



'Snapshot' projects - results



Buzz Club projects tend to be quite long, with data recording taking place over several months at least. Members' feedback indicated that there was desire for shorter projects, that did not require the same time commitment, but still fitted with the Buzz Club's focus on garden insects. The findings from these 'Snapshot' projects are summarised here:

🇬🇧 The Cinnabar Snapshot (2023) 🇬🇧

Cinnabar moths (*Tyria jacobaeae*) are a striking black and red day-flying moth, and their caterpillars feed exclusively on ragwort. They only produce one generation per year, overwintering as pupae, and the adults do not tend to fly very far from where they hatch. Thus it can take a while for a population to spread into new areas, or recover from losses.

In our first Snapshot, participants recorded the number of caterpillars found on ten ragwort plants local to them; finding 1594 caterpillars on 791 plants. Populations varied a lot between sites, with around a third of participants finding no caterpillars at all on their local ragwort; more than half finding less than ten — and one garden site recording a whopping 316 caterpillars!

Follow-up?

Participants reported enjoying the short project and liked having a distinctive insect to focus on. Engagement was good. However, thinking about future years, we could not see a good use for this as a Buzz Club project *specifically*.

There are already monitoring schemes for this species (such as the [National Moth Recording Scheme](#), which includes caterpillars). We decided that boosting awareness of those schemes at suitable times of year was a better use of effort than trying to coordinate our own monitoring, simply to feed it back into NMRS.



Participants	#	%
Signed up	73	
Returned data	58	79.45%
Remained actively engaged (data returned or communicated with project).	59	80.82%

Participation in Cinnabar Snapshot

Caterpillars per plant	# sites
Zero	21
1-10	34
11-20	2
21-30	0
30+	2

Caterpillars were patchily distributed

🇬🇧 The Ivy Bee Snapshot (2023) 🇬🇧

This Snapshot focused on the UK's newest bee—the ivy bee (*Colletes hederae*). We asked participants to go and check their local mature (flowering) ivy plants to see if the bees were present, and to record any observed behaviour. We were also hoping to identify nesting aggregations.

Few participants found ivy bees during the project time (Sept – Oct). Two large aggregations were found, one with 700+ bees on the Sussex University campus, and 1200+ bees near Worcester. Cold wet weather may have delayed the bees' emergence that year (Linda found some weeks later, on a site where they had been recorded earlier in 2022)

Follow-up?

Similar to the cinnabar snapshot, we decided that effort would be better spent promoting the existing BWARS [monitoring scheme for ivy bees](#) to Buzz Club members at a suitable time of year.





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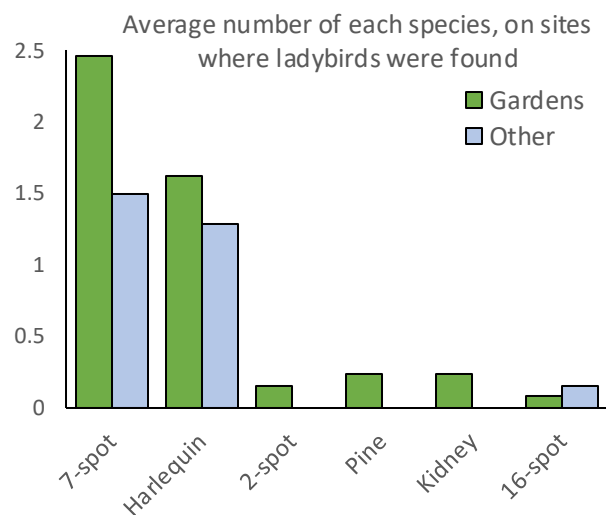
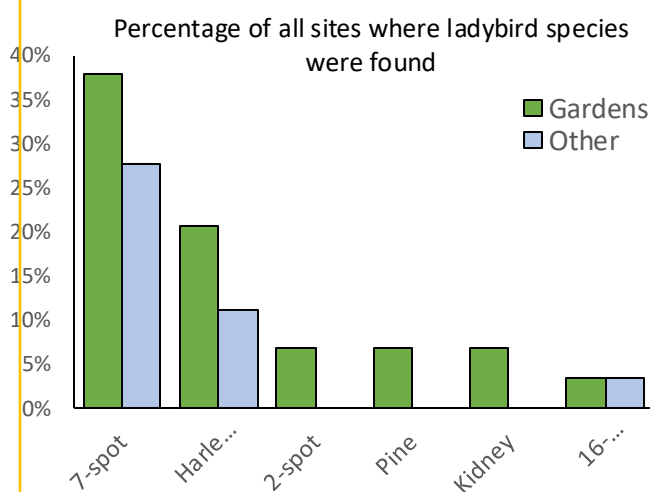


📷 The Ladybird Snapshot (2023) 📷

Ladybirds are a hugely important part of our garden wildlife, and they are also generally easier to identify in the field than many other insect groups. This Snapshot asked participants to compare the ladybirds found in their garden with those found in a nearby 'wilder' green space (i.e. not a garden). To keep the task 'snapshot sized', we asked participants to only do a **10 min** survey, and to focus on similar patches of plants (thus comparing local 'wild plants' rather than 'garden plants').

Participants ID'd their own ladybirds, and also took photos for the Buzz Club to confirm IDs.

- 30 volunteers took part, looking at 47 patches (29 gardens, 18 other).
- Ladybirds were found on 20 sites, and were slightly more likely to be found in gardens (13 gardens = 43%, 7 other = 39%).
- On sites where ladybirds were found, gardens had a greater abundance of individuals found (average of 4 ladybirds per garden; 2.7 per other site).
- Gardens were more diverse in the species recorded, with **five** species of ladybirds found (7-spot, Harlequin, 2-spot, Pine, Kidney-spot), **three** were found in 'other' (7-spot, Harlequin, 16-spot).
- The most common ladybirds found were 7-spots (on 16 sites), and Harlequins (on 8 sites). 7-spots were more abundant in gardens than on other sites; Harlequins were fairly similar in abundance wherever they were found.



Since Harlequins are an invasive species, known to be having negative impacts on UK native ladybirds (especially 2-spots), it is good to see them not being the dominant species found!

We decided that 'other' was too broad a category for comparing inside / outside gardens.

📷 The Ladybird Snapshot 2024 📷

This year tried to look at more specific intra-garden habitats – comparing areas managed for flowers, crops, or 'wild'. The ladybird counting protocol was the same, but this year's ladybird snapshot was not successful. Sign-up rates were low and participants found few ladybirds, possibly due to issues with the timing of the project.

Follow-up?

We would like to run a comparison of ladybirds in different garden sub-habitats, but it looks like it would require a larger time / effort investment from participants than a 'Snapshot'.