and one with a focus on moths to support delivery of the EU Pollinator Monitoring Scheme in Ireland. This would be an ideal opportunity for someone who would like to gain experience in insect pollinator identification and fieldwork survey techniques. Training will be provided to the successful candidate if necessary.



**An tIonad Náisiúnta  
Sonraí Bithéagsúlachta**  
**National Biodiversity  
Data Centre**

[Read more and download the candidate information booklets](#)

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