



Shrill Carder Bees Make Comeback in the UK!

What are pollinators?

- Animals like bees and butterflies, which carry pollen from one flower to another, are called pollinators.
- It is because of pollination that crops and fruit plants are able to produce the food we eat.

Bees and other pollinators have been having a hard time in recent years. However, thanks to the hard work of volunteers in Somerset, some rare shrill carder bees are making a comeback.

Shrill carder bees are named for their high-pitched buzzing sound and, like other bees, they play a **crucial** role in pollinating crops and other plants.

However, according to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, "In the last 80 years our bumblebee populations have crashed." This has led to a "dramatic decline" in bee numbers and two species becoming "nationally extinct".

This is due in part to the loss of their habitats over the past decades. In fact, since the Second World War, 97% of the country's grasslands have been lost.

Wildflower meadows and other grasslands are an important habitat for bees and other pollinators. This is why the volunteers at The National Trust's Lytes Cary Manor and Estate, in Somerset, have worked hard to create flower-rich habitats for the bees to **thrive** in.

John Butler, a volunteer, said, "It has been a fantastic project to be involved with. I really hope this work will inspire others to play their part."

World Bee Day

World Bee Day is an **annual** event designed to raise awareness of how important bees are

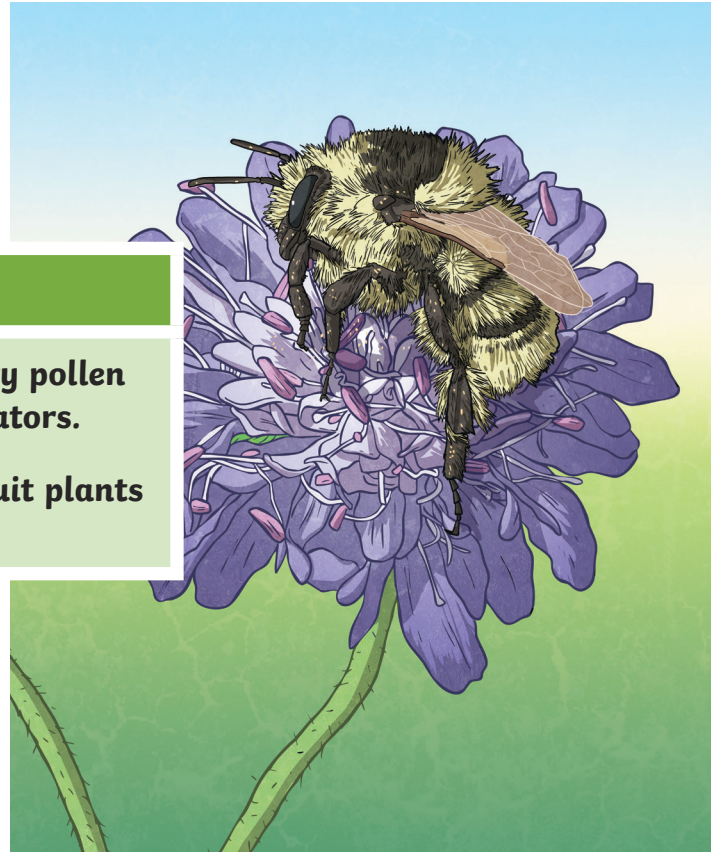


Illustration: A shrill carder bee.

and the need for more habitats to help bees and other pollinators.

Recognising how important they are to our planet, the United Nations (UN) decided to make 20th May, each year, World Bee Day.

They chose this date because it celebrates the birthday of Anton Janša. He was famous for being an expert and a **pioneer** of beekeeping methods. He wrote books that helped others learn how best to care for bees.

In one of his books about bees, he wrote that out of all the animals on earth, "there are none so hard working and useful".

Glossary

crucial	Very important.
thrive	Develop or grow healthily.
annual	Something that happens every year.
pioneer	A person who is one of the first to do something.

Questions

1. Tick the two correct facts.

- ☐ Shrill carder bees are named for their low-pitched buzzing sound.
- ☐ Shrill carder bees are named for their high-pitched buzzing sound.
- ☐ Since the Second World War, 87% of the country's grasslands have been lost.
- ☐ Two bee species have become nationally extinct in the last 80 years.

2. In the paragraph beginning 'However, according to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust...', which past tense verb is used to describe what has happened to the bee population?

3. 'John Butler, a volunteer, said, "It has been a fantastic project to be involved with. I really hope this work will inspire others to play their part."'

What do you think he meant by the phrase 'inspire others to play their part'?

4. Tick the correct box to show whether a statement is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Bee numbers have been declining for years.		
The volunteers have done fantastic work.		
Wildflower meadows are an important habitat for bees.		
Carder bees are the most important bees.		

5. Which headline is the **least** accurate description of the article?

- ☐ Bees Bounce Back
- ☐ Pollinators Return to Somerset Meadows
- ☐ Bees Buzzing after Numbers Decrease
- ☐ Bee Population on the Rise

6. Summarise the story in 15 words or fewer.

Answers

1. Tick the two correct facts.

- ☐ Shrill carder bees are named for their low-pitched buzzing sound.
- ☒ **Shrill carder bees are named for their high-pitched buzzing sound.**
- ☐ Since the Second World War, 87% of the country's grasslands have been lost.
- ☒ **Two bee species have become nationally extinct in the last 80 years.**

2. In the paragraph beginning 'However, according to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust...', which past tense verb is used to describe what has happened to the bee population?

crashed

3. 'John Butler, a volunteer, said, "It has been a fantastic project to be involved with. I really hope this work will inspire others to play their part."'

What do you think he meant by the phrase 'inspire others to play their part'?

Accept any answer referring to other people helping, e.g. I think 'inspire others to play their part' means that he wants other people to join in.

4. Tick the correct box to show whether a statement is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Bee numbers have been declining for years.	✓	
The volunteers have done fantastic work.		✓
Wildflower meadows are an important habitat for bees.	✓	
Carder bees are the most important bees.		✓

5. Which headline is the **least** accurate description of the article?

- ☐ Bees Bounce Back
- ☐ Pollinators Return to Somerset Meadows
- ☒ **Bees Buzzing after Numbers Decrease**
- ☐ Bee Population on the Rise

6. Summarise the story in 15 words or fewer.

Accept any sensible summary that covers the main points of the article. e.g. Shrill carder bees have been helped by volunteers in Somerset.