

Bees' Needs Week buzzes into action

At the start of Bees' Needs Week, new research today (Monday 18 July) revealed that improving pollinator populations could help stabilise the production of important crops like oilseeds and fruit.

The [new research](#), published by the University of Reading, found that crops visited by pollinators had more stable yields, with 32% less variation than those crops grown in the absence of pollinators.

Thousands of pollinators – bumblebees, butterflies, moths, flies and honeybees – are essential for food production and biodiversity. But they are under threat, facing growing challenges from climate change, pests and diseases, invasive species and habitat loss.

This year Bees' Needs Week (18 – 24 July) makes a call on the public to take [Five Simple Actions](#) to help pollinators.

These actions are easy to do, and it doesn't matter how much space is available – every action, big or small, counts. To sustain bee populations, everyone can:

1. Grow more flowers, shrubs and trees
2. Let your garden grow wild
3. Cut your grass less often
4. Don't disturb insect nest and hibernation spots
5. Think carefully about whether to use pesticides

Monitoring for insects in your local area is also a great way to help scientists understand what pollinator populations look like. The [Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#) is the first scheme in the world to generate data on the abundance of bees, hoverflies and other flower-visiting insects at a national scale. It will provide information that will help us measure trends in pollinator populations and target conservation efforts.

This summer, thousands of people will be taking part in a [Flower-Insect-Timed Count \(FIT Count\)](#) and as part of Bees' Needs Week, the public are being encouraged to take part. Anyone can get involved by taking ten minutes to observe flowers and insects in good weather before sharing the information on the app. FIT Counts can be completed anywhere, wherever there is an abundance of flowers, and every observation helps improve survey records and knowledge of pollinator activity.

Biodiversity Minister Lord Benyon said:

From bumblebees to moths and butterflies, pollinators are a critical part of our natural ecosystem, playing an essential role in upholding biodiversity and food production.

Creating wildflower meadows, insect hotels or even a humble window

box will boost nature. We can all play our part to support our vital pollinators.

Marian Spain, chief executive of Natural England, said:

Pollinators are a crucial part of a healthy environment which we all depend on. There are many things we can do to help them thrive, from getting involved in monitoring their numbers to leaving any outdoor space we have to flourish. Collectively, even small actions all help pollinators do the job we need them to”.

Bees’ Needs Week, coincides with the ‘Superbloom’, a thriving natural landscape planted in the iconic moat at the Tower of London. The University of Reading’s Bee Team will be on site today (Monday 18 July), showcasing their projects which display buzzing bumblebee colonies, the world of pollinators through the microscope, and activities to help the public to understand how everyday shopping relies on pollination.

Dr Jake Bishop, from the University of Reading’s Bee Team, who led the new study, said:

This research reminds us just how much we need to look after our pollinating heroes.

Our study shows how important bees and pollinating insects are for our food security. Every gardener, farmer and landowner in the UK can make a big difference to bees by making small changes to how they mow, grow or spray.

This Bees’ Needs Week, Defra will also be launching the 2022 Bees’ Needs Champions Awards which celebrate the outstanding action taken by community groups, businesses and farmers to protect pollinators.

To learn more about the awards and apply visit: [Bees’ Needs – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Notes to editors:

- Bees’ Needs Week is supported by the Pollinator Advisory Steering Group (PASG) – members include beekeeping partners, eNGOs, academic partners and government departments
- To find out more about the Pollinator Monitoring Scheme and FIT counts visit: [UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#)
- [The Pollinator Action Plan](#) published in May 2022 sets out the government’s plan to protect pollinator habitats and help them thrive. The action plan builds on, and is informed by, the National Pollinator Strategy, a ten-year project which sees collaboration with farmers, conservationists and businesses to address the pressures pollinators are

facing and improve habitats.

[Animal medicine seizure notice: Parcel shipped from USA addressed to premises in County Londonderry](#)

News story

Details of seizure notice served following a parcel addressed to premises in County Londonderry was stopped at a Belfast depot.



