



## BeeWalk Annual Report 2026

Dr Richard Comont & Helen Dickinson



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## About BeeWalk

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BeeWalk is the standardised bumblebee-monitoring scheme active across Great Britain, running since 2008 (opened to the public from 2011). Volunteer BeeWalkers survey a fixed-route transect once a month between March and October (inclusive), recording the abundance of each bumblebee species seen. This data is submitted via the [BeeWalk website](#) (hosted by the Biological Records Centre) and used to analyse population trends. The outputs of BeeWalk are widely used to inform policy and conservation interventions.

## The BeeWalk team

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## Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank the financial and in-kind contributions to the BeeWalk scheme by the many organisations, charitable trusts and individuals who have supported BeeWalk in particular, and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in general. Thanks to the Biological Records Centre, who provide website support and data storage free of charge.

We would also like to thank the photographers who have given consent to use their images as part of this BeeWalk Annual Report.

## Citation

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This report can be downloaded from [www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk).

Cover photo: Garden bumblebee, *Bombus hortorum* © Lucy Roberts

## THANK YOU!

**We are indebted to the volunteer BeeWalkers and organisations past and present who have contributed data to the scheme or have helped recruit or train others in connection with it. Thanks also to all the individuals and organisations who allow and actively promote access to their land for bumblebee recording.**

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# BeeWalk background, aims and methods

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## BeeWalk background and aims

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The Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society ([BWARS](#)) has collected distribution data for Hymenoptera since 1978 and whilst providing understanding of the distribution of bumblebee species, there has been historically a lack of data on abundance. Knowing the size of populations and how these change over time is key to monitoring population trends, identifying species at risk and provision of an early warning system for declines. The lack of abundance data, alongside the need to better understand what's happening to all our species, not just the rarest, led to the development of BeeWalk. BeeWalk collects bumblebee abundance data from across Britain to gain an accurate understanding of current bumblebee populations and distributions.

## BeeWalk survey methods

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BeeWalk transects (fixed monitoring routes) are established and monitored by volunteers (BeeWalkers) using a standardised methodology to ensure accurate and comparable data is gathered. Transects are around 1-2 km in length and walked a minimum of once a month between March and October inclusive (the main bumblebee flight period). BeeWalkers record the abundance of each bumblebee species seen in a 4m x 4m x 2m 'recording box' in order to standardise between habitats and recorders.

Bumblebees are identified to species and caste where possible (recorded as 'unknown bumblebee' or 'unknown caste' where not) and the number of each entering the 'recording box' is recorded. Those recorders confident in plant ID also record the flower species bumblebees are visiting. Survey results are submitted via the BeeWalk website [www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk).

### BeeWalk key aims:

- Collect long-term data on bumblebee distribution and abundance across Britain.
- Analyse data to identify population trends and drivers.
- Use the findings to inform policy and conservation interventions, improve understanding of forage plants & identification of management impacts.
- Encourage public understanding of bumblebees.

## BeeWalk data verification and analysis

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Each year data is downloaded at multiple intervals and prepared for analysis; an intensive process of data validation and verification. This is essential to meet the high standards required for monitoring scheme data to be scientifically robust and reliable. Records of rare and difficult-to-identify species, and species outside known ranges, are queried with the recorder to establish supporting evidence.

Data received provide an annual estimation of the abundance of a species. This is a relative measure which requires statistical interpretation to evaluate changes over time. Estimates of population trends are calculated using statistical modelling. Bumblebee counts submitted by BeeWalkers are summed to produce total counts of each caste of each species, for each month surveyed. These monthly counts are analysed using statistical modelling to work out the monthly counts as a rate; bees seen per kilometre walked. This allows for the fact that the distances walked per month varies between months, years, and species. As all species are not found on all transects, a list is generated of sites each species has ever been recorded on within BeeWalk. This is used to

calculate the distance walked each month across the species' range.

We use the results to demonstrate the abundance of each species in a given year, against the mean monthly abundance across previous years, in order to see whether a given year was statistically 'good', 'bad', or 'standard' for each species.

## Changes to BeeWalk for 2026

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It's important that the core BeeWalk methodology remains the same for comparability of data across years, but we have a few changes across the wider BeeWalk project in 2026.

### BeeWalk & PoMS FIT Counts

For the 2026 field season **we're asking BeeWalkers to try to carry out a 10-minute Flower-Insect Timed Count with their transect walk** (either at the end or before) as part of the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS). The aim is to help link the two surveys, helping us to both understand the wider pollinator community, and benchmark the two surveys against each other. This is not an obligatory part of your BeeWalk survey, but it will be hugely useful for both recording schemes.

Further details of PoMS, including how to carry out a FIT Count, can be found on page [14](#).

