

Assessment of Pilot Pollinator Action Areas –May 2019 Report

1. The Corbally Road Meadow

This site was surveyed on 25th May 2019. Two additional species were added to the species list: cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*, Fig.1), and weld (*Reseda luteola*, Fig. 2). The former species was uncommon, occurring in the middle part of the meadow, and the latter was found on waste ground by the western margin.

1.1 Value for biodiversity and pollinating insects in May

Fifty-one species were noted in flower in the meadow area. Forty-four were true meadow species, when marginal woody/shrub species and plants of waste ground are excluded (Table 1). Bird's-foot trefoil (Fig. 3), ox-eye daisy (Figs 4, 5), black medick, ragged robin (Fig. 6), red clover, meadow buttercup, knapweed (Fig. 7), bush vetch (Fig. 8) smooth hawk's beard, and ribwort plantain were the principal herbaceous species in flower that are most useful to foraging insects and pollinators. Noteworthy was the presence of small colonies of yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*, Figs 9, 10) which had been introduced as seed in autumn 2018.

Recommendations for summer management.

Encroachment by tall herbs, grasses and shrubs/tree sapling (briars, nettles, creeping thistle, false oat-grass, couch grass, great willowherb, rosebay willowherb, gorse and willows) particularly on the western margin will need to be addressed by cutting. Removal of willow saplings is also required and it is recommended to remove these by hand if possible. The colonies of Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed in the southern part of the meadow should be eradicated.

Common horsetail appears to spread extensively in the meadow particularly in the northern portion. The colonized areas will need to be cut at least once, and preferably twice during the growing season. Repeated assiduously over a number of seasons, cutting may eliminate the horsetail. Chemical control with glyphosate or a selective herbicide such as triclopyr should be considered.

Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) appears to have established itself well in the middle part of the meadow following the introduction of seed at the end of last season. Seeding, from sources within the meadow or from outside, should be carried out towards the end of the growing season over the rest of the meadow.

2. The College Park Meadow.

Fifteen species were in flower in Corbally Park meadow on late 25th May. Most were grasses of no value to pollinating insects. The most valuable herbaceous plants to pollinating insects in May were meadow and creeping buttercups, daisy, common mouse-ear, and ribwort plantain (Fig. 11).

No mowing of the northern part of the Park has been carried out so far this year and this has benefited the flowering of buttercups. There is a heavy grass sward and this could be cut from the end of May onwards. Care should be given to avoid the damp south eastern portion of the meadow which is home to the uncommon tubular water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*), or to delay cutting until after this plant has flowered in July.

3. The Childers Road site

Thirty-eight species were in flower on the 25th May. Of these, 20 were useful to pollinating insects: principally ox-eye daisy, bird's-foot trefoil, black medick, red clover, smooth and rough hawk's beards, common vetch, bush vetch, lady's smock, knapweed, cut-leaved crane's-bill, red valerian and ribwort plantain. The most valuable area for pollinators was the frontal berm which supported a colourful stand of ox-eye daisy, smooth hawk's-beard and knapweed (Fig. 12).

3.1 Recommendations for further management.

The berm should not be cut before the herbaceous plants have set seed. Later in the year, yellow rattle seed should be introduced. Seeds of ox-eye daisy and other flowering herbaceous plants should be spread in the grass-dominated part of the berm near the weighbridge.

Table 1. Plant species in flower in Corbally Road, College Park and Childers Road meadow sites on 25th May 2019.

Species	Common Name	Corbally Rd.	College Park	Childers Rd.
Grasses				
<i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i>	Marsh Foxtail	+	+	
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Foxtail	+	+	+
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal Grass	+		+
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Oat Grass	+		+
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-Tail	+		
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot	+		+
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	Meadow Fescue	+	+	
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	+		
<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>	Floating Sweet Grass	+	+	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	+	+	+
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-Grass	+		
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Meadow Grass	+		+
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough-Stalked Meadow Grass	+	+	
Herbaceous Perennials				
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	+		

<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	Kidney Vetch	+		
<i>Aquilegia sp.</i>	Columbine			+
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	+	+	+
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Lady's Smock, Cuckoo Flower	+	+	+
<i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous Sedge	+		
<i>Carex hirta</i>	Hairy Sedge	+		
<i>Carex otrubae</i>	False Fox Sedge			+
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Knapweed	+		+
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	Red Valerian			+
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear	+	+	
<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear			+
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye Daisy	+		+
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoil	+		+
<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>	Ragged robin	+		
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick	+		+
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	+	+	+
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip	+		
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	+	+	+
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	+	+	+
<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld	+		
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Yellow Rattle	+		
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel	+		
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled Dock	+		+
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	+		+
<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	Wood Dock	+		
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i> subsp. <i>minor</i>	Salad Burnet	+		
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	+		
<i>Taraxacum vulgare</i>	Dandelion	+		+
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	+		+
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	+		+
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	Bush Vetch	+		+
Trees and Shrubs				
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red Osier Dogwood			+
<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	Wall Cotoneaster			+
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Whitethorn, Hawthorn	+		+
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Bramble	+		+
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder			+
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	+		+
Annuals/Biennials				
<i>Brassica rapa</i>	Wild Turnip	+		+
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	Wavy Bitter-Cress	+	+	+
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Cornflower	+		
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard	+	+	+
<i>Crepis biennis</i>	Rough Hawk's-beard			+
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	+		+

<i>Papaver argemone</i>	Prickly Poppy	+		
<i>Veronica persica</i>	Common Field-Speedwell	+	+	+
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch	+		+

Fig. 1 Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 2. Weld (*Reseda luteola*) Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 3. Bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 4. Ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Corbally Road Meadow.



Fig. 5. Ox-eye daisy and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 6. Ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 7. Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 8. Bush vetch (*Vicia sepium*) Corbally Road meadow.



Fig.9. Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 10. Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), Corbally Road meadow.



Fig. 11. Buttercups and plantain in Corbally Park meadow, May 2019.



Fig. 12. Frontal berm, Childers Road site, May 2019.



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