

BUSY BUZZING BEES!

Celebrate International Bee Day 20th May



OPW



Honeybee

Pollinators include bees, birds, bats, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, wasps and small mammals. We need pollinators to make sure we have lots of healthy fruit and vegetables and to keep our countryside (and gardens!) full of beautiful wildflowers. Bees are one of the most important pollinators. There are over 100 different species of bee in Ireland. This includes 21 species of bumblebee and 1 native species of honeybee (*Apis mellifera mellifera*). Bumblebees and honeybees are social insects that live in colonies with a queen and male and female workers.

Honeybees usually live in hives and bumblebees live in the ground or in hollowed out trees. The remaining species are mainly solitary species and this means they nest on their own. There are many species of bee which are in decline in Ireland and 2 species have become extinct in the last 80 years. This is because we are making them homeless by not leaving enough natural habitats for them to live in. We need to protect the bees to keep our planet and ourselves healthy!



Bumblebee

Kilkenny Castle Park is a Native Irish Honey Bee Society (NIHBS) Conservation Area. There are colonies of *Apis mellifera mellifera* living in hives, bird boxes and even in the castle walls!

Finds the words in the box below.....!

FLOWER

WING

BEE

CROP

HONEY

HIVE

POLLEN

BUZZ

H	R	K	U	W	B	C	X	K	H	I	V	E	Z
B	L	F	L	O	W	E	R	D	H	O	S	V	M
N	B	U	Z	Z	F	K	U	E	L	F	A	W	U
Q	A	T	K	P	O	L	L	E	N	G	K	I	R
I	M	F	D	S	A	C	R	O	P	Y	U	N	L
G	K	B	E	E	W	Q	N	K	U	R	T	G	C
S	P	H	A	P	J	H	O	N	E	Y	F	O	S

Fill in the gaps.....!

SNAIL

GROUND

SMALLER

FEMALE

FEED

HIVE

Solitary bees are _____ than bumblebees and they come in different shapes & colours.

In the world of bees, it is only the _____ bees that can sting!

Mining solitary bees make their nests by digging holes in the _____.

Bumblebees usually _____ on flowers within 1km of their nest, but can travel up to 5km!

A _____ can contain up to 50,000 honeybees.

The solitary bee *Osmia aurulenta*, lives in sand dunes and only nests in empty _____ shells.

Bees beat their wings about 200 times per second and can fly up to 25km per hour!

Here's 5 ways that you can help bees...

- ❖ Don't mow your grass or at least not all of it! Bees rely on flowers for their food. Let native wildflowers like dandelion and clover develop, bees love to feed on these! Make sure any wildflowers you sow are native Irish ones.
- ❖ Grow pollen and nectar rich plants in your garden, such as snowdrops and crocus. Bees love feeding on herbs such as thyme, sage and lavender along with the flowers of native Irish trees like hawthorn, rowan, willow and holly.
- ❖ Create nesting habitats for pollinators by leaving some areas to grow wild or scraping back some bare earth. You can also make a small bee hotel using reeds or bamboo stems where the bees can nest.
- ❖ Avoid using insecticides, fungicides and herbicides. They can harm, disorientate or kill bees and destroy their food sources.
- ❖ Talk to you friends and family and tell them how brilliant and important bees are. Make everyone **BEE AWARE!**



CHECK OUT WWW.POLLINATORS.IE FOR MORE INFORMATION