### Training: the BeeWalk Academy

Since BeeWalk began back in 2008 training has been a major part of the scheme, aiming to build an army of BeeWalkers nationwide. At first this was solely delivered through face-to-face training. Then in 2020 we began delivering live virtual training sessions, and from 2021 through our Skills for Bees projects we have experimented with hybrid approaches, repeated short sessions, and smaller groups, collecting a lot of feedback along the way.

To bring this together, in 2026 we will be launching the BeeWalk Academy, a new online learning and community platform for bumblebee identification and monitoring. Developed exclusively for BeeWalkers this will bring together self-led training modules, key resources, and opportunities to connect. BeeWalkers will be able to work through from first principles from what is a bumblebee, to all aspects of the BeeWalk methodology, to identification of species from common through to rare.

This development will ensure BeeWalk continues to support a skilled, confident and connected volunteer network, underpinning one of the UK's most important long-term insect monitoring schemes.

Full details of how to access the BeeWalk Academy will be circulated to registered BeeWalkers from spring 2026 onwards.

# Mapping BeeWalk

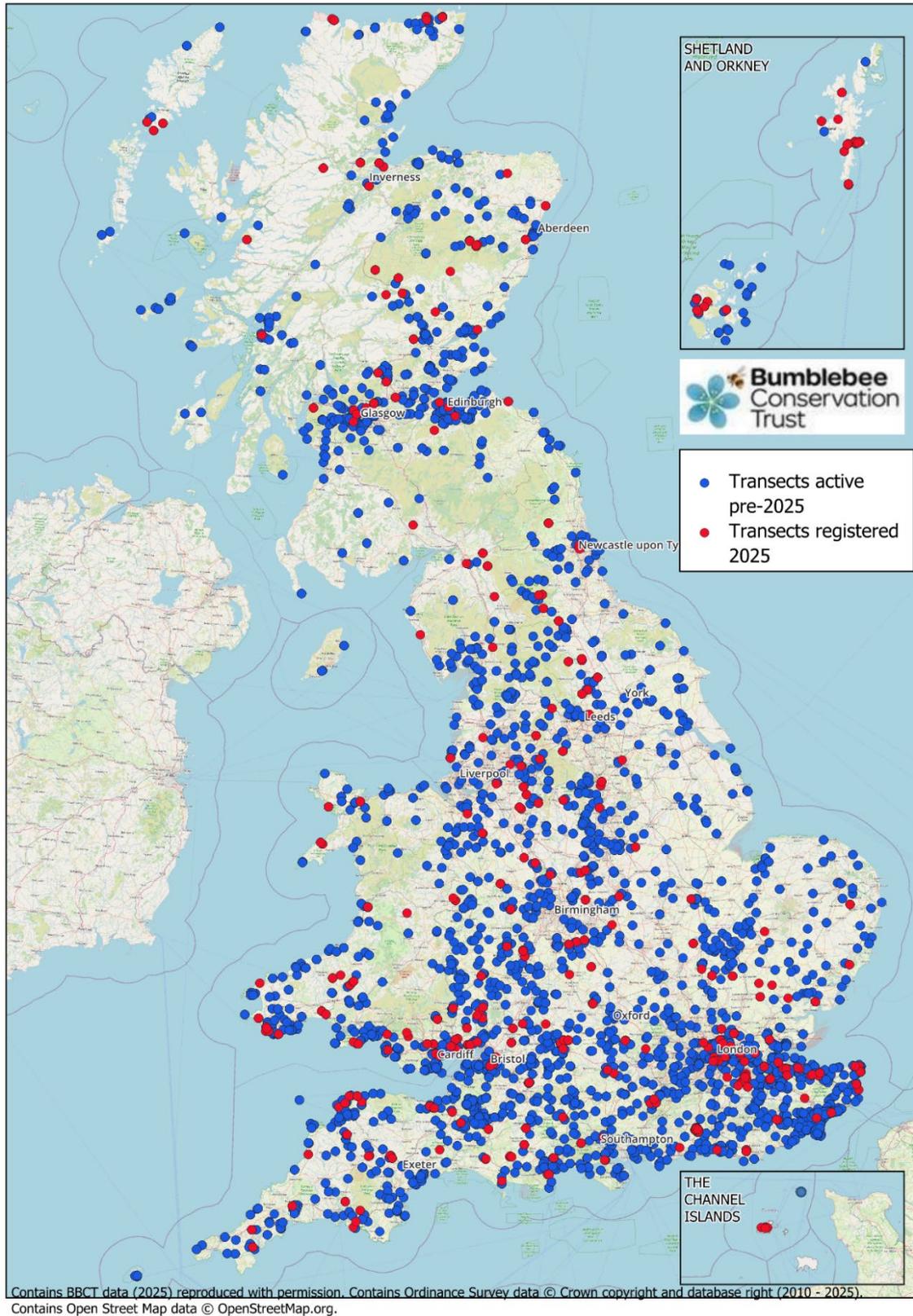


Figure 1. Newly registered transects (red) showing the growth of the BeeWalk network during 2025

