
[Test] FarmBioNet Summer Newsletter

From FarmBioNet - Teagasc <FarmBioNet@teagasc.ie>

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To FarmBioNet <FarmBioNet@teagasc.ie>



Update from the Project Team

The FarmBioNet project has now reached its midpoint mark, with June 2026 marking the first half of the project completed. A lot has taken place in these first 18 months, and we celebrated this milestone with all FarmBioNet partners meeting in Florence in May 2026 for the second project Consortium Meeting. The National Networks and their members were a central focus of the Consortium Meeting discussions as we planned and organised the next steps for the second half of the project. You can read more about the Consortium Meeting [here](#).



May also marks the international day for biological biodiversity, and to mark the date, our NN lead, Saorla Kavanagh took part in the Teagasc Signpost Webinar Series, with a presentation titled **Beast of Burden: How can we increase biodiversity on farmland?** The presentation included results from the FarmBioNet project. You can watch the presentation [here](#).

While we are busy in the office continuing to write reports and work on project results, we are also taking advantage of the summer days with the FarmBioNet team attending the Teagasc Johnstown Castle Open Day, Farming for a Better Future, this past Wednesday 10th of June. It was great to see some of our NN members there.



Irish FarmBioNet team at the Teagasc Johnstown Castle Open day. Left to right: Saorla Kavanagh, Niall Walshe, Meritxell Grau Butinyac and Claudia Barry.

Actions for Biodiversity on the Farm

Invasive Species Control

Invasive Species Week is taking place from 22nd-28th of June 2026. Invasive species can displace our native species. The summer months are the perfect time to inspect your farm for any flowering invasive plant species such as Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam and Montbretia. You can report any sightings of invasive species, find specific guidance on how to control invasive species and log your “Actions on Invasives” at invasives.ie.

Leave a Patch of Nettles

Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) are the primary food source for a number of butterfly larvae including the red admiral, peacock, painted lady, small tortoiseshell, and comma. The seeds provide a food resource for seed-eating birds and dense patches provide foraging and nesting cover for small mammals. Nettles also support ladybirds which are natural predators of aphids, providing free pest control. Consider leaving some patches of nettles in a field, field margin, hedgerow or farmyard to support these species and avoid using chemical herbicides on patches of nettles. You can find more on how to support butterflies with native plants [here](#).



Peacock butterfly caterpillars on nettles. Photo credit: Saorla Kavanagh.

Upcoming Farmland Biodiversity Events

Farming for Nature farm walks (June to September)

The Farming for Nature Farm Walk series offers an opportunity for Farming for Nature Ambassador to demonstrate nature-friendly farming practices on their land. Each walk runs for approximately 2.5 hours, with tickets priced at €12 per person, all of which is returned to the farming community. There are 3 upcoming farm walks in June:

17th June - John Liston: Building Resilience on an Organic Beef Farm.

22nd June - Bruce Thompson: Reducing Inputs and Supporting Soil Life on a Dairy Farm.

22nd June - John McHugh: Organic Dairy, Agroforestry and Community in Practice.

The Farm Walk series takes place between May and September 2026. The full schedule and booking details are available [here](#).



Skerries Wild Bee Festival 2026 (June 13th – 14th)

This year's festival programme includes a fantastic line-up of speakers, guided walks and hands-on activities, with something for everyone from curious beginners and families to gardeners, nature lovers and pollinator enthusiasts. The Wild Bee Festival will take place at Skerries Mills, Townparks, Skerries, Co. Dublin. Detailed agenda of the festival is available [here](#).



Farming for Nature Festival 2026 (June 23rd)

"Where Farming, Nature and Food Come Together", the Farming for Nature Festival will take place at Ballykilcavan Brewery, Stradbally, Co. Laois. You can book your tickets [here](#). The FarmBioNet team will see you there.

Farming For Nature Festival

FarmBioNet decision-tools workshop (October 2026)

After a year and a half of National Network members sharing their time and knowledge with us, it is time for FarmBioNet to share the project's decision tools with you.

In October 2026, we will host a workshop where the Navigator and the Calculator decision-support tools will be presented.

The Navigator: One-stop shop for all incentives associated with BFF practices.

The Calculator: Cost-benefit analysis of 10 BFF practices.

