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## Newsletter: May 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 Red Mason Bee

This is another of our more distinctive solitary bees – look out for rounded abdomen with orange hairs. This species is commonly found in gardens and will nest in existing cavities – usually loose masonry or bee boxes. It is estimated that just one of these females can do the pollination work of over a hundred honey bees!

Can you help find more new populations?

## Red Mason Bee

Commonly found in gardens. Nests in existing cavities, often loose mortar or bee boxes. Found from April-June

Females have black hairs on head and small 'horns' on face

Rounded abdomen with orange hairs

© John Breen

[Submit your solitary bee sightings](#)

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### Welcome to No Mow May!

No Mow May is an annual campaign started by Plantlife in the UK, asking everyone to put away the lawnmower during the month of May to help native wildflowers and grasses grow.

Native Irish wildflowers like Dandelions, Clover, and Birds-foot trefoil provide the best source of pollen and nectar for our hungry wild pollinators. By mowing less, we can give them a chance to appear naturally – no seeds needed!

But May is just the start. Mowing less all summer is one of the best things you can do to help pollinators. So why not start your low-mow summer and keep it going with Let it Bloom June and Help them Fly July?

Ashy Mining Bee

# #NoMow May

Don't mow, let it grow  
Join the buzz to save the bees

[www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)

Pic: Lill Dunne



[No Mow May homepage](#)

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## Guest blog: Tracking Dalkey's Bumblebees

Every year, volunteers walk a set 1-2km route once a month between March and October, recording sightings of our eight most common bumblebees. This provides vital baseline data that is used to assess the impact of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

In this guest blog, Fiona Treacy of Dalkey Tidy Towns tells us how the community have tracked local bumblebees through the Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme, and how these important pollinators are bouncing back thanks to their efforts to help nature thrive.



[Read 'Tracking Dalkey's Bumblebees'](#)

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### **Louth students launch Meadow Magic film**

Students from Mullaghbuoy National School, Co. Louth, and Dundalk Institute of Technology have unveiled a brand-new short film, 'Meadow Magic', that puts a spotlight on the magic of our grasslands and encourages each of us to leave space for nature to bloom.

Students aged between seven to ten years old got involved in every element of film production, from acting and scriptwriting to sound, filming and all the behind-the-scenes magic. The experience gave them new skills, confidence and a stronger appreciation for the nature on the Cooley Peninsula.

The project was funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) through the Local Authority Biodiversity Action Fund, in partnership with Louth County Council, with support from DKIT, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, and Ceangal.



[Watch the Meadow Magic film](#)

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## Skerries Wild Bee Festival 2026

The much-loved Skerries Wild Bee Festival returns for its 5th year, on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th June at Skerries Mills.

This year's festival programme includes a fantastic line-up of speakers, guided walks and hands-on activities, with something for everyone from curious beginners and families to gardeners, nature lovers and pollinator enthusiasts.

Throughout the weekend, visitors can enjoy sessions including Naomi Lavelle's Family Pollinator Science Workshop, Sarah Larragy on RestPoll and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, Brian Seales' Plant Walk in Skerries Mills Wildflower Meadow, Kate Harrington's Basic Bumblebee Identification Workshop, Charlie Heasman's talk on the weird and wonderful interactions of plants and pollinators, and a Birdwatch Ireland Bird Walk with Cathal Copeland.

There will also be face painting, arts and crafts stalls, storytelling and family-friendly activities.

# Skerries Annual Wild Bee Festival

Skerries Mills  
Saturday & Sunday  
13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026



[Eventbrite: Skerries Wild Bee Festival](#)

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## Mark World Bee Day by carrying out a FIT Count

Flower-Insect-Timed Counts (FIT Counts) 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 May, it's especially useful to carry out FIT Counts on Buttercup. Why not carry out a FIT Count for World Bee Day on the 20th of May and for National Biodiversity Week (Friday 15th – Sunday 24th of May)!

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 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.