## BeeWalk 2025 highlights in number

**1109** transects surveyed in 2025

↑ 83 from 2024

**984** BeeWalkers submitted data in 2025

↑ 56 from 2024

**53,867** records submitted in 2025

↑ 6018 from 2024

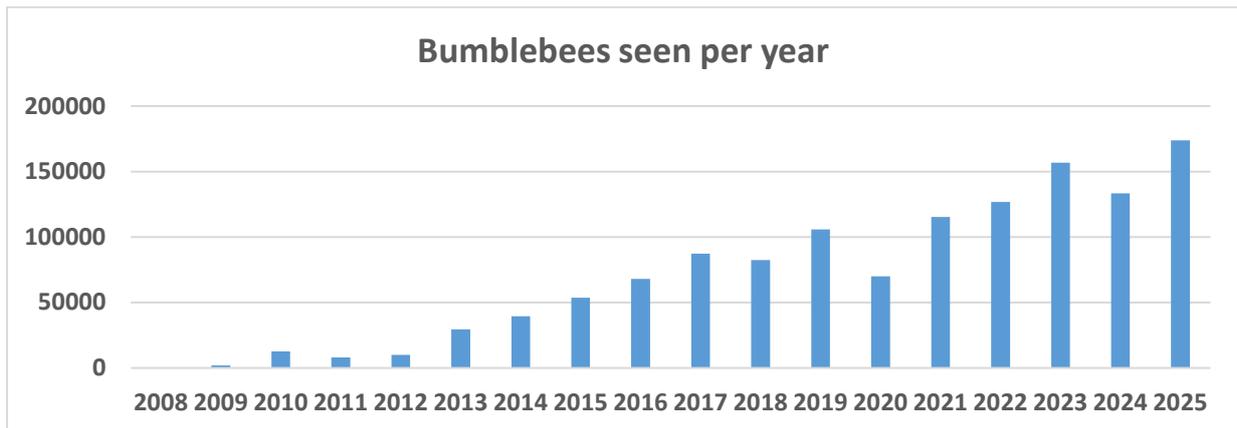


Figure 2. Bumblebees seen per year

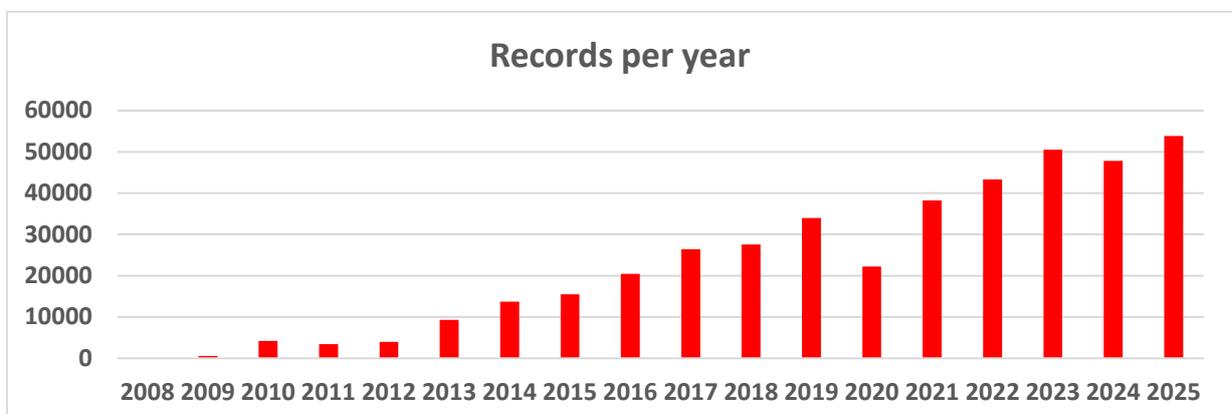


Figure 3. Bumblebee records per year

## BeeWalk training

Over the past year, BeeWalk has continued to grow as a truly national programme across Britain, powered by its committed and increasingly skilled community of volunteers. Through a programme of in-person training days, virtual ID and support sessions, the BeeWalk team trained over 200 people in person and over 300 virtually, equipping new and existing BeeWalkers with the skills, confidence and ecological understanding needed to survey bumblebees. In person sessions took place right across Britain, from Caernarfon to Cambridgeshire, and from Cumbria to Kingcombe, reflecting the breadth of BeeWalk's reach and the diversity of landscapes in which volunteers are collecting vital data.

