



# **B-Lines connected flower-rich habitats for pollinators and other wildlife**

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As well as their own **intrinsic value** and the health and wellbeing benefits to us, invertebrates perform many vital ecosystem services such as:

- Pollination services
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Food for other wildlife
- Soil - improvements in nutrient cycling, water-use efficiency, aeration of soil, reduce need for inputs



Rose Chafer (*Cetonia aurata*) © Andrew Whitehouse



# The importance of pollinators

- 8 out of 10 wild plants need insect pollination
- One in every three mouthfuls of our food depends on pollination
- 84% of EU crops rely on insect pollination
- Wild pollinators can:
  - Increase yields
  - Increase crop production stability
  - Increase crop quality and value



# Pollinators - an (almost) silent army

At least 4,000 species involved in the UK



Clockwise from top left: Pied Hoverfly (*Scaeva pyrastris*) © Liam Olds; Small Scabious Mining Bee (*Andrena marginata*) © Liam Olds; Five-banded Weevil-wasp (*Cerceris quinquefasciata*) © Peter Harvey; Speckled Longhorn (*Pachytodes cerambyciformis*) © Steven Falk; Brown-banded Carder Bee (*Bombus humilis*) © Sam Ashton; Grayling (*Hipparchia Semele*) © Iain H Leach.



# Declines in insect pollinators

- More than 2/3 of pollinating insects in the UK are in decline (CEH 2019)
- Bugs Matter 78% decline in insect abundance from 2004-2023 Kent WT)
- 80% of butterfly species have declined since the 1970s (BC 2022)
- 20 bee and wasp species have gone extinct in Britain in the last century (Ollerton 2014)
- Big Butterfly Count 2024 results reveal lowest numbers on record
- 2024 worse year on record for bumblebees (BBCT)



Shrill Carder Bee (*Bombus silvarum*) © Steven Falk



Small Blue (*Cupido minimus*)  
© Ian H Leach

# The problem



© Rachel Richards

- **Loss of 97% of species rich-wildflower grassland** (3 million ha) since 1930s (intensification of agriculture, chemical usage)
- Fragmentation of habitat in the modern landscape.
- Too much **untargeted** and **diffuse** delivery.
- Poor management of public green spaces.
- **We need more, bigger, better and more connected areas for wildlife** (*Making Space for Nature, 2010*)

**We need to make landscapes work better for pollinators and other wildlife**

More, permanent, connected flower-rich habitats

Increase size, quality and diversity of this habitat (e.g. habitat mosaic approach)

Increase 'permeability' of the landscape and create key 'connections'- rural & urban



Top: © Rachel Richards, bottom: © Suzanne Burgess



## B-Lines the solution

B-Lines- a network of 3km wide corridors connecting the best remaining areas of wildflower-rich habitat.

A shared map to direct and focus the national flower-rich habitat creation effort to reverse pollinator declines.

Something anyone can contribute to- NGOs, local authorities, businesses, industry, schools, landowners....



## B-Lines guiding principles:

- Approximately east-west and north-south corridors.
- Create continuous network of habitat to link around the country- 10% of B-Lines 'filled' with habitat stepping stones.
- Encompass the best and the majority of wildflower-rich habitats (esp. grasslands).
- Not just for pollinators!



Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) © Neil Smith, CC BY-SA 2.0 DEED



Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) © Gail Hampshire, CC BY-SA 2.0 DEED

# B-Lines the solution

- The B-Lines principle is based on research from University of Liverpool.
- Mapped round the table, county by county, including local data and expertise.



