



## 2015 Summary

# Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/record-biodiversity/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/>

Dear All Bumblebee Monitors,

Firstly, a big welcome to the 19 new recorders to the scheme and a sincere thank you to you all for your efforts in 2015! We now have 77 recorders walking across 92 sites each month and last year we collectively spent 665 hrs walking 1,179 km and recorded 11,829 individual bumblebees (page 3). Given how we, and the bumblebees, have had to battle the weather over the past two years it's fantastic to see everyone go above and beyond to walk their transects. In particular, given the enormous success of the [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#), [Limerick's Buzzing](#) and the continued growth of our UK partners the [Bumblebee Conservation Trust](#), 2015 was a good year for raising the profile of bumblebee conservation.

Secondly, although the number of transects remained the same this year, there has been a turnover in recorders over the past four years of the scheme. In most cases, between the weather and personal circumstances, recorders have a bad year and many continue monitor afterward, but for a small number they cannot continue and we need someone locally to 'inherit' their walk. At present, the list below represents transects we'd love to continue – if you know of someone willing to give eight days a year to monitor bumblebees for the sites below, or anywhere else for that matter (!), never hesitate to point them in our direction.

Cork:	Ardgroom	Laois:	Portlaois
Down:	Scarva	Limerick:	Abbeyfeale
Down:	Ulster Folk Museum	Limerick:	Aughinish
Galway:	Terryland	Roscommon:	Termonbarry
Kildare:	Crookstown	Wexford:	Courtown

As for our bees, 2015 was the worst year so far with counts being on average 7% below 2014, 37% below 2013 and 15% below 2012. Compared to 2012 (page 5), the last three years have seen consistent increases in the Early bumblebee (*B. pratorum*, +2.4 to 4.9%), Red-tailed bumblebee (*B. lapidarius*, +2.4 to 4.2%) and White-tailed bumblebees (*B. lucorum* agg., +3.7 to 14.5%), but consistent declines in the Large carder bee (*B. muscorum*, -4.4 to 5.5%), the Common carder bee (*B. pascuorum*, -0.2 to 7.9%) and the Buff-tailed bumblebee (*B. terrestris*, -3.2 to 7.2%). What's also of potential concern is that while the abundance of both the Garden bumblebee (*B. hortorum*) and the Heath bumblebee (*B. jonellus*) have not changed dramatically, the number of sites where they are being recorded has declined by -5.0 to 17.9% and -8.2 to 27%, respectively. Particularly in the past two poor years, they both seem to have increased their abundance per site but across a smaller number of sites.

The 2016 bumblebee monitoring season is almost upon us, so we hope you keep fighting the good fight and help us gather the fundamental information needed to protect and restore our bumblebees!

Best wishes,  
Tomás Murray  
Project Co-ordinator



## 2015 Summary

# Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/record-biodiversity/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/>

### 2016 Workshops

As usual, we'll be out and about providing workshops on bumblebee identification and the monitoring schemes in areas where we currently lack bumblebee monitors. The programme for 2016 is still being finalised, so keep an eye out on our websites for updated information:

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/record-biodiversity/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/news-events/>

Here is the current list of confirmed workshops – more are on their way!

16 <sup>th</sup> April	Cork, Duhallow
27 <sup>th</sup> April	Kerry, Listowel
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Kerry, Cahersiveen
9 <sup>th</sup> May	Louth, Carlingford
10 <sup>th</sup> May	Louth, Dundalk
28 <sup>th</sup> May	Monaghan, Monaghan
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Cavan, Belturbet

We'll also be holding our **Annual Recorders Event** this year on the **13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> of August** in Barley Cove, Co. Cork. 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 two days are finalised, we'll update the website and email everyone with the details.