In-person training days combined practical field skills with species identification, survey

methodology and an understanding of how BeeWalk data is used to inform conservation, research and policy. Just as importantly, they provided opportunities for BeeWalkers to connect with each other, share local knowledge and feel part of a wider national effort to protect bumblebees.

Online sessions allowed wider access to training and support in bumblebee ID, survey methodology and use of the BeeWalk website.

Looking ahead, the coming year marks an exciting next phase for BeeWalk training and volunteer support, with the launch of the BeeWalk Academy and a refreshed in-person training experience.



In person sessions being delivered by Annie Ives (left), former Skills for Bees: Scotland Project Officer (picture © Helen Dickinson), and Helen Dickinson (right, picture © Miranda Shepherd)

## View from a BeeWalker

BeeWalk is powered by our ever-increasing network of skilled volunteer bumblebee surveyors, many starting from scratch with no previous biological recording or bumblebee ID experience. We are indebted to these volunteers committing their time to learning the required skills and putting them into practice on their monthly bumblebee surveys. We hear from one such fantastic volunteer:

### Walk and Bee counted ... a BeeWalkers view by Cheryl Sheff

*I've been a BeeWalker since 2017. I signed up for a year as part of my Corporate Social Responsibility but have continued ever since as I really enjoy it. Nature is my happy place. The more I've watched bumblebees, the more I've fallen in love with them. Their fluffy, stripy bodies, buzzing, and general busyness, they are real little characters. Gives me a 'buzz' (sorry, couldn't resist the obvious pun!).*

*Initially, I was nervous about my ability to ID the different species, castes, and plants they were on. To aid my ID skills, I've attended one in-person and one virtual ID skills course with BBCT and have some reference books at home to also help. The plant ID features on smartphones can be useful too. The BBCT experts are also only an email away to assist with ID.*

*Highs – getting a confirmed sighting of the rare Shrill carder bumblebee in Hyde Hall in Autumn 2025; huge personal wellbeing gains of being out in Nature; and spending quality time with loved ones. Lows – there are none!*



Cheryl surveying and Shrill carder bumblebee (*B. sylvarum*) (© Cheryl Sheff)

In addition to maintaining her original transect, which Cheryl has surveyed for almost 10 years, Cheryl took over the established RHS Hyde Hall transect in Essex in 2025. The RHS are long term supporters of BeeWalk, with transects established and monitored across all RHS gardens. Cheryl's find confirms an extension of the known distribution for the Shrill carder bumblebee, a species only known from five areas in England and Wales, meaning every new record is hugely significant. Without BeeWalkers and other biological recorders we wouldn't be able to track this vital information.

## The BeeWalk dataset

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As the Trust celebrates its twentieth anniversary, BeeWalk celebrates 18 years of data collection. Over 3,600 people have walked more than 89,000km looking for bumblebees, from Shetland to the Scillies, Sandwich Bay to Snowdon. The 415,100 records of 1,275,625 individual bees would be valuable enough as a scientific archive if we knew nothing about how, or why, they were collected. But because they are from a standardised survey, we know the exact methodology used to collect all those records, that data becomes even more valuable.

BeeWalk is standardised in a couple of different ways. Walking a fixed route, only recording bumblebees in the 4m x 4m x 2m 'recording box', surveying every month March-October, and submitting records of all the bumblebees seen, even if none were, gives us a better understanding of the bumblebee year. For example, if someone walked a BeeWalk but logged no bumblebees, we know that that was because there were none to be seen. If that blank walk hadn't been submitted, we wouldn't know if anyone was looking, so we wouldn't know about the bees. That gets important looking at seasons and climate change, as bees may begin flying at times when they previously wouldn't have been out.

The contextual information becomes particularly important as well. For instance, are bumblebees only emerging earlier in certain habitats? Or is latitude more important? How does that relate to the actual temperature measured during the survey? In analysis terms, the BeeWalk protocol controls for a lot of the variability implicit in monitoring of wild populations and gives us a much easier task of extracting the signal from background noise.

Two other important parts of BeeWalk are recording abundance and recording down to caste.

Caste is important because of bumblebees' social structures. Queens, workers and males all have different roles, so can inform us about the local colonies. For example, good numbers of queens in spring means that there's potential for lots of colonies, but if they are still flying months later, rather than being replaced by workers, then they're probably struggling to establish.

That combination of caste and count gives an unparalleled insight into the colony each year, both the relative abundance of the castes through the season, and species over the years. That lets us see which species are thriving or struggling, and also to look at some of the possible reasons, guiding conservation work and policy recommendations.

