

## Visiting Tomintoul's wildflower meadow

Please visit our beautiful meadow! It is located on the site of the former mart a couple of minute's walk from the village square. This is becoming a key wildlife spot in our area. The surrounding fields and wetlands are home to wading birds including lapwing, known locally as peesies, oyster catcher, curlew and red shank. Many are in decline nationally but they can be found nesting here in the spring. If you are visiting in Spring and Summer, keep an ear out for their distinctive calls when you visit. You can also spend time in our amazing bird hide, overlooking the Conglass Water and the wetlands that surround it.

## How can you help?

### Join the polli-nation!

You can help join in the polli-nation, spreading the word... and spreading seeds! No matter whether you have a garden with a large grassed area, or whether you could find room for pots, tubs or window boxes of nectar-rich and pollinator-friendly flowers. This will all help to provide for these essential little critters.

*To find out more about pollinators  
and fun ways in which you can get involved  
take a look at the following websites:*

[www.polli-nation.org.uk](http://www.polli-nation.org.uk)

[www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

[www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)

[www.growwilduk.com](http://www.growwilduk.com)

[www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)



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# TOMINTOUL Wildflower Meadow



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A SANCTUARY FOR POLLINATORS

## Pollinators are amazing!



They may be small, but pollinators are mighty! Did you know that without pollinators we wouldn't have many plants for food, shelter, clothing and lots more? Pollination occurs when a bird or insect visits a flower to feed and accidentally collects pollen on its body. As it moves to the next plant, some pollen is rubbed off and fertilises this plant, eventually leading to seeds. It's estimated that 85-95% of insect pollinated plants rely on wild pollinators like bees, butterflies, moths, flies and beetles. When the wild flowers are in bloom in Tomintoul and Glenlivet in the late spring and summer, it's a great time to see all kinds of pollinators.

When you visit the wildflower meadow, keep an eye out for some of these:

- Butterflies including Small Tortoiseshell, Scotch Argus, Peacock (pictured below, left), and Common Blue, and
- Moths including the Poplar Hawkmoth (pictured below, centre), Emerald Moth and Silver Y Moth.

## A stunning habitat...but in decline



The habitats that pollinators rely on for their food are incredible. From gardens, to uncut road verges, to meadows the flowers that you find here are beautiful and often rare.

Sadly, the habitat that these amazing insects rely on for their food has decreased enormously across the UK in the last 50 years, and what's left has become increasingly fragmented. This means that the numbers of pollinators are decreasing too and it's essential that we help as much as we can to reverse this decline.

## Creating a sanctuary



A local farmer, Hamish McIntosh, was keen to play his part. In 2017, with help from the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Wildlife Group and the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, a mix of native wildflowers and grasses were used to transform the field into a sanctuary for pollinators.

Cutting wildflower meadows once the flowers have gone to seed helps the meadow to regenerate year on year. It is also important to remove the cut flowers and grasses from the meadow as soon as possible to prevent the soils becoming too rich in nutrients.

Originally, this was done mechanically but in 2020 local volunteers learnt to use hand scythes to cut part of the meadow. We hope, in time, to be able to cut the whole meadow using this traditional method as well as to harvest the seeds from the flowers.

