



Fact Sheet

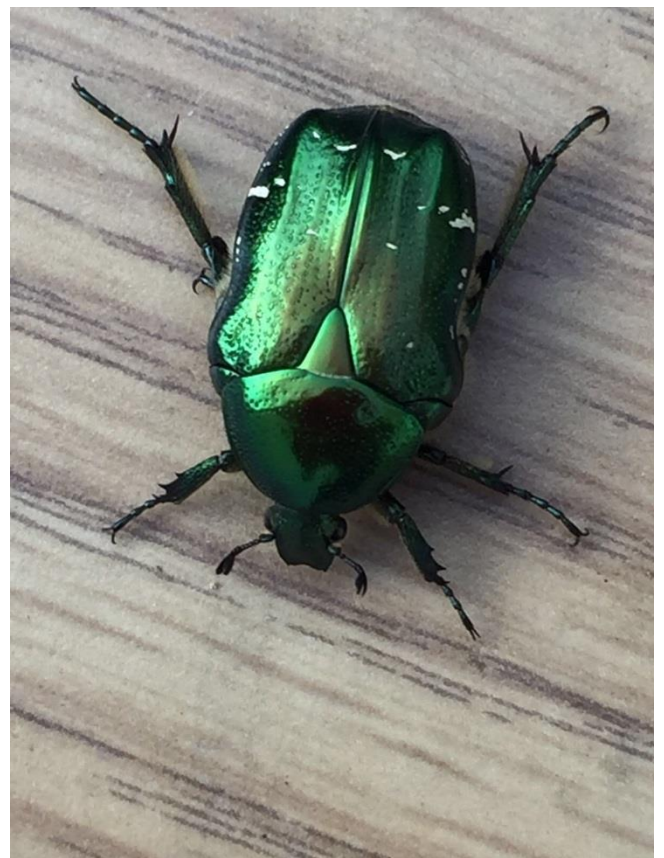
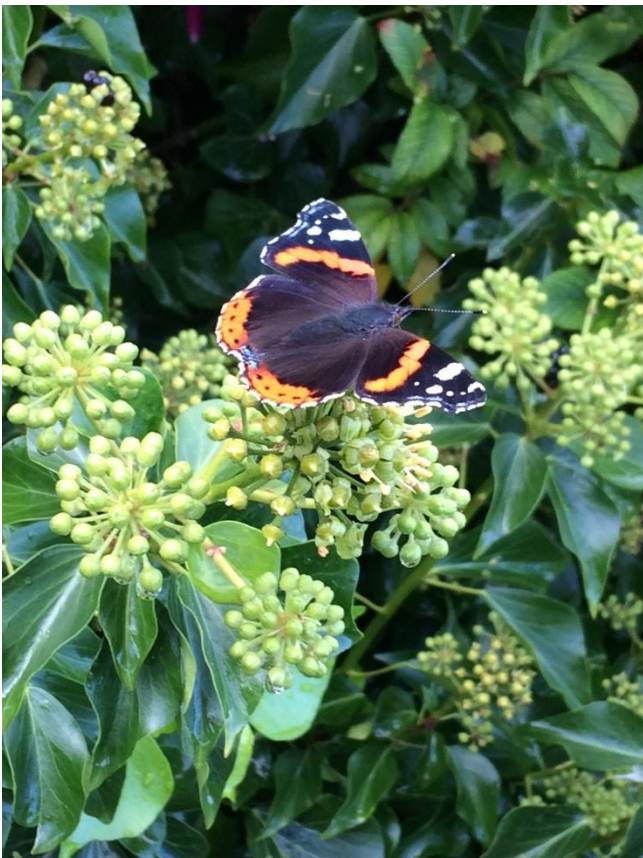
Insects and the buzzing, humming minibeast world!

Purple
Patch
Arts

Being at home more during lockdown means we've all really got to know our own local and smaller wild patches and green spaces better.

Discovering and really taking proper notice of how many different wildlife species we can spot and which ones, however small, call our gardens, backyards or window boxes home is really important to help us gather information about what is happening to nature in Britain at the moment and how healthy it is.

This information then helps scientists and naturalists get a clearer picture of what is actually going on. Which means every one of us can get involved by just getting outside in the fresh air, looking around us and by noting what we see!



Insect facts:

Pollination is when insects (or the wind) brushing by causes the dusty yellow pollen you see inside flowers to be moved around and then brushed onto the female part of the flower called the stigma. This then fertilises the plant and allows it to produce tasty fruits or seeds. We wouldn't have any food like fruits or vegetables to eat without pollination happening so it is really important.

Although bees are the most well known of our pollinators, there are **many other different types of pollinating insects** – moths, beetles, wasps, hoverflies, ladybirds all act as pollinators when they visit flowers to collect sweet nectar.

We have over **250 different bee species in the UK!** There are 25 bumble bee types, 224 types of solitary bee but only 1 honey bee species.

COMMON UK BEE SPECIES

How many species have you seen?

 Buff-Tailed Bumblebee ID: Distinctive yellow and black bands and a white tail.	 Common Carder Bee ID: Ginger or brown on top of the thorax.	 Early Bumblebee ID: Yellow and black bands and an orange tail. Small size.
 Shrill Carder Bee ID: Pale yellow and grey bands with a peachy tail.	 Tree Bumblebee ID: Ginger thorax, black abdomen and a white tail. Black underside.	 Honeybee ID: Abdomen with amber bands or completely black. Buff-haired thorax. Rear legs bare and shiny.
 Ashy Mining Bee ID: Black with double ashy bands across the thorax.	 Orange-Tailed Mining Bee ID: Rusty thorax. Black abdomen with tuft of rusty hairs on the rear. Yellow rear legs.	 Tawny Mining Bee ID: Thick orange coat. Black leg and face hairs. Collects pollen on legs.
 Common Mourning Bee ID: Grey collar. White spots along abdomen. Sometimes all-black. Pointed rear.	 Leafcutter Bee ID: Broad head and body.	 Long-Horned Bee ID: Grey-brown hair. Males have very long antennae.
 Red Mason Bee ID: Bristly orange hair with dark head and thorax showing through.	 Small Scissor Bee ID: Very small (6-7mm), black and shiny. Slender body with a large head.	 Wool Carder Bee ID: Yellow spots along abdomen.

Our only type of honey bee has sadly suffered a big drop in numbers recently - partly because of manmade chemicals being sprayed on crops in the countryside and also because of other disease.

The worker honey bees you actually see out and about on flowers busy gathering nectar and pollen are in fact all female. In a honey bee hive the hundreds or even thousands of bees inside are all the sons and daughters of just one single queen bee!

More information:

Plant flowers for bees and pollinators (Yorks Wildlife Trust)

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/plant-flowers-bees-and-pollinators>

Types of bee in UK (The Woodland Trust)

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/05/types-of-bee-in-the-uk/>

Life in a Honey Bee Colony (Arizona State University) <https://askabiologist.asu.edu/bee-colony-life>