The coming year will see some of the largest changes to BeeWalk since it was established. Firstly, training. This has always been a massive part of BeeWalk and will continue to be, but demand has grown so much that we can't keep up. Therefore in 2026 we will be launching the BeeWalk Academy online, to make training available to BeeWalkers, anywhere, any time. We'll still be running face-to-face training sessions, but this new approach will broaden our reach and help recorders keep their skills sharp.

Secondly, FIT Counts. We've been working with UKCEH on the National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme project (PoMS) for over a decade, and this year we are trialling greater integration between it and BeeWalk. In particular, we are keen for as many BeeWalkers as possible to carry out a FIT Count at the start or end of their transect walk. That will allow us to link the two datasets much more closely, improving our understanding of the whole pollinator community.

## Bumblebee population & phenology trends

### 2025 season

At last! For the first time since the lockdown year of 2020, we had a warm, dry spring, ideal conditions for bumblebees to establish colonies. After four years of poor springs, cold snaps, rain, and, in 2024, cold wet grey weather from April to June making it the worst bumblebee year on record, it felt like a lot of species were overdue for a break.

The warm spring weather made an immediate difference for quite a few species. The Garden bumblebee (*B. hortorum*) actually had its best May on record. Other early-emerging, quick-nesting species like the Early bumblebee (*B. pratorum*) and the Bilberry bumblebee (*B. monticola*) were able to take advantage of the weather, peaking earlier than normal and in good numbers.

Many of the species which had a terrible 2024 were able to rebound significantly in 2025. Both the Red-tailed and White-tailed bumblebees (*B. lapidarius* and *B. lucorum*) showed a hangover from 2024 in the form of low queen numbers, but were able to recover their numbers once nests were established. Both ended up having a relatively average year, quite a triumph given where they started from.

As spring turned to summer, the weather stayed hot and dry across most of the country. That suited some species very well, the Shrill carder (*B. sylvarum*), perhaps Britain's rarest species, had its best year on record, with the highest numbers for the species in BeeWalk history in both June and July. The species actually peaked in July rather than August for the first time in the survey, showing what an early year it was (particularly in the south-east, where the bulk of the records were from).

Records of *B. lucorum*, *B. magnus* and *B. cryptarum* are combined as the *B. lucorum* aggregate for analysis as they can only be reliably separated by DNA analysis. Additionally, workers of the *B. lucorum* aggregate cannot be reliably separated from workers of *B. terrestris* in many cases, so a further aggregate, *B. terrestris/lucorum* is used which potentially contains workers of all four species. We do not currently receive enough records of Great Yellow bumblebee *B. distinguendus* to calculate an index.

Another priority species, the Brown-banded carder (*B. humilis*), also had an excellent year and, like the Shrill carder, has now shown a population increase every year since 2021.

Summer stayed hot and dry, and this may well have caused some issues for later-peaking species. The Moss and Common carders (*B. muscorum* and *B. pascuorum*) had decent colony build-up in the spring, but didn't manage to kick on and peak in the way that they might have been able to.

Other species showed similar late-summer patterns, either plateauing instead of peaking, or steep drop-offs after an average peak. Red-tailed and Early bumblebees both showed this latter pattern despite that early promise, numbers dropping after an early peak. Meanwhile, the Buff-tailed bumblebee (*B. terrestris*) had its lowest August and September counts ever, despite a reasonable year overall.

The Tree bumblebee (*B. hypnorum*) was puzzling. Since arriving in 2001 it has become both widespread and abundant, but this was the first year since 2019 that the population showed an increase. Even then, it had a decidedly average year despite a good number of queens in early spring, and ideal weather conditions for the species. The peak count was a third of previous levels, with no obvious reason behind it. One to keep an eye on.

Table. 1 Winners and losers: species which have increased (green) or decreased (red) their abundance (measured as number of individual bees seen per km walked) in 2025, compared to the previous survey year, 2024, and to the mean from the start of the scheme in 2010 the end of 2024. All species only calculated on transects with records of that species. Species in orange are conservation-priority, those in blue are abundant and widespread (the 'Big 8').