Red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*, queen)  
07/04/2015  
Photo by Ciaran Byrne, Ballykealey Lane, Co. Carlow



Large carder bee (*Bombus muscorum*), queen  
21/05/2015  
Photo by Michael Keating, Meakstown, Dublin



## 2015 Summary

# Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/record-biodiversity/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/>

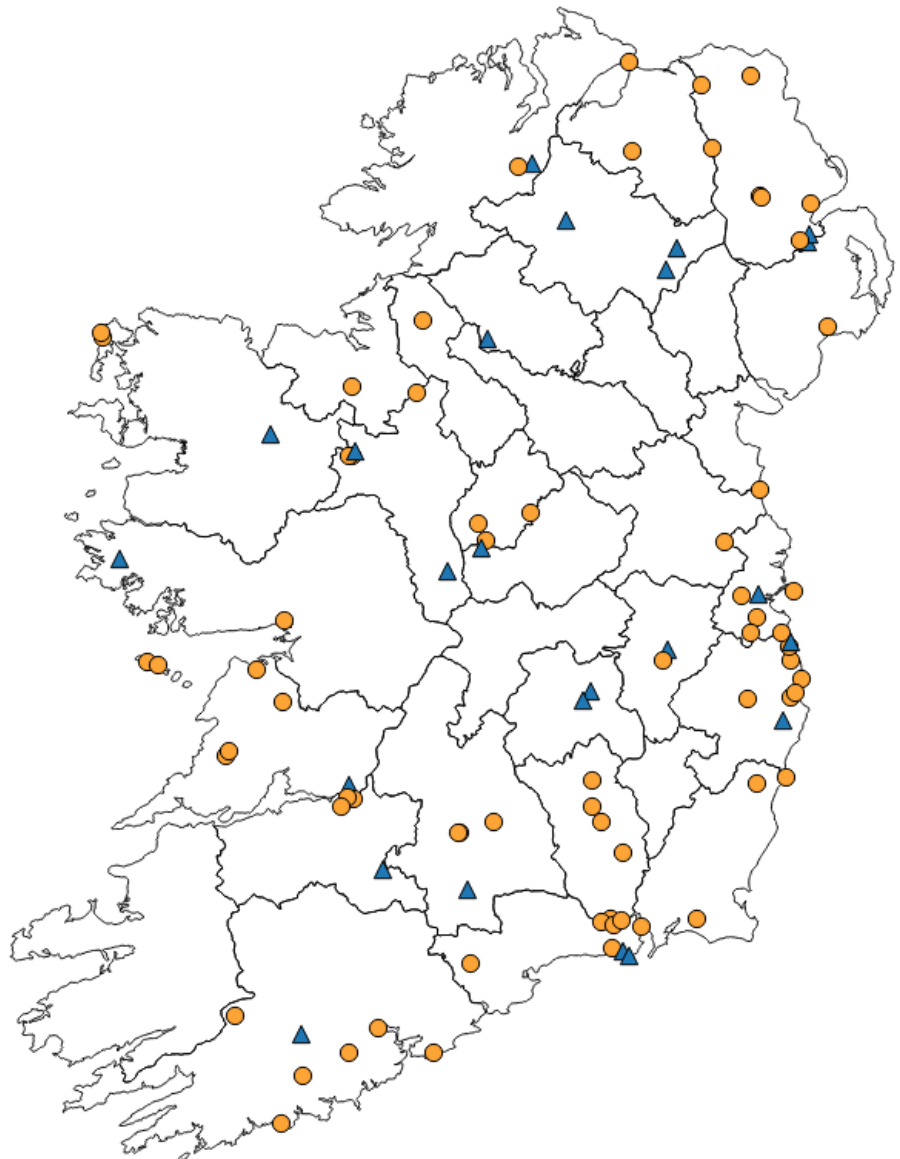
Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of Recorders	26	54	75	77
No. of Bumblebees	4,234	13,190	11,832	11,849
No. of Transects Submitting Records	36	67	92	92
No. of Transect Days Walked	216	444	598	625
Average Transect Days Walked Per Site	6.0	7.2	6.5	6.8
Average Abundance of Bumblebees/transect/day	20.6	27.6	18.8	17.5

