



Dear All Bumblebee Monitors,

A sincere thank you for all your efforts in 2014. The success of the scheme rests on you taking the time to walk your transects each month, and as you'll see from our summary of 2014, you've been brilliant! We've grown to 75 recorders and 92 sites (see page 2), so with our partners in the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, we're well on our way to having an gold-standard all-island monitoring scheme. As always, we're happy to welcome and support new members, so if you know anyone wishing to begin bumblebee identification and monitoring, please ask them to get in touch with us in the Data Centre.

By the end of 2016, we should have enough information to conduct a formal analysis of all your efforts in the monitoring scheme. Until then, we can get a rough idea of how our bumblebees are doing by looking at how their relative abundance changes from year-to-year. Across all species, 2014 was very similar to 2012, but not as good as 2013 where on average 43% more bees were seen per transect per day (page 3). The average number of transect days walked per site is a little down on last year, so please do try to keep at it and walk your transect once per month. As always, if you have a query or need help with identification, never hesitate to get in contact.

Compared to 2012 (page 4), the last two years have been good to the Early bumblebee (*Bombus pratorum*, +4.9% 2013, +4.9% 2014), Red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*, +2.5% 2013, +4.2% 2014) and White-tailed bumblebees (*Bombus lucorum* agg., +14.6% 2013, +3.8% 2014), but less kind to the Large carder bee (*Bombus muscorum*, -4.4% 2013, -4.4% 2014), the Common carder bee (*Bombus pascuorum*, -7.9% 2013, -3.0% 2014) and the Buff-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*, -7.2% 2013, -4.3% 2014).

March is just around the corner, so let's see what 2015 has in store for our bumblebees!

Best wishes,
Tomás Murray
Project Co-ordinator



Early bumblebee (*Bombus pratorum*), male
10/06/2014
Photo by Colin Stanley, Merlin Woods, Co. Galway



Large carder bee (*Bombus muscorum*), worker
15/05/2014
Photo by Michael Bell, Bunduff, Co. Sligo



2014 Summary

Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

<http://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie>

<http://monitoring.biodiversityireland.ie>

2015 Workshops

As usual, we'll be out and about providing workshops on bumblebee identification and the monitoring schemes. The programme for 2015 has yet to be finalised, so keep an eye out on our websites for updated information: <http://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie>

Here is the current list of confirmed workshops:

10 th April	Tyrone
18 th April	Limerick
24 th April	Fermanagh
25 th April	Fermanagh
9 th May	Waterford

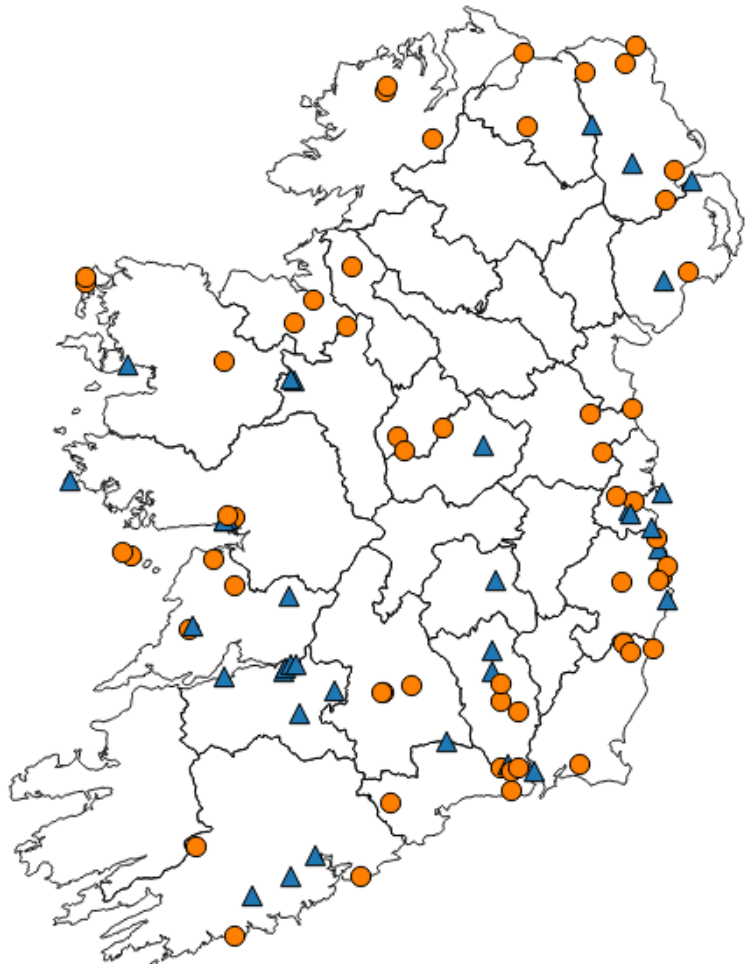
We'll also be holding our Annual Recorders Event this year on the 23rd & 24th of May in Wicklow. All recorders across the bumblebee and butterfly monitoring schemes are welcome to attend, get out into the field together and have an excuse to meet-up and discuss the monitoring schemes. As soon as the venue and programme for the day we update the website and email everyone with the details.

