

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: Robin's Pincushion or Bedeguar Gall Wasp

Scientific Name: *Diplolepis rosea*

Group

Belong to the insect (*Hymenoptera*) order in the family of gall wasps (*Cynipidae*).

There are 3,195 *Hymenoptera* (ants, wasps, bees and their relatives) known to occur in Ireland and around 39 gall wasps/gall flies (*Cynipidae*).

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. Robins pincushion was present on some of the 40 farms.



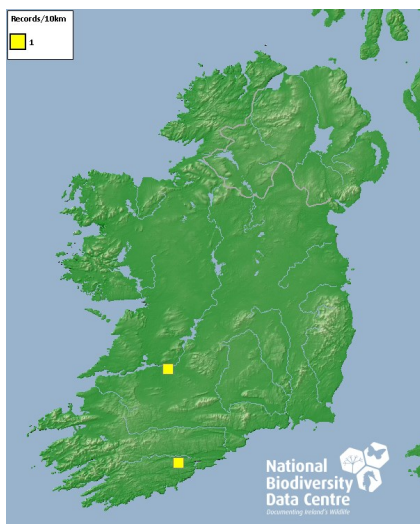
Robin's pincushion Note: Long branched stiff red hairs, found on Dog roses.

Identification Tips

- A mass of long branches stiff hairs, which start green and then turn red.
- The gall is more likely to be seen than the wasp.
- Found where Dog Roses are growing, especially in our native hedgerows.
- There can be numerous galls where they are present.
- It's the gall of the Bedeguar Gall Wasp *Diplolepis rosea*.

Distribution

Common and widespread, but under recorded.



Source: The Robin's Pincushion gall records as viewed on Biodiversity Maps, 2023.

Biodiversity Tip No. 36

Ensure your hedgerows contain a diversity of native plants.

This will help to create a healthy and resilient hedgerow.



Conservation Status

Red Lists are an internationally recognised methodology for assessing conservation status. A Red List has yet to be published for gall wasps.

The Bedeguar Gall Wasp (which causes the Robin's Pincushion) has therefore not yet been assessed

Management Tips

Native hedgerows:

- Retain, maintain or restore existing hedgerows.
- When gap filling, choose a range of native species, to increase the diversity of species in your hedgerow.
- When planting a new hedgerow, choose a diversity of native species.
- Where possible choose local provenance native species, grown in Ireland.
- Add some Dog rose to an existing native hedgerow, or include in a new hedgerow.
- Manage hedgerows on a 2 to 3 year rotation on the farm, to allow the hedgerows to produce flowers, then fruit and berries.
- Always cut out a little from the previous cut, to prevent a 'knuckle' forming on the hedgerow stems.

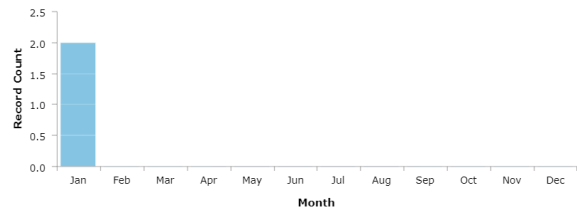


Robin's Pincushion.
Photo: Ruth Wilson

When?

Robin's pincushion, the gall of the Bedeguar Wasp, can be seen all year round.

Records per month across all datasets



National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, Robin's pincushion, *Diploleptis rosae* image, accessed October 2023.

[Diploleptis rosae - Detail - Biodiversity Maps \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](https://biodiversityireland.ie/diploleptis-rosae-detail)

Where on the farm?

Anywhere where Dog Rose grows, such as native hedgerows, scrub and woodland edges.

Value

- There may be parasitoids that live within the Bedeguar Gall Wasp gall itself.
- They cause no harm to their host plant.
- The wasp larvae are a food supply for some bird species, e.g. Blue tits.



Robin's Pincushion showing green hairs at the start.
Photo: Ruth Wilson

Further Info

A Robin's Pincushion is also known as a Bedeguar Gall (*Diplolepis rosae*). A gall is basically a cluster of abnormal growth cells in a plant, in this case caused by the small Bedeguar Gall Wasp. The gall develops on a bud, into a mass of branched red hairs. Occasionally some small galls develop on leaves or hips.

Inside the gall is a group of the Bedeguar Gall Wasp larvae, each residing in their own chamber within the gall. The larvae feed on the plant tissue inside the gall. The Bedeguar Gall Wasp larvae overwinter in the gall emerging as adult wasps in spring.

The adult wasps reproduce without needing males i.e. parthenogenetically.

The wasp is small and black with a amber abdomen and legs and not easy to identify. The gall is more likely to be seen than the adult wasp.

Similar species

The rare *Diplolepis mayri* has similar galls, but with stiff unbranched spines. It has not been recorded in Ireland.

Useful Links

Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording System is a useful information resource.

<https://www.bwars.com/home>

A Red List of Wasps for Ireland.

[Biodiversity-Ireland-Issue-23 WEB.pdf \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)

A new wasp for Ireland.

[Add that to the checklist! A new wasp for Ireland. - National Biodiversity Data Centre \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)

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 the National Biodiversity Data Centre website:

<https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/biodiversity-on-your-farm#7/53.455/-8.016>

Affected by a change in climate?

It is not known how climate change may affect the Bedeguar wasp. A change in climate may allow some insects to increase their range.

Need some help with identification?

Just drop us a line, we'll be happy to help:

pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie

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Bia agus Mara
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An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
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An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
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