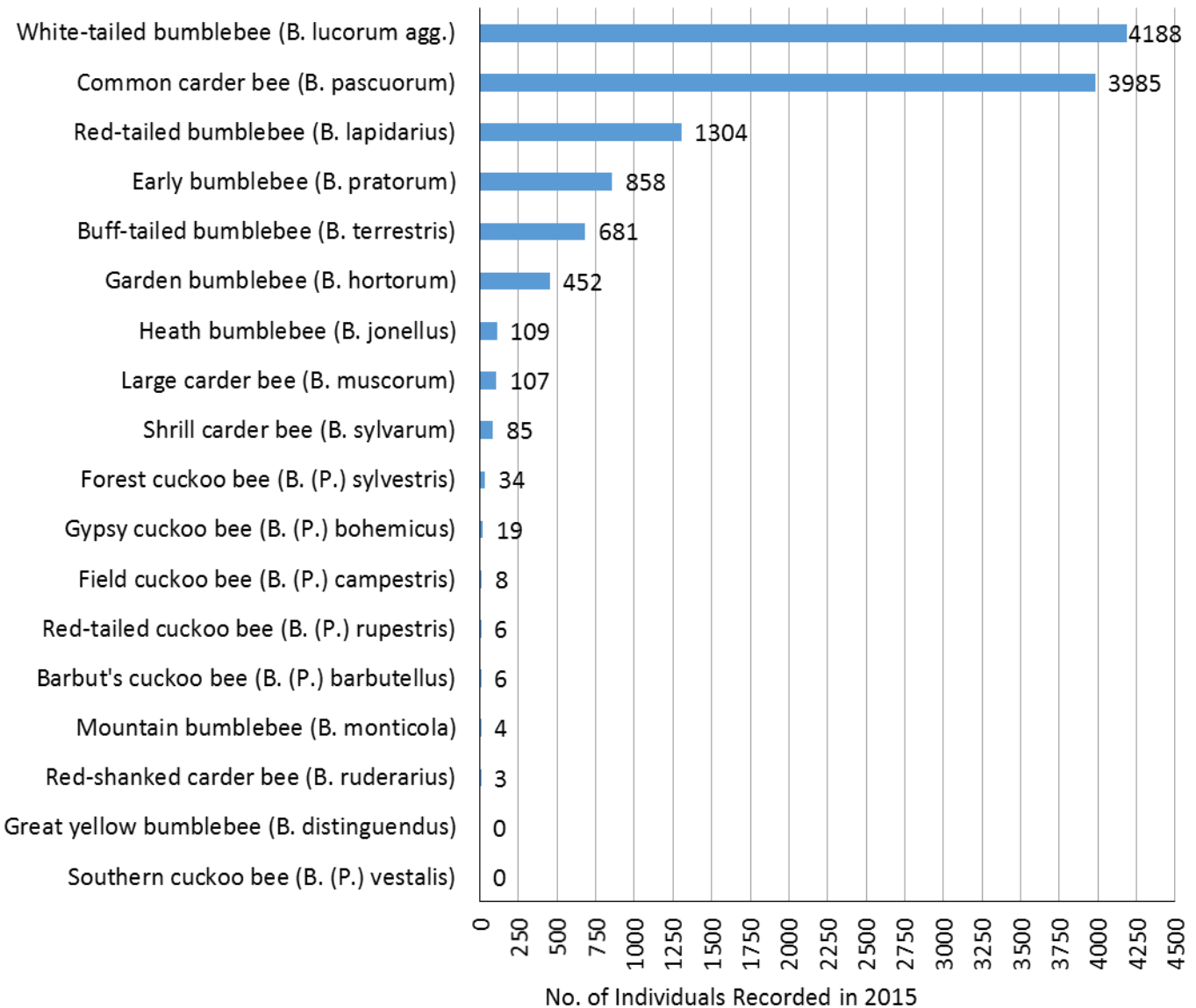
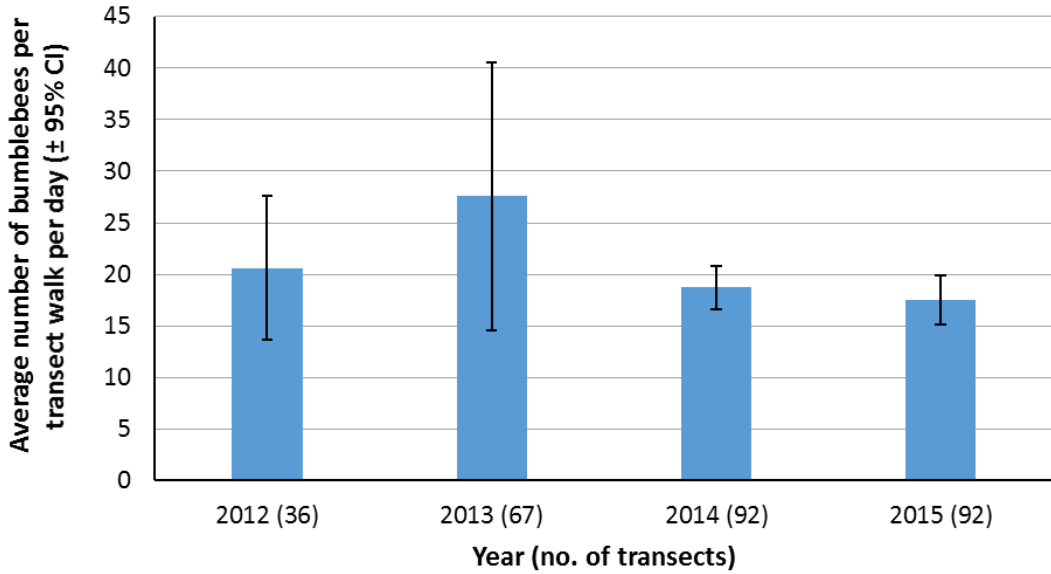
## 2015 Transects