**MAY**

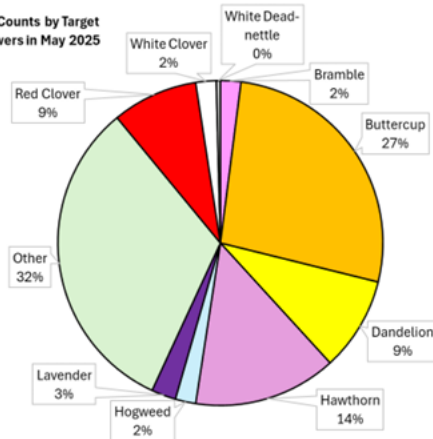
Target Flower for May 2025: **Buttercups and hawthorn**

### May 2025

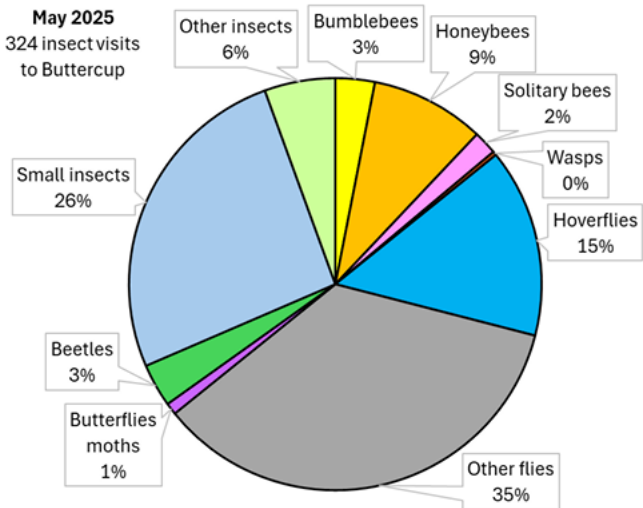
Total number of FIT Counts 246

Average Insects/FIT Counts 8.59

#### FIT Counts by Target Flowers in May 2025



#### May 2025 324 insect visits to Buttercup



Based on the 2025 data, small insects and other flies were the most common visitors to Buttercups in May

[Download Android app from Google Play](#)

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

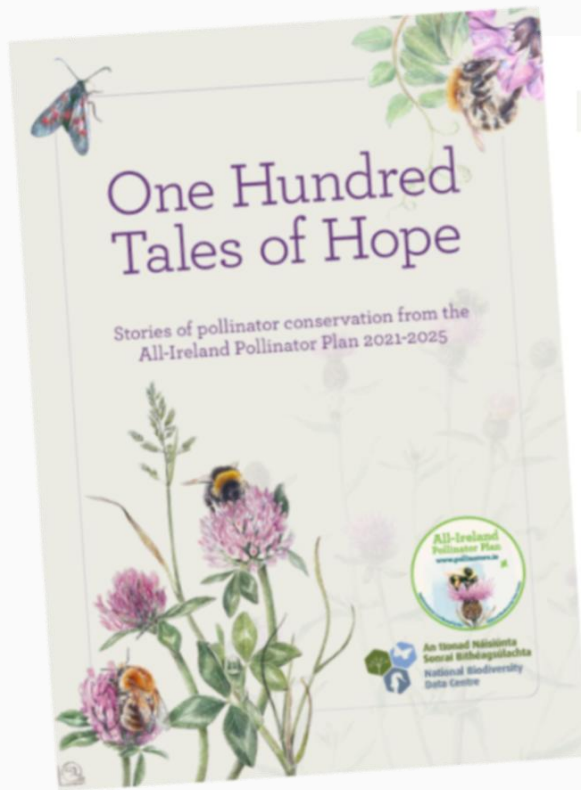
## 100 Tales of Hope for World Bee Day

To celebrate World Bee Day on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, the National Biodiversity Data Centre is releasing a new free booklet shining a spotlight on 100 good news stories of pollinator conservation from across the island of Ireland.

*100 Tales of Hope: Stories from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025* celebrates the hard work of local communities, farmers, councils, gardeners, schools and businesses, who have transformed their land to help wild bees during the most recent phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

The stories in this booklet provide vital inspiration in a time of biodiversity crisis and serve as an important reminder that even in the face of pollinator declines, there are many reasons to hope. With beautiful illustrations by artist Shevaun Doherty, the 'tales of hope' represent people across society, from all sectors and with many different backgrounds, all coming together behind a shared goal to create a landscape where pollinators can survive and thrive.

100 Tales of Hope: Stories from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 will be published on [pollinators.ie/news](http://pollinators.ie/news) on 20th May 2026.



[Available from Latest News on 20th May](#)



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