OU Pollinator Watch Final findings

Section 1:

• Bumblebees were the most common pollinators recorded with 42.9% of observations during the mission period, this was followed by 12.0% butterflies, 10.1% honeybees and 9.85% hoverflies.





• Here are some examples of photos respondents uploaded to OU Pollinator Watch:

Anonymous nQuire participant



Anonymous nQuire participant



Anonymous nQuire participant



Anonymous nQuire participant



Anonymous nQuire participant



Anonymous nQuire participant

• Observations of pollinators were submitted from all across the UK, from 123 of the 124 postcode areas, with 4.8% of contributions from the Oxford postcode area. Over 80% of observations were from gardens, this was followed by 11.5% 'other' which included allotments, window boxes and woodland.



Number of contributions (n) by postcode area

Section 2:

• Whilst an expected high level of engagement amongst dedicated wildlife watchers was confirmed by the survey, we found that 19.2% of participants wouldn't normally observe or identify pollinators and 10.9% were not previously aware of the threats they face.



• The great majority of respondents (90.5%) were found to already do things to help insect pollinators, and they plan to carry on doing that in the near future. These findings suggest that most of the mission participants have been taking action to support insect pollinators, and this may more likely explain their interest in taking part in OU Pollinator Watch.



The vast majority of respondents stated that they had planted species of flowers with pollinators specifically in mind, some of which also specified that these were wild/native species including a 0.5 acre dedicated wildflower meadow. Many also specified that they gardened organically with some adding that they let self-seeding plants such as nettles and dandelions grow in their gardens. After planting, the most frequent action taken was the addition of constructed habitat in the form of bug or bee 'hotels', 'bee tubes' were also mentioned and a small number of respondents also had beehives, one respondent reporting 5 hives in their garden. A few also created 'wild' habitat such as piling deadwood or simply leaving areas of their lawn uncut or emphasised their awareness of the need to 'share' human structures such as sheds and outbuildings as habitat.

The provision of water in some form featured regularly in responses, this ranged from mini wildlife ponds or pebble pools to larger garden ponds as well as sugar water solution left out for feeding.

Engaging in garden-based surveys such as the Butterfly Conservation garden survey was also cited as a form of support.



• For most respondents their intention was to continue what they had been doing into the future, particularly in relation to planting in their garden. Some outlined more specific targets such as an aim to increase the diversity of plants or try and achieve year-round flowering across the range of species in their garden. Some stated that they would add further pollinator-friendly habitat structures or introduce structures for the first time. A few stated that they would continue to observe and research pollinators in future, whether informally or as part of structured surveys, whilst some also saw a future role in educating others, whether their own children or a school class in the case of a number of teachers taking part in the survey.

Section 3 and 4:

• Of contributors who could be identified as unique, about 70.8% said they were paying more attention to nature since Government restrictions in response to Covid-19.



 Many respondents, during the UK lockdown, commented that reduced traffic noise meant they heard and were aware of many natural sounds (especially birdsong) encouraging them to observe animals and plants more. People commented that because they were furloughed, shielding, working from home or had reduced social commitments, they had more time in the garden, allotment or out walking, to notice nature, including pollinators. Some people said they included a daily walk in school lessons, and others used time spent observing the natural world to help ground them during the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many participants commented that they had always enjoyed nature, while others noted that lockdown and subsequent restrictions had encouraged them to do new things including planting flowers, growing vegetables and explore and learn about local natural areas. • Of contributors who could be identified as unique, over 70% conducted the mission on their own.