© Buglife



Oct 2024

almost 3,300 dots on  
the map

> 4,300 Ha of  
Wildflower work

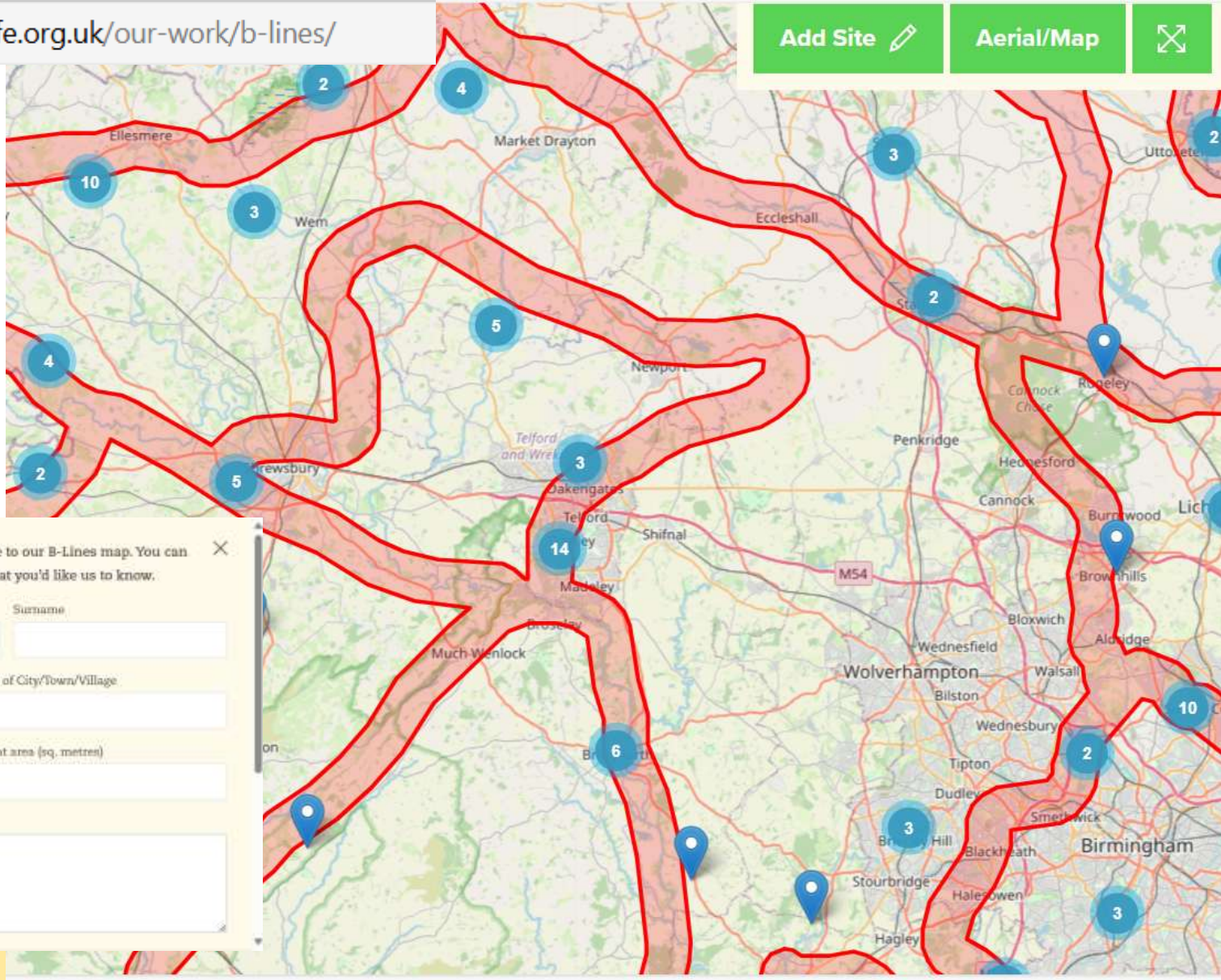



# Adding your meadow to B-Lines

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

Add Site 

Aerial/Map 



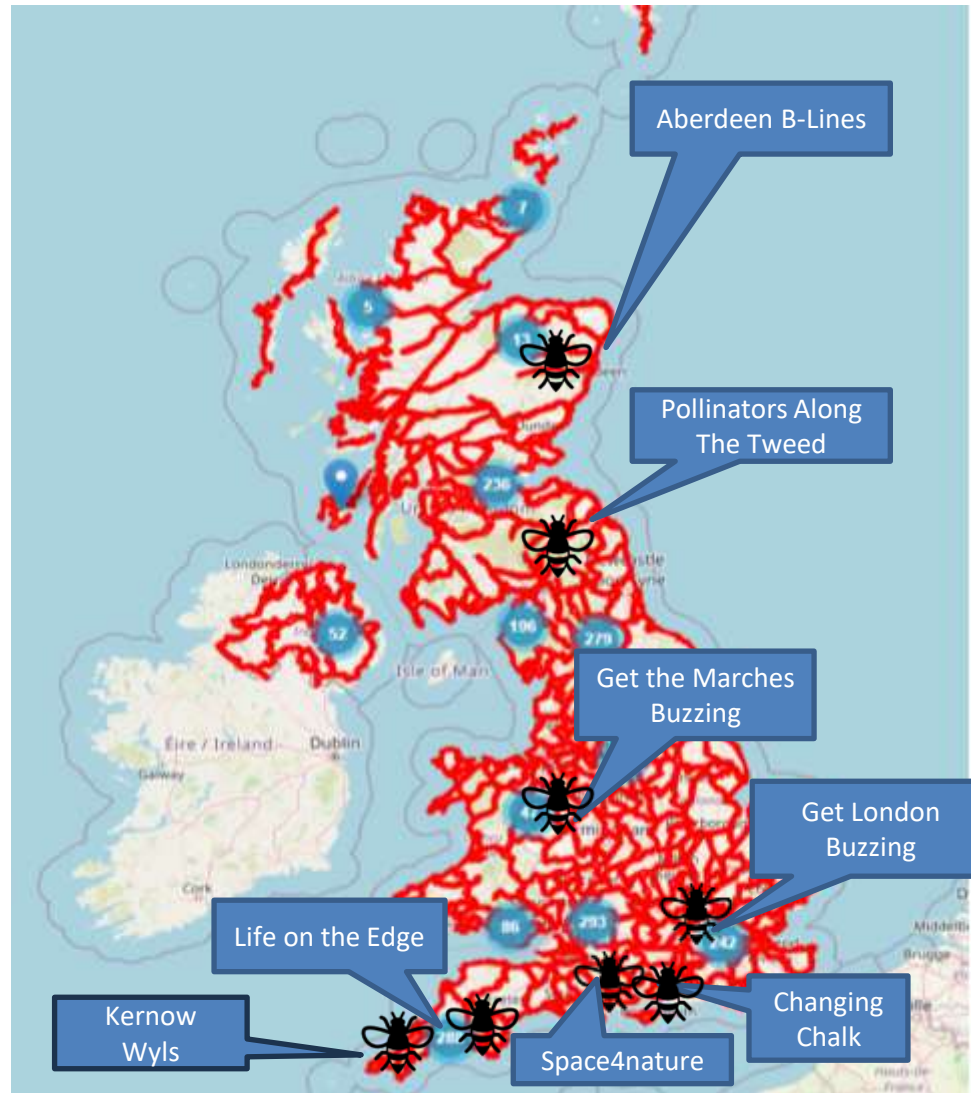
Please complete all of the boxes to add your site to our B-Lines map. You can upload a photo or add any other information that you'd like us to know. 

Title	First name	Surname
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Organisation/Project name (optional)	Name of City/Town/Village	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Date of work	Habitat area (sq. metres)	
<input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Comments		
<input type="text"/>		






# Active Buglife B-Lines projects Sept 2024







**Thank you for listening**  
Rachel Richards: B-Lines officer

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