

Pledge your Garden for Pollinators

Our pollinating insects are in decline, with one-third of our 98 wild bee species at risk of extinction. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan aims to reverse these declines and make the island a place where pollinators can survive and thrive. By taking simple steps in your garden, you will help provide much-needed food and shelter for our pollinating insects, while creating a beautiful, colourful garden.



Pledge your garden for pollinators at www.pollinators.ie

See pollinators.ie/gardens for lots of advice, videos, pollinator-friendly plant lists and to download our booklet: **Gardens: Actions to Help Pollinators.**



Here is just a small sample of common pollinators you may see in your garden if you reduce grass-cutting and provide pollinator-friendly plants. And remember, if you help pollinators, you are also helping all our biodiversity.

Put your garden on the Map!

The Pollinator Plan's online mapping system tracks actions for pollinators across the island. Please add your pollinator-friendly garden to our map at: pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie



The **Red-tailed bumblebee** is all black apart from its red tail. It is very common in gardens.



The **Early bumblebee** is Ireland's smallest bumblebee. It is excellent at pollinating fruit and vegetables, especially raspberries.



This **Marmalade hoverfly** is common in gardens. The adults feed on nectar, but the larvae feed on aphids, making this a very useful garden visitor!



Leaf-cutter Bees cut circles of leaves or petals to line their nest. We have five different types in Ireland. These are the bees most likely to use your garden bee box.



The **Grey mining bee** is black with two grey stripes. Like most of our 62 solitary bee species in Ireland, it nests by making tiny little burrows in bare soil.

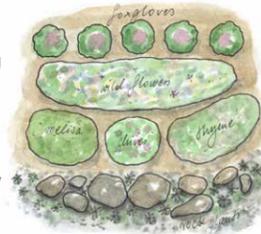


The **Garden Tiger moth** is just one of approx. 1,400 moth species in Ireland. Its larvae feed on Dandelion leaves.

Here are just some ideas for ways you can help pollinators each month:

January

Make a pollinator plan for your garden
Wild pollinators are hibernating now and don't need our help just yet, but you can use this time to get prepared. Look through all our tips, videos and plant lists at www.pollinators.ie, and draw up a 'pollinator plan' for your garden.



February

Create solitary bee nesting sites
Expose a south/east-facing bank by removing vegetation for mining bees. Or erect a small bee hotel for cavity-nesting bees. See **'Creating Wild Pollinator Nesting Habitat'** guide at pollinators.ie/gardens



March

Let Dandelions Bee
The humble *Dandelion* is a super food for pollinators. If you can avoid cutting your lawn while *Dandelions* are flowering in March and April, you will be helping to provide much-needed food for early pollinators.



April

Pots for Pollinators
Even if you only have a very small garden or none at all, you can still help. Plant a 'pot for pollinators' to flower on your patio, balcony or window sill throughout the season. See instruction guide at pollinators.ie/gardens



May

No Mow May
Could you leave your lawn mower in the garage during May? This will allow *Red* and *White Clover* to bloom in your lawn to feed the hungry bees.
(True bee-lovers cut their grass just once a month – at the end of June, July and August – to let wildflowers bloom all summer!)



June

Ask your garden centre for pollinator-friendly plants
Unfortunately *Daffodils*, *Tulips*, and traditional bedding plants, such as *Begonias* or *Petunias*, are of little value to pollinators. But there are lots of pollinator-friendly options to choose from. See pollinators.ie/resources



July

Hanging baskets can be pollinator-friendly too
Considering a hanging basket? Make sure it contains *Bidens* or *Bacopa*, pollen-rich flowers that do well in containers.



August

Collect wildflower seeds
It is important to only plant native wildflower seed of local provenance. August is a good time to collect seed locally from your favourite wildflowers. This can be grown on in pots and then added as plugs to your wildflower patch. See our guide **'Collecting and using pollinator-friendly Wildflower Seed'** at pollinators.ie/resources



September

Cut long-flowering meadows now
If you have a long-flowering annual meadow area, it is very important to cut and 'lift' or remove clippings now. This helps to reduce fertility of the soil (wildflowers grow best in less fertile soils).



October

Plant a shrub, tree or native hedgerow
Add a pollinator-friendly shrub or tree to your garden that will flower and provide food for pollinators for years to come. There are lots of different types and sizes to choose from!



November

Plant bee-friendly bulbs
Plant pollinator-friendly bulbs such as *Crocus* or *Snowdrops* now, to flower next February/March. This will give early bumblebees a good start to the new year.



December

Take willow cuttings locally to plant in your garden
Willow can be grown easily from cuttings. (It's best to plant well away from house to avoid damaging pipework.) Don't forget you can also create pollinator-friendly gardens in your school, business, or housing estate. Winter is a good time to make plans.





A pollinator-friendly garden provides **FOOD** in the form of pollen-rich flowers, **SHELTER** for nesting, and **SAFETY** by eliminating chemicals. Try to make sure your garden has pollinator-friendly flowers in bloom from mid-February through to the end of October.

FOOD

Plant big patches of each pollinator-friendly plant for better foraging efficiency.

FOOD

Plant pollinator-friendly containers. Choose pollinator-friendly bulbs, such as *Crocus*, which will flower in early spring.

FOOD

Allow *Ivy* and *Bramble* to grow in a corner of your garden as they provide important food sources in late summer and autumn for pollinators.



IVY

BRAMBLE

FOOD

Reduce mowing to allow wildflowers to bloom around your lawn in patches or strips (you don't have to buy wildflower seed! just stop mowing).

★ This is the most cost-effective way to help pollinators. The more of these flowers, the better:



DANDELION

DEAD NETTLE

SELFHEAL

BIRD'S-FOOT TREFOIL

CLOVER



SHELTER

Areas of long grass for bumblebees to nest.



FOOD

Plant pollinator-friendly shrubs.



BERBERIS

FIRETHORN

HEATHERS

MAHONIA

FOOD

Native flowering hedgerows, such as *Hawthorn* or *Blackthorn* provide important food in spring.



HAWTHORN

BLACKTHORN

FOOD

Plant pollinator-friendly trees such as *apple trees*, or native trees such as *Wild Cherry* or *Rowan*.



APPLE

ROWAN



SHELTER

Erect a small bee hotel for cavity-nesting solitary bees. You could also simply drill holes in walls or fencing.

SHELTER

Earth Banks bare soil/dry stone walls for nesting solitary bees.

Did you know only 10 species of Irish bees are likely to use a garden nest box, but we have 62 species of mining bees?

FOOD

Your fruit and veg. patch will benefit from pollinators and vice versa.

SAFETY

Avoid using harmful chemicals.

FOOD

Create a herb bed to benefit your cooking as well as the bees!



CHIVES

THYME

OREGANO

ROSEMARY

While reducing mowing and planting native trees and shrubs is always best for biodiversity, there are also lots of pollinator-friendly ornamental plants. Here is just a small selection:



GRAPE HYACINTH

WALLFLOWER

BROOM

COMFREY

ALLIUM

CATMINT

LAVENDER

STONECROP

RUDEBECKIA

SINGLE-FLOWERED DAHLIA

ASTER

SALVIA

HELLEBORUS

WILLOW

CROCUS

SNOWDROP

You can find lists of pollinator-friendly flowers, shrubs and trees at www.pollinators.ie