The following veterinary medicines were identified by a courier company based at a Belfast depot. The products were then detained and subsequently seized by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

This parcel was addressed to residential premises in County Londonderry and was shipped from the USA. The parcel contained:

- 1 x box VitMinPRO Health Enhancer (100 tablets)
- 1 x Vitamin B – complex + amino acids (100 ml bottle– injectable)

These products were intended for use in poultry and livestock and are not authorised veterinary medicines in the GB or NI.

The medicines were seized under Regulation 25 (Importation of unauthorised veterinary medicinal products) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013

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UN Human Rights Council 50: UK closing statement

This month we celebrated a milestone – 50 sessions of the Human Rights Council. Sixteen years after its inception, the UK fully believes the Council continues to be the best tool the international community has to address human rights violations and abuses and to advance many of our international goals. As a founding member of the Human Rights Council, the UK remains a strong advocate for the UN's human rights fora and will continue to fully support the Council and the mechanisms at its disposal.

I am appalled by mounting evidence that Russian forces are committing clear violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine, many amounting to war crimes. I welcome the Human Rights Monitoring Mission and Commission of Inquiry's ongoing efforts to uncover the full extent of Russian atrocities. Russia must cease its illegal war and withdraw its forces from the entirety of Ukraine. I welcome the UK-Gambia led joint statement on food insecurity as a result of Russian aggression in Ukraine, and the EU-led joint statement highlighting the situation of human rights in Russia.

We saw a record 47 signatories to a joint statement led by the Netherlands, which underlined growing international concern at the grave human rights situation in China, including severe restrictions on freedom of religion or belief and the erosion of rights and freedoms in Hong Kong. We continue to urge China to comply with its human rights obligations under international law, and look forward to the early publication of the High Commissioner's report on Xinjiang.

I welcome the Council's adoption of the resolution on women and girls in Afghanistan. The UK will continue to champion the rights of women and girls, who play a vital role in society and economic development. We also call for an immediate end to all human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan. The Special Rapporteur will play a key role in holding those responsible for violations and abuses to account and we look forward to hearing the findings of his report in September.

I am pleased the Council adopted the UK-led resolution on Syria. This session we took a new approach and focused the text on sexual and gender based violence, which is continually used as a weapon of war. The prevalence of sexual violence in Syria is appalling. It continues to affect women, girls, men, and boys. The Commission of Inquiry has repeatedly documented the rape of women and girls at checkpoints and in detention centres, at the hands of the Asad regime and its allies. This resolution refers to the need for perpetrators to be held to account and support services for survivors.

I am proud that the UK continues to lead efforts to ensure the situation in Sudan remains on the Councils' agenda, and welcome the adoption by consensus – including with the agreement of the Sudanese authorities – of the resolution to commission further reporting from the High Commissioner and UN

Expert on Human Rights in Sudan. The UK remains deeply concerned at the use of violence and killing of peaceful protestors. Continued monitoring and reporting on these serious human rights concerns is vital, and represents an important step in Sudan's path back toward a democratic transition. I hope the Sudanese authorities will continue to cooperate fully with the Council, the High Commissioner and her Expert, to help deliver the peace, justice and full respect for human rights that the Sudanese people call for.

I also welcome the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea, where the human rights situation remains dire. Eritrea's continued refusal to cooperate with the Council or the Special Rapporteur on its human rights record – leading to the resolution being put to a vote – is unacceptable, and I call on the Government of Eritrea to reverse this obstructive policy, and engage fully with the legitimate concerns of the international community on its human rights record, and of its role as a party to the conflict in Northern Ethiopia.

The UK remains unwavering in its commitment to gender equality and women and girls' rights. I am pleased the Council adopted resolutions to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls and the Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls. The UK is committed to supporting women and girls everywhere in taking charge of their own bodies, lives and futures. Their right to live free from violence and discrimination, and their choice in whether to get married, start a family, and have a career are fundamental to creating equal and empowered societies and must be upheld.

