

## Bees The Pollinators

Bees are the most important pollinating insect, in Ireland crops such as apples, clover, strawberries and oilseed rape all benefit from pollination and a recent study from the Department of the Environment valued this 'ecosystem service' that bees provide at €85m a year to the economy.

2013: Worldwide study shows the decline of wild bees and other pollinators may be an even more alarming threat to crop yields than the loss of Honey Bees, revealing the irreplaceable contribution of wild insects to global food production.



Of the 100 crops that provide 90% of the world's food supply, 71 are pollinated by bees.



## Help Support Our Bees

Gardens are extremely important for bees, and vice versa. Bees need flowers for sustenance, and flowers need bees for pollination. It's vital you provide flowers throughout the Bumble Bee's life-cycle, from March to September. It's also a good idea to have at least two nectar or pollen-rich plants in flower at any one time during this period. So 'Let's Bee Friendly' by turning part of your garden into a Bumble Bee haven!

**Pledge your support to help our bees by planting at least one of the plants listed in your garden. Email your pledge to [bees@wexfordtidytowns.com](mailto:bees@wexfordtidytowns.com) Learn more at [www.wexfordtidytowns.com](http://www.wexfordtidytowns.com)**

## Gardener's Advice For Bees

Your garden should provide bee-friendly flowers, open cup shaped flowers are rich in pollen and nectar which bees can easily access from spring until late summer.

Flowers clustered into clumps of one species will attract more pollinators than individual plants scattered throughout the habitat patch.

Uncut verges and wildflower meadows benefit bees. Leave an area of your lawn uncut during summer to allow Clovers and Bird's-foot Trefoil to flower.

Leaving exposed areas of soil at the edges of lawns or creating south facing banks of sandy or clay soil will attract ground nesting species.

Plants listed inside are an excellent food source and will provide plenty for bees to forage on, while they pollinate our plants.

## Things to Avoid

Flower shapes that Bumble Bees cannot use include flowers that have petals that form long tunnels are too long or narrow for the bees to feed from. Flowers with multiple tightly packed heads also offer bees very little accessible food.

Some species have a habit of escaping from gardens and invading wild habitats nearby, for example, Rhododendron and Himalayan Balsam.

Flowers like Pansies and Double Begonias produce little or no pollen and nectar and offer little for Bumble Bees and other pollinators.

You should avoid using any pesticides in your garden, almost all of these can harm bees.

Learn more at [www.wexfordtidytowns.com](http://www.wexfordtidytowns.com)

## Wexford Tidy Towns Biodiversity Campaign



**LET'S BEE FRIENDLY** 



# Pollinator Friendly Flowers and When to Plant Them

## Spring Flowers - March and April



**Daffodil**



**Hawthorn**



**Rosemary**



**Willow**



**Flowering Currant**



**Broom**

## Early Summer Flowers - May and June



**Blue Geranium**



**Thyme**



**Sweet Pea**



**Honeysuckle**



**Chives**



**Cotoneaster**

## Late Summer Flowers - July and August



**Lavender**



**Marjoram**



**Heather**



**Sunflower**



**Rock Rose**



**Fuchsia**



For more information on how you can help the bees go to [www.wexfordtidytowns.com](http://www.wexfordtidytowns.com)

