

— BIODIVERSITY — on your Farm

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: Common Carder Bumblebee

Scientific Name: *Bombus pascuorum*

Irish name: Bumbóg Charda Choiteann

Group

1 of 21 bumblebee species in Ireland. The Common Carder Bumblebee is one of our six most common bumblebees.

Check out our Bumblebee poster:

https://pollinators.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SE-29-NBDC-Bee-Poster-2019_EMAIL.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 Common Carder Bumblebee was recorded on thirty eight of the 40 farms.



@ Ruth Wilson

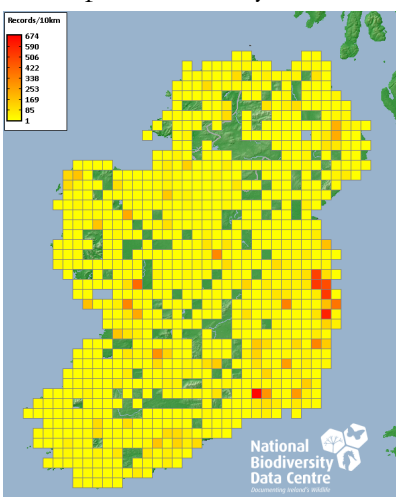
Common Carder Bumblebee. Note: Variable in colour and pattern. Ginger thorax and some black hairs on the abdomen.

Identification Tips

- The most commonly seen bumblebee.
- Medium sized bumblebee, queens can be 17mm in length.
- Very variable, but the only bumblebee with a ginger thorax and some black hairs on the abdomen (these can be in a banded pattern or not).
- Ginger tail.

Distribution

Widespread and very common.



Source: The Common Carder Bumblebee records as viewed on Biodiversity Maps, 2023.

Biodiversity Tip No. 18

Leave some Brambles to flower around the farm.

They're a valuable native plant for pollinators and their berries are valuable for wildlife in the autumn.

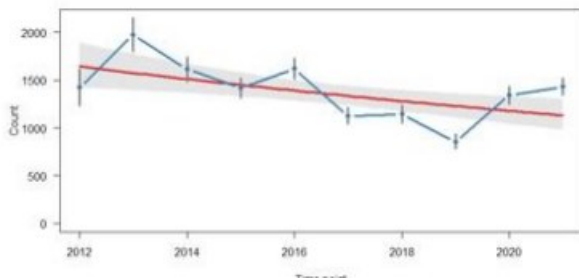


Conservation Status

Red Lists are an internationally recognised methodology for assessing conservation status. An Irish Bee Red List was published in 2006. It found that the Common Carder Bumblebee was extremely common. Based on the Red List it is 'Least Concern' with extinction from the island of Ireland.

Data from the All-Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme (<https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/>) suggest that the Common Carder Bumblebee has shown worrying losses and is in moderate decline. Volunteers within this citizen science scheme have been helping assess changes in bumblebee abundance since 2012.

Bombus pascuorum



Source: Report on the All-Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme. 2012 to 2021.

Management Tips

Food for the Common Carder Bumblebee:

- Encourage spring-blossoming shrubs and flowers, including Willow, Blackthorn, Dandelion, White Dead-nettle, Colt's-foot and Dandelion.
- Later in the season (especially for summer queens), encourage Bramble, Thistle, Foxglove and Selfheal.
- Autumn foraging plants include Ivy, Devil's-bit Scabious,

Nest sites:

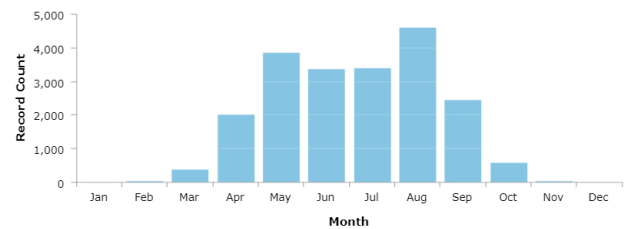
- Leave some long tussocky grass areas, especially at the base of hedgerows. The queen rakes grass and mosses over the nest to conceal and protect it.

When?

Queen emerges from hibernation in March Flight period is longer than that of any other bumblebee, continuing into November., in two generations.

The new mated queen will go into hibernation in the autumn.

Records per month across all datasets



National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, Common Carder Bumblebee (*Bombus pascuorum*), image, accessed July 2023, <[Common Carder Bee \(Bombus \(Thoracobus\) pascuorum\) - Detail - Biodiversity Maps \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)>

Where on the farm?

Found in most habitats, hedges, field margins, non-farmed areas, meadows, pastures, woodland edges, woodland edges and glades, and gardens.

Value

- Provides valuable 'pollination service'.
- An excellent pollinator of
- Cross pollination of our wildflowers, helping them stay resilient and boosting their fruiting ability for wildlife and the next generation.
- Health and wellbeing: There's nothing better than hearing a bumblebee buzzing or watching it move from flower to flower while feeding. So, it's fair to say, it give us that 'feel-good' factor.

Further Info

Bumblebees have a short life cycle. Only the mated new queen hibernates over the winter to emerge in spring. The old queen, the female workers and the males all die off as the colder weather approaches.

The Common Carder is a long-tongued species and visits a huge range of plants and is well adapted to foraging in those with deep flowers, like Dead-nettles and Foxgloves.

They generally have between 60-150 workers in a nest.

Similar species

The Tree Bumblebee (found mainly on the east coast at present) can look similar, but it has a white tail and dark sides on the thorax.

The Large Carder-bee (a near threatened species) has no black hairs on the thorax or abdomen.

Affected by a change in climate?

There may be increases the frequency and severity of extreme weather events like temperature, floods, storms and droughts, that may impact bumblebees.

They may be affected by a change in flowering periods, if there's a shift in seasonal weather patterns.

Need some help with identification?

Just drop us a line, we'll be happy to help:
pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie

Useful Links

Try our free online course on how to identify common bumblebees. It includes activities and quizzes to test your progress, and get feedback on answers: <https://learn.biodiversityireland.ie/courses/commonbumblebees>

There are also other free resources here: <https://pollinators.ie/record-pollinators/id-guides/>

Record here

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

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

or

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

Android App:

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

iPhone App:

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

Common Carder Bumblebee foraging on Devil's-bit Scabious.

The Farmland Pollinator Officer post is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine as one of its contributions to assisting implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
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An tSeirbhís Páirceanna Náisiúnta
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