

Pollinator Count

Counts can be carried out between 1 April to 30 September. It is advised to do a baseline survey as soon as possible before any management work begins. Ideally you should aim to do one count per month to allow for monthly fluctuations. If monthly is not possible, do as many as you can. If you can only do 3 counts in a year (aim for 1 in early to mid spring, 1 late spring to early summer and 1 late summer). If you can only do 1, aim for late spring. Whichever option you go for repeat it at roughly the same time each year.

Counts can be carried out at any time of day provided it is during daylight hours. Counts can be carried out in any weather conditions (temperature permitting, see below) although if it is raining there are likely to be fewer pollinators out.

- If sky is clear (less than half cloud) the minimum temperature for a count is 13°C.
- If sky is cloudy (half cloud or more) the minimum temperature for a count is 15°C.

If you see any dramatic or unexpected fluctuations in your pollinator numbers, particularly month to month, you should check the weather listed against each count. If it is cooler, raining or particularly windy you are likely to see fewer pollinators than if it is warmer, dry or a calm day.

Where multiple sites require a count, you should carry out a separate count with a separate form for each location. If you are counting on a linear feature such as a path verge or unmown strip, simply walk the length (or part-length) and count all of the pollinators you see. If you are counting in an area, walk through the area in a zig-zag shape to take in the whole area. If it is a particularly large area you can count through a number of smaller sample areas.

Ensure you count the same distance or location each time. Each count should follow the same route and should be done at a similar speed, taking the same length of time. “Consistency” is the vital key word throughout. You may find it helpful to mark the area/s on a map, and you can use apps such as What3Words to mark the end points/ corners of the area chosen.

The results from this count will give you an idea of the abundance of pollinators at your location. It is not designed to give a detailed breakdown of all the different species present. For the purpose of these counts, pollinators have been split into ten groups based on the groups used by UK PoMS (UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme). Refer to their ID guide: <https://shorturl.at/gxMW2>

There are a number of things this data can be used for:

Compare data from one year to the next to see if pollinator abundance at your location is increasing, decreasing or staying the same. This can help give you an idea if your management is working. If your abundance is increasing year on year, your management is likely to be having a positive effect. If your abundance is decreasing you may need to change what you are doing slightly. That being said, there are a number of factors beyond your control which may also be causing them to decrease, such as pollution or climate change. You can compare your abundance levels to county or national abundance levels to help give an idea of this. It is important to note that in this age of decreasing biodiversity, if your pollinator abundance is staying the same year on year this is also likely to be a good sign for your location.

If you have multiple sites for a potential project but limited funds or time, you can use these abundance levels to help decide where to focus your efforts. You may decide to focus on the area with the lowest levels of pollinators as this is likely to result in the biggest increase in numbers.

If there are plans to change a management regime in an area, such as increasing the amount of mowing, you can use these counts to provide evidence to argue either for against proposed changes.

Pollinator Count

Name of Recorder:

Date: Time:.....

Weather:

Location:

Insect Group	Tally of number seen
Bumblebees	
Honeybees	
Solitary bees	
Wasps (including ichneumon wasps)	
Hoverflies	
Other Flies	
Butterflies and Moths	
Beetles (larger than 3mm)	
Any small insect less than 3mm long	
Other	