2014 Sites

New (36)

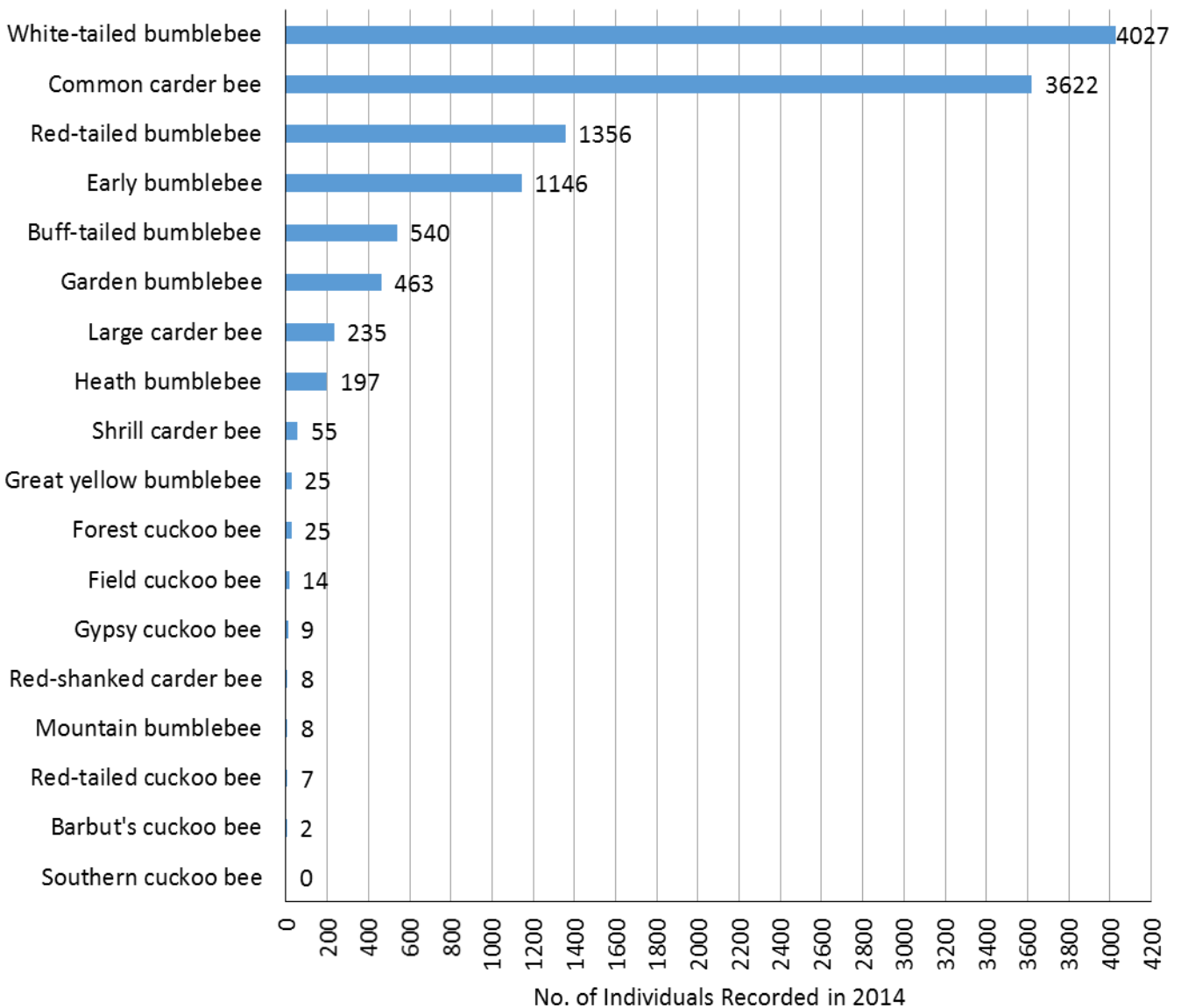


Ongoing (56)





Year	2012	2013	2014
No. of Recorders	26	54	75
No. of Bumblebees	4,234	13,410	11,739
No. of Sites Submitting Records	36	67	92
No. of Transect Days Walked	216	479	598
Average Transect Days Walked Per Site	6.0	7.2	6.5
Average Abundance of Bumblebees Per Transect Day	19.6	28.0	19.6





By the end of 2016, we should have enough information to conduct a formal analysis of all your efforts in the monitoring scheme. Until then, we can get a rough idea of how our bumblebees are doing by looking at how their relative abundance changes from year-to-year.

Species	% (Proportion of Total Abundance)		% Change Compared to 2012	
	2012	2013	2014	
Barbut's cuckoo bee	0.02	-0.02	-0.01	
Gypsy cuckoo bee	0.05	+0.10	+0.03	
Field cuckoo bee	0.00	+0.03	+0.12	
Red-tailed cuckoo bee	0.00	+0.08	+0.06	
Forest cuckoo bee	0.19	-0.10	+0.02	
Great yellow bumblebee	1.56	-1.21	-1.35	
Garden bumblebee	2.93	+0.58	+1.02	
Heath bumblebee	2.27	-1.06	-0.59	
Red-tailed bumblebee	7.37	+2.47	+4.18	
White-tailed bumblebee	30.56	+14.55	+3.74	
Mountain bumblebee	0.14	-0.08	-0.07	
Large carder bee	6.35	-4.41	-4.35	
Common carder bee	33.87	-7.92	-3.01	
Early bumblebee	4.89	+4.87	+4.87	
Red-shanked carder bee	0.85	-0.72	-0.78	
Shrill carder bee	0.02	+0.02	+0.44	
Buff-tailed bumblebee*	8.93	-7.18	-4.33	

* Based on just Buff-tailed bumblebee queen numbers as males and workers are difficult to differentiate from White-tailed bumblebees