	2025 vs			2025 vs	
	mean	2024		mean	2024
<i>Apis mellifera</i> <b>European honeybee</b>			<i>Bombus muscorum</i> <b>Moss carder</b>		
<i>Bombus barbutellus</i> <b>Barbut's cuckoo</b>			<i>Bombus pascuorum</i> <b>Common carder</b>		
<i>Bombus bohemicus</i> <b>Gypsy cuckoo</b>			<i>Bombus pratorum</i> <b>Early bumblebee</b>		
<i>Bombus campestris</i> <b>Field cuckoo</b>			<i>Bombus ruderarius</i> <b>Red-shanked carder</b>		
<i>Bombus hortorum</i> <b>Garden bumblebee</b>			<i>Bombus ruderatus</i> <b>Ruderal bumblebee</b>		
<i>Bombus humilis</i> <b>Brown-banded carder</b>			<i>Bombus rupestris</i> <b>Red-tailed cuckoo</b>		
<i>Bombus hypnorum</i> <b>Tree bumblebee</b>			<i>Bombus sylvarum</i> <b>Shrill carder</b>		
<i>Bombus jonellus</i> <b>Heath bumblebee</b>			<i>Bombus sylvestris</i> <b>Forest cuckoo</b>		
<i>Bombus lapidarius</i> <b>Red-tailed bumblebee</b>			<i>Bombus soroeensis</i> <b>Broken belted</b>		
<i>Bombus lucorum</i> agg <b>White-tailed complex</b>			<i>Bombus terrestris</i> <b>Buff-tailed bumblebee</b>		
<i>Bombus lucorum/terrestris</i> workers <b>White/Buff-tailed workers</b>			<i>Bombus vestalis</i> <b>Southern cuckoo</b>		
<i>Bombus monticola</i> <b>Bilberry Bumblebee</b>			<b>Total bumblebee numbers</b>		



Broken-belted bumblebee *B. soroeensis* (© Carol Inskipp). For this species, 2025 was better than the long-term average but not as good as 2024.

## Research and collaborations – how BeeWalk data is used

BeeWalk was established with the aims of collecting abundance and distribution data on all Britain's bumblebee species and using this data as widely as possible (particularly to analyse population trends). The Trust carry out some research in-house, but also collaborate widely with other researchers on shared projects. The BeeWalk dataset has grown over the past two decades into one of the largest bumblebee datasets in the world. Because it includes abundance as well as distribution, it can be used for estimation of population trends, as well as range change analysis. This lets us see what's happening with bumblebee populations now, or over the past few years, much more clearly than looking at range changes over the same period. This means BeeWalk can function as an early warning for bumblebee declines, detecting declines in the abundance of populations, before the species is lost from large enough areas that declines can be seen in their inhabited range sizes. This guides our strategic planning and species conservation priorities.

The data are made widely available. Once cleaned, validated, and verified, the dataset is added to the online data-sharing platform [Figshare](#), where it is available for anyone to use as long the scheme is credited as the source. The dataset (converted to presence-only data to fit site restrictions) is also added to the [National Biodiversity Network](#) (NBN) Atlas and the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#) (GBIF).

### BeeWalk data use in 2025

During 2025 a total of 753,404,292 BeeWalk records were downloaded across 5,893 individual downloads from the NBN Atlas and GBIF. Globally, records within the dataset have been downloaded more than two billion times.

It has been used worldwide for a range of purposes, principally research, but also by the UK statutory agencies for nature conservation (Natural England, NatureScot, and Natural Resources Wales), by a range of Local Environmental Records Centres, and for use in education and planning. Particularly during 2024 and 2025 in England, the dataset has provided up-to-date information on the distribution of rare bumblebees for the ongoing development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Several of these now include bumblebees as target species.

As well as this general use, the data has been key in the following:

- BeeWalk Annual Report population analysis.

- The Office for National Statistics. *Extent and Condition of Natural Capital* publications and *Habitat Accounts*.
- Monitoring of multiple conservation sites across Britain, by a variety of environmental organisations, including the RSPB, National Trust and numerous local Wildlife Trusts.
- Included as part of a DEFRA/JNCC wildlife abundance indicator for assessing progress against the targets in the 2021 Environment Act.
- 24 scientific papers published during 2025 which cite the GBIF BeeWalk dataset.

### Ongoing collaborations

The BeeWalk team collaborate with a range of colleagues both inside and outside the Trust. Internally, the data guides our strategic planning – which species should we be prioritising? Where should we be working? – while our external collaborations tend to focus on extracting more information

from the dataset. In particular, we have a long-running collaboration with researchers at the University of Kent and Queen Mary University of London to develop better methods of modelling the dataset. The aim of this work has been to build on our 2018 paper (Matechou, Freeman & Comont (2018). Caste-Specific Demography and Phenology in Bumblebees: Modelling BeeWalk Data), drilling down into the data more than we currently do using advanced modelling techniques. This allows us to examine phenology in more detail, and to examine the within-season productivity (numbers of workers, males, new queens per spring queen), giving us more information about colony dynamics and how these vary year to year. Additionally, we're hoping to integrate other bumblebee datasets into the analysis.

### In-progress PhDs

The Trust support and collaborate with a range of PhD students; most, though not all of these will use the BeeWalk dataset.