The goal of the workshop is to ensure the tools are suitable and useful to our members needs and that all of you can be part of the design process. More details to follow.

Biodiversity in Plain Sight

Dragonflies and Damselflies

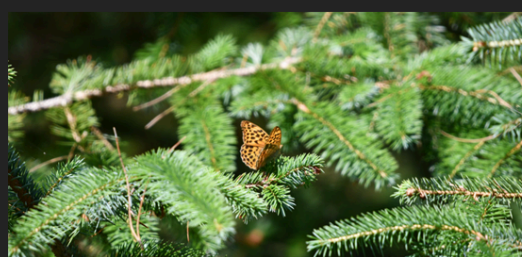
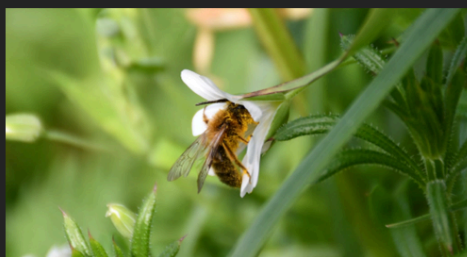
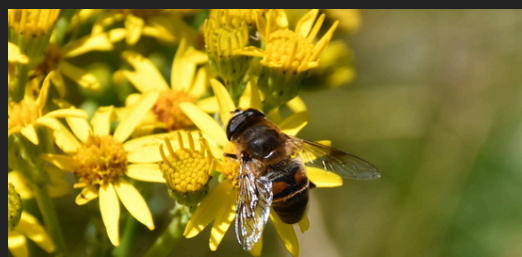
Keep an eye out for dragonflies and damselflies near ponds, streams and rivers. The striking blues, greens and reds are hard to miss, and they are impressive predators if you get a moment to watch them hunt. The largest species, the emperor dragonfly can be 7.8cm long on average with a wingspan of up to 11cm.



Four-Spotted Chaser Dragonfly with Blue Damselfly in background (left) Variable Blue Damselfly (right). Photo credit: Claudia Barry.

Pollinators on the Wing

June, July and August are the busiest time of year for our pollinating friends. Bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies, moths and hoverflies are great pollinators. If you spot any of these on your farm, be sure to take a picture and report your sightings to the National Biodiversity Data Centre.



Top left: Silver Y Moth, Bottom left: Mining Bee, Top right: Eristalis tenax Hoverfly, Bottom right: Silver Washed Fritillary.
Photo credit: Claudia Barry.

Further Reading

While the FarmBioNet team is working in the background to produce training materials based on the results produced from our events up to date, you can find blogs in the FarmBioNet website and short articles in Teagasc T-daily.

FarmBioNet Newsroom

In the FarmBioNet Newsroom you will find project updates as well as blog posts on biodiversity and other related topics. Access the full list at: <https://farmbionet.eu/newsroom/>.

Teagasc T-daily

Any time the Irish Farming and Biodiversity National Network has hosted or taken part in an event, we have published a short article within Teagasc T-daily. You can find all the articles published up to date below:

[Farmer-focussed Biodiversity and Agricultural Knowledge Network](#)
[Boosting Biodiversity: The FarmBioNet Project Kicks-off](#)
[FarmBioNet workshop brings farmers together to share biodiversity knowledge](#)
[Biodiversity and productivity can go hand in hand](#)
[Insights from FarmBioNet's second workshop](#)
[Exploring a new BASELINE for Irish agriculture](#)
[Projects working together – news from the FarmBioNet and SAFER workshop](#)
[FarmBioNet at the Farming for Nature Festival](#)

Additional Resources

If you want to find out more about the project, please check out our website <https://farmbionet.eu/>. And make sure to follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

The Farming for Nature Handbook is a practical resource for farmers looking to boost biodiversity and build resilience. From meadow management to soil health, it's full of real-

world, biodiversity-friendly farming practices that work with the land—not against it. For more information about Farming for Nature and the handbook you can visit farmingfornature.ie.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre host a variety of [workshops](#) and free online [training courses](#) on a wide range of topics from managing hedgerows for biodiversity to identifying farmland birds, bees and butterflies. You can also keep an eye on [The Hare's Corner](#) and [Farming for Nature](#) websites for upcoming events and workshops.

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