New (24)



Ongoing (68)







## 2015 Summary

# Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/record-biodiversity/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/>

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	% of Total Abundance		% Change Compared to 2012		
	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Barbut's cuckoo bee <i>B. (P.) barbutellus</i>	0.02	-0.02	-0.01	+0.03	
Gypsy cuckoo bee <i>B. (P.) bohemicus</i>	0.05	+0.10	+0.03	+0.11	
Field cuckoo bee <i>B. (P.) campestris</i>	0.00	+0.03	+0.12	+0.07	
Red-tailed cuckoo bee <i>B. (P.) rupestris</i>	0.00	+0.08	+0.06	+0.05	
Forest cuckoo bee <i>B. (P.) sylvestris</i>	0.19	-0.10	+0.02	+0.09	
Great yellow bumblebee <i>B. distinguendus</i>	1.56	-1.21	-1.35	-1.56	
Garden bumblebee <i>B. hortorum</i>	2.93	+0.58	+1.02	+0.89	
Heath bumblebee <i>B. jonellus</i>	2.27	-1.06	-0.59	-1.35	
Red-tailed bumblebee <i>B. lapidarius</i>	7.37	+2.47	+4.18	+3.64	
White-tailed bumblebee <i>B. lucorum</i> agg.	30.56	+14.55	+3.74	+4.78	
Mountain bumblebee <i>B. monticola</i>	0.14	-0.08	-0.07	-0.11	
Large carder bee <i>B. muscorum</i>	6.35	-4.41	-4.35	-5.45	
Common carder bee <i>B. pascuorum</i>	33.87	-7.92	-3.01	-0.24	
Early bumblebee <i>B. pratorum</i>	4.89	+4.87	+4.87	+2.35	
Red-shanked carder bee <i>B. ruderarius</i>	0.85	-0.72	-0.78	-0.83	
Shrill carder bee <i>B. sylvarum</i>	0.02	+0.02	+0.44	+0.69	
Buff-tailed bumblebee <i>B. terrestris</i>	8.93	-7.18	-4.33	-3.18	