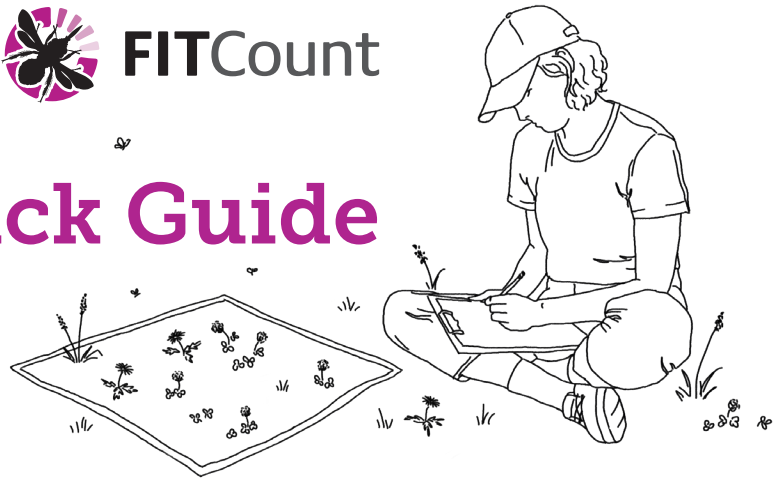


FIT Count Quick Guide

Contribute to the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme and help build a national picture of pollinator abundance.



What is a FIT Count?

A Flower-Insect-Timed Count is a mini survey where you watch a patch of flowers for 10 minutes and record all the insects (to insect group) that are sitting on or land on your 'target' flowers.

When can I do a FIT Count?

You can do a FIT Count between 1st April and 30th September in good weather. It should be dry, not too windy, and at least 13°C when sunny, or 15°C when cloudy.

Five steps to carry out a FIT Count

1. Print a recording form from the PoMS website, or use the FIT Count app.
2. Decide on your target flower species or type (ideally from the list, but any flower will do) and mark out a 50x50cm patch that includes those flowers.
3. Count and record the number of flowers (as floral units) of your target species in your patch.
4. Set a timer for 10 mins and count all insects that are sitting on or land on your target flowers (ignore other flowers, insects not on the flower heads, and try to count each insect only once!). Count the insects by group (see guide overleaf). Count any you don't recognise as 'other insects'.
5. Fill in the simple weather and location details, then send in your results via our online FIT Count form or the app.

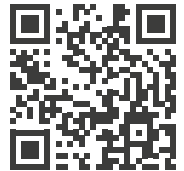


10 min

Download the recording form and extra guidance
ukpoms.org.uk/fit-counts

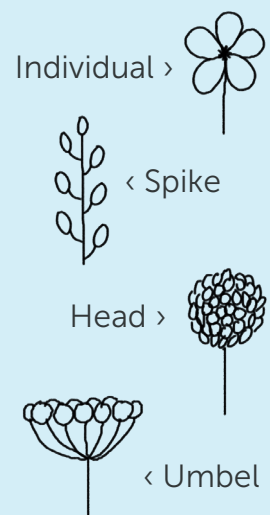


Download the FIT Count App from your phone's app store



Target flowers

- Dandelion
- Buttercup
- White dead-nettle
- Hawthorn
- Bramble
- Lavender
- Hogweed
- Knapweed
- White clover
- Ragwort
- Heather
- Thistle
- Buddleja
- Ivy



Floral units



For more information about monitoring pollinators see this guide: DOI [10.5281/zenodo.8091250](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8091250)

ukpoms.org.uk/fit-counts

Guide to the FIT Count insect groups

Bumblebees

- Fluffy, large (1-3 cm), rounded bees
- Contrasting stripes (black, yellow, red, or white), or gingerly all over
- May have a ball of pollen on back legs
- Antennae often bent at base



Look closely at the eyes and antennae



Solitary bees

- Variable in size (0.4-2 cm) and appearance; over 250 UK species!
- Often have short hairs; ginger, brown or black
- May carry dry pollen on hairy back legs, or under body
- Antennae straight out in front



Bees have long eyes down sides of the face



Hoverflies

- Flies with distinctive hovering flight
- Some mimic bees and wasps in colour and stripes
- Look for large round eyes and short antennae



Hoverflies have short antennae



Butterflies and moths

- Large patterned, opaque wings
- Wings held flat or together at rest
- Long proboscis for drinking nectar, rolled up under body at rest



Small insects

- Any insect smaller than 3 mm



Small, but important

Don't count

- Spiders
- Slugs and snails
- Centipedes and millipedes
- Larval stages of insects e.g. caterpillars



Honeybees

- Gingerly or brown with dark stripes and a long body (1.2 cm)
- Less hairy than bumblebees
- May have a ball of pollen on back legs which hang down when flying
- Antennae often bent at base



Bees and wasps have long antennae

Wasps

- Common wasp (bold black and yellow stripes) and many other species (often black and red)
- Shiny body with a narrow 'waist'
- Can be small; never carry pollen
- Often have a boxy, rectangular head



Other flies

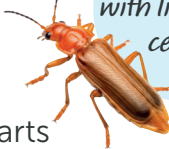
- Many species; often brown, black, grey, yellow, green or blue
- Large rounded eyes, covering most of head
- Short (or not visible) antennae



Flies (incl. hoverflies) have large, round eyes

Beetles

- Hard, often shiny case (elytra) covering body and wings
- A straight line often visible down the centre of elytra
- Biting or chewing mouthparts



Hard case with line down centre

Other insects larger than 3 mm

- None of the above or if you are unsure
- Includes Bugs; like beetles but wings folded over, often in an X or Y shape
- Includes Sawflies; like wasps but typically hairless with a wide waist



Sawflies like this have a wide waist



Note: Insects are NOT shown to scale



FITCount

More guidance available on the PoMS website:
ukpoms.org.uk/fit-counts

