

The National Biodiversity Data Centre has set a challenge for farmers to record some of the amazing biodiversity found on your farm during the year. We have 40 species for you to record.

Are you up for the challenge?

## Species: Marsham's Nomad Bee

Scientific Name: *Nomada marshamella*

Irish name: Beach Fáin Marsham

### Group

1 of 80 solitary bee species in Ireland.

A small cuckoo bee who preys on a variety of *Andrena* solitary bee species.

Check out our Solitary bee poster:

<https://pollinators.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Solitary-Bees-Poster-2022.pdf>

### How common on farms

Biodiversity surveys were carried out across 40 farms within the National Biodiversity Data Centre's 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators' EIP project (<https://biodiversityireland.ie/projects/protecting-farmland-pollinators/>). The 40 farms were chosen to reflect farms of differing types and intensity levels. The Marsham's Nomad Bee was recorded on fifteen of the 40 farms.



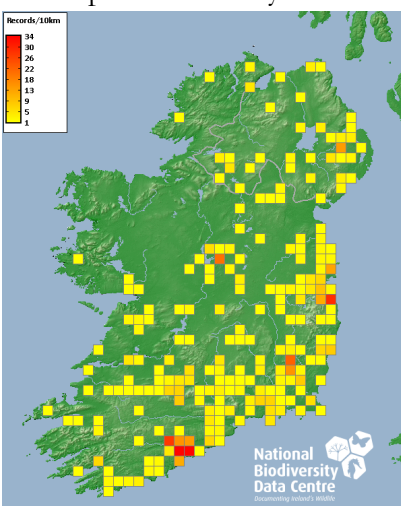
Marsham's Nomad bee. Note: Yellow spots the thorax. Abdomen with black and yellow strips, the 2nd yellow band is broken in the centre.

### Identification Tips

- The Marsham's Nomad bee is a medium to large sized solitary species (9-13mm).
- Yellow spots on the thorax where the wings attach.
- Abdomen with yellow and black strips, the second yellow band is broken in the centre.
- Orange-brown legs and orange antennae.
- Males are slightly smaller.

### Distribution

Widespread and fairly common.



Source: The Marsham's Nomad bee records as viewed on Biodiversity Maps, 2022.

## Biodiversity Tip No. 5 Encourage spring flowers

Spring flowers are vital for pollinators, like this beautiful Coltsfoot flower.

Encourage them to grow in non-farmed areas, at the base of the hedgerow and in field margins.



## Conservation Status

Red Lists are an internationally recognised methodology for assessing conservation status. An Irish Bee Red List was published in 2006. It found that the Marsham's Nomad Bee was not threatened with extinction from the island of Ireland. Based on the Red List, it is 'Least Concern'.

Known hosts: Chocolate mining bee *Andrena scotica* (Least Concern), Buffish mining bee *A. nigroaenea* (Vulnerable), Trimmer's mining bee *A. trimmerana* (Critically Endangered).

## Management Tips

*Food for the Marsham's Nomad Bee:*

On the farm:

- Encourage spring and early summer-blossoming shrubs and wildflowers, including Willow, Buttercup, Lesser celandine, Dandelion, Tormantil, Coltsfoot, and Daisy.

In the garden:

- Encourage or plant pollinator friendly plants  
<https://pollinators.ie/gardens/>

Nest sites:

- Marsham's nomad bee can be seen flying and lurching around their host *Andrena* solitary bee nest site burrows.
- Retain or create suitable solitary bee nest sites, find out more [https://biodiversityireland.ie/app/uploads/2022/05/ActionSheet\\_Solitary-Bees-WEB-2.pdf](https://biodiversityireland.ie/app/uploads/2022/05/ActionSheet_Solitary-Bees-WEB-2.pdf)

Reduce pesticide use:

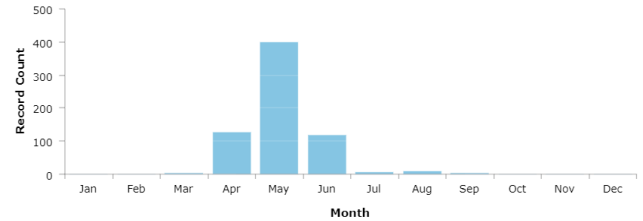
- This will ensure there are more wildflowers for pollinators to feed on and will increase overall bee health.



## When?

A spring species, generally be seen between April and September. The earliest it has been recorded in Ireland is 25 March (2017).

### Records per month across all datasets



National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, Marsham's Nomad Bee, *Nomada marshamella*, image, accessed 20 March 2023, <<https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Species/55600>>

## Where on the farm?

Found in a range of habitats, including hedgerows, woodland edges, field margins, non-farmed areas,

Females are particularly fond of foraging on Dandelion, also Willow, Buttercup and Tormantil.

## Value

- Solitary bees provide valuable 'pollination service'.
- Cross pollination of our wildflowers, helping them to be resilient, and boosting their fruiting ability for wildlife and the next generation.



The Chocolate mining bee (*Andrena scotica*), a known host for Marsham's nomad bee.

## Further Info

The Marsham's Nomad bee is one of Ireland's most common cuckoo bees. It uses the nests of other solitary bees, like the Chocolate mining bee *Andrena Scotica*, Buffish mining bee *A. nigroaenea* and the rare Trimmer's mining bee *A. trimmerana*.

As a cuckoo bee (also known as a cleptoparasite) it does not collect pollen.

Like most Nomad bees, they wait at the nest entrance of their target host species.

When they get an opportunity, they enter the nest and lay an egg in the cell wall, then leave.

It's offspring will develop more quickly than the host, which it will destroy with it's jaws.

It is also a wasp mimic with it's yellow and black strips.

## Similar species

Can be confused with Gooden's Nomad bee *Nomada goodeniana*, in this species the second yellow band on the abdomen is entire.

## Affected by a change in climate?

They may be affected by a change in their food plants flowering periods.

## Need some help with identification?

Just drop us a line, we'll be happy to help:  
[pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie](mailto:pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie)

## Useful Links

There are also other free resources here:

<https://pollinators.ie/record-pollinators/id-guides/>

Some images can be found on BWARS

<https://www.bwars.com/bee/apidae/nomada-marshamella>

## Record here

Your records will help us build a picture of farmland biodiversity in Ireland. If you're happy with your identification, you can submit your record.

- On our website at the National Biodiversity Data Centre: <https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/bumblebees>

or

- You could also download our free smart phone App for recording in the field

*Smart phone App:*

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=nbdc.mobile.biodiversity>

*Apple App:*

<https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/biodiversity-data-capture/id906361120>

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