The UK is immensely proud the Council has renewed the mandate of the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). The mandate for the Independent Expert remains one of the standout achievements of the Human Rights Council. We thank the UN Independent Expert for the progress that has been achieved and his steadfast commitment and inclusive approach. We are pleased that this important work can continue. Collectively, we have sent the right message: that human rights apply equally to all people, in all places and at all times.

Following the High Commissioner's announcement to step down and not serve another term, I would like to thank her for her leadership and contribution to human rights issues across the globe over the last four years.

[Vacancy for an Inspector of Marine Accidents \(Fishing\), Southampton](#)

News story

We have an exciting opportunity for someone with UK commercial fishing experience and a recognised maritime qualification to join our team of accident investigators.



Your key responsibilities will include:

- deploying to accident sites and leading investigations
- collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses
- conducting detailed analysis in order to identify safety issues and draft recommendations
- writing investigation reports and safety bulletins
- giving evidence at inquests and fatal accident inquiries
- providing in-house fishing vessel expertise
- representing the MAIB at fishing industry working groups and other safety fora

You must be prepared to travel throughout the UK (for which you will need a full UK driving licence) as well as overseas.

For further information about this position and how to apply see [Civil Service Jobs, Inspector of Marine Accidents – Fishing, Ref: 221789](#)

Closing date: 14 August 2022.

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[Exhibition of Beer's flood history to open in Devon](#)

Press release

Lessons learned from historic flooding are to be shared with the current generation to urge them to act now and protect their own loved ones and property.



Flooding in Beer in the 1950s

A free exhibition of historic flood photographs and maps of Beer and surrounding area is being held at The Mariners' Hall in Fore Street, Beer, thanks to the Environment Agency, Beer Emergency Response Team and The Westcountry Rivers Trust.

Residents and visitors are invited to come along to the event on 28 July 2022 from 10am to 4pm and share their experiences or just take in the photographs on display.

Chris Khan, a flood resilience officer at the Environment Agency, said:

We are hosting this event because your neighbourhood is at risk of flash flooding. This type of flooding happens extremely quickly with potentially devastating impacts as seen in Beer and Boscastle in 2004 and Coverack in 2017.

More than 750 people attended a similar exhibition in Sidmouth in 2018 and over 500 in Colyton in 2019. Both were an amazing success with people coming from all over the country. The photographs are a real eye-opener and leave you questioning how you would react.

Beer has a history of flooding, like this event in August 2004

While the Environment Agency hopes attendees will leave with the information they need to prepare, act, survive, Beer Emergency Response Team hopes to attract new members to support its newly created Community Emergency Plan for the village.

Westcountry Rivers Trust will also display posters on some of its work done in the area and share potential solutions and opportunities to improve Beer's waterways and increase its resilience against flooding.

Refreshments will be available.

Find out how you can reduce the impact of flooding on your home at

Editor's notes

A brief history of flooding in Beer:

- 17 July 1926. Practically every house in the village was flooded within the space of a few minutes. The Dolphin Hotel was flooded to several inches.
- 5 August 1931. Flood water poured down the hillsides into the main thoroughfare. Little damage was done. No rain fell at Colyford which is not far away.
- 15 July 1937. Several cottages and houses flooded.
- 16 July 1956. The observer at Beer said that an inch probably fell in 15 minutes. There was some flooding and damage in the village.
- 1 July 1985. Surface water flooding in Fore Street – watercourse overflowed – water coming up through the drainage systems of properties.
- 15 May 1994. A number of properties and businesses affected.
- 18 June 1996. At least seven properties affected.
- 25 August 1999. Fore Street flooded.
- 11 August 2004. Significant flooding and damage in the village. At least 18 properties flooded.
- June and October 2021. The most recent flooding to occur in the village.

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