- University of Worcester
  - Joe Leaper - Biological sustainability of vineyards
- University of Cambridge
  - Jacqui James - *Bombus sylvarum* genetic diversity
  - Sofia Dartnell - Interactions between social and cuckoo bumblebee species
  - Nynke Blömer - Interactions between bumblebees and honeybees
- University of Aberdeen
  - Tegan Gaetano - Machair of the Outer Hebrides
- University of Bristol
  - Tori Mallinson – Pesticide and weather impacts on bumblebees

- University of Kent
  - Cam Milliken – Maximising the benefits of BeeWalk using advanced modelling techniques
- Imperial College
  - Miles Nesbit – Parasite spillover across pollinator communities

### UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS)



The [UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#) has been running since 2017, with the aim of generating systematic data on the abundance of bees, hoverflies and other flower visiting insects at a national scale. The Trust is a partner, alongside a range of other invertebrate conservation organisations.

As a relatively young recording scheme, data analysis and interpretation is still under development, with further years of data required before outputs and trends can contribute as indicators. The more people who participate, the faster the scheme will be able to progress.

In 2025 the scheme published their 2024 Annual Report\*, showing 37,922 insect visits to flowers were logged in 2024 across 4,212 Flower-Insect Timed Counts, and 29,077 bees and hoverflies recorded across 301 survey days for the 1km square surveys.

BeeWalk data is used as part of a PoMS analysis project aiming to pull together all pollinator data that is currently collected separately, to provide a better picture of pollinators across the UK.

\* <https://ukpoms.org.uk/node/77>

## Details of the PoMS fixed monitoring surveys

### Flower-Insect Timed Counts (FIT count)

Watch a small patch of flowers (50cmx50cm, ideally from the PoMS species list, though any flowers are acceptable) for 10 minutes and record the insects that visit the flowers, identify them to broad groups (butterfly, beetle, bumblebee, hoverfly etc). Sightings can be recorded on paper and submitted online or via the FIT Count app - for full details, visit the PoMS website, <https://ukpoms.org.uk/fit-counts>.

This year we are asking BeeWalkers where possible to carry out a FIT Count at the start or end of their transect. If doing so, 'BeeWalk' can be selected from the project list when data is entered.



50x50cm FIT count quadrat

### 1km square survey

A selection of 95 1km grid squares across the UK have been picked to be monitored in

depth for their pollinators. These sites are monitored for additional reasons, to track pollinator numbers and changes against other wildlife, plants and abiotic factors such as rainfall. This survey involves up to four day-long site visits across the field season, carrying out FIT counts and pan trapping to get a full understanding of the pollinator species present.

The red squares on the map are the currently available locations.

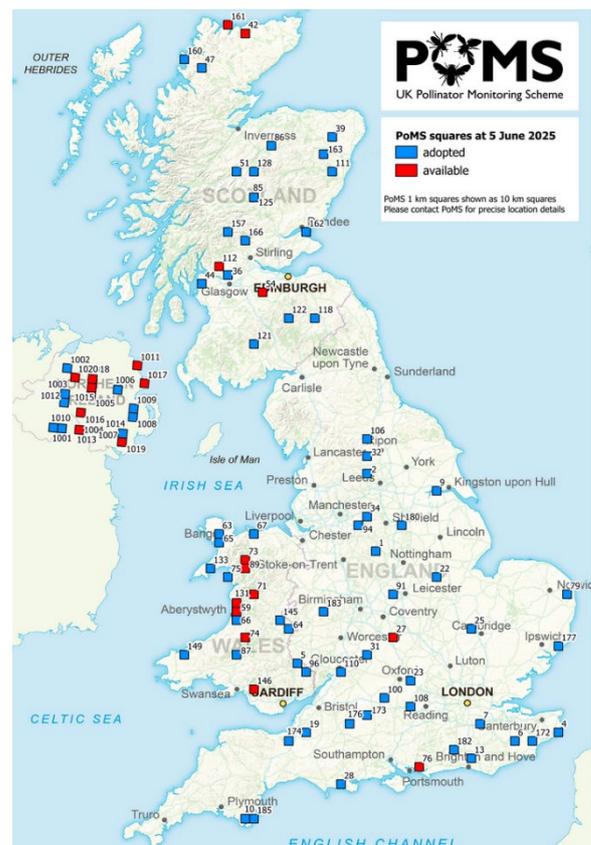


Figure 6. [PoMs 1km squares](https://ukpoms.org.uk) © UKPoMS

For full details of how to join in with either survey, please visit: <https://ukpoms.org.uk>.

The National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme is funded by JNCC and the UK, Northern Irish, Welsh & Scottish Governments.

## Our projects

### Skills for Bees

Significant parts of Britain have very few bumblebee records and little to no coverage in terms of BeeWalk transects. As a result, there remain gaps in our knowledge, including of locations which potentially hold populations of rare and scarce bumblebees.

Our Skills for Bees projects aim to increase bumblebee recording, for both BeeWalk and ad hoc records, through focused on-the-ground training and mentoring in under-recorded areas. We hope to provide a legacy of skilled bumblebee recorders who will continue to monitor in these unique areas.

#### Skills for Bees key aims:

- Raising awareness of bumblebees and the need for recording
- Building partnerships with key organisations, groups and individuals
- Training and transferring skills, knowledge, and confidence to a wider group of people
- Data – improving distribution and abundance data for bumblebees.
- Mentoring volunteers to maintain action for bumblebees beyond the end of the project

Our Skills for Bees project continues in Scotland for its 5<sup>th</sup> field season thanks to funding from the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Cairngorms Trust, Hugh Fraser foundation and NatureScot. The project offers a range of virtual and field-based sessions within the target areas, whilst working with local landowners and partner organisations to increase BeeWalk transects and ad-hoc recording. In 2025 we said goodbye to Project Officer Annie Ives, who moved to a new role with the RSPB and we welcomed Lucy Duerdoth. Lucy brings a wealth of experience to the team, from managing wildlife reserves,

coordinating ecological surveys, to leading volunteer work parties. Lucy has hit the ground running and is busy preparing for the 2026 field season.

In 2025, alongside developing the BeeWalk Academy and delivering in person training sessions, Skills for BeeWalk Manager Andy Benson finalised development of our next SfB project, securing funding to deliver Skills for Bees: North Wales which will begin in January 2027.

### Skills for Bees: Scotland 2025

Focusing on the Cairngorms National Park in the Scottish Highlands, Skills for Bees: Scotland completed its 4<sup>th</sup> field season, building and supporting a network of bumblebee recorders and BeeWalk transects. The project includes target survey days, focused particularly on the rare species associated with the area; Bilberry, Broken-belted, and Moss carder bumblebees (*B. monticola*, *B. soroensis*, & *B. muscorum* respectively).

2025 was another busy year, with 23 in person and online events and activities reaching over 270 individuals, who received training and support in bumblebee identification and survey skills.

- **Five beginner workshops**
- **Three intermediate workshops**
- **Four BeeWalk demo/bumblebee recording training events**
- **Seven target species survey days**

Developing strong local partnerships is a key aim of the project to increase longevity of bumblebee recording in the area. Established relationships continued to be maintained, with new projects links developed with Royal Zoological Society of Scotland and Durrell Wildlife Trust.

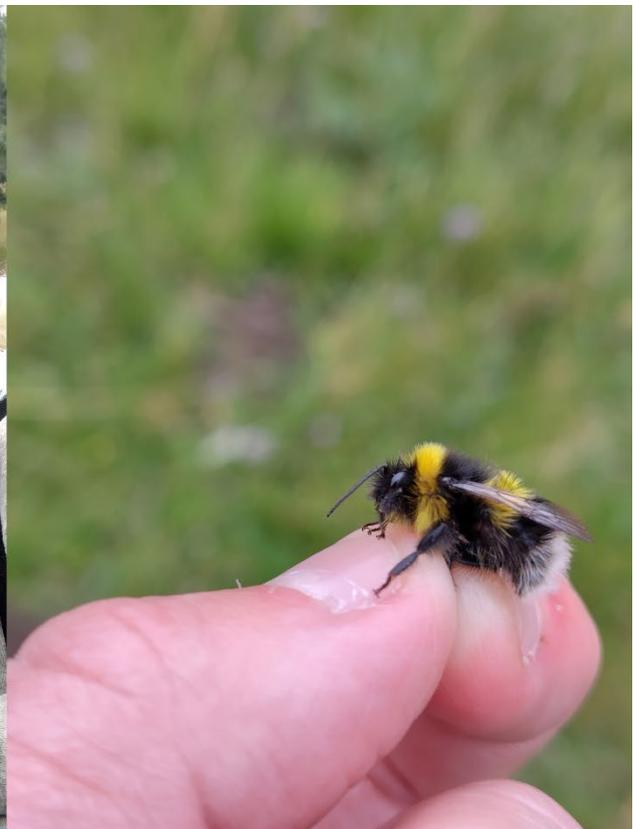
Training delivered in partnership with Cairngorms National Park Authority

Of seven new BeeWalk transects set up in 2025, five were walked during 2025, with data being received for a record total of 15 transects across the area. Prior to the project BeeWalk data had only been received for three transects, showing the impact of this style of on the ground support and partnership development.

15 targeted survey and field sessions were carried out at sites previously prioritised for surveying our target species surveys. These sessions involve gathering a group of volunteers to search for Blaeberry, Broken-belted and Moss carder bumblebees in

locations where the habitat is suitable to support them, but where there have been no records within the past 20 years or more. Out of 15 targeted surveys/field sessions, 11 were successful in identifying rare species. These sessions prove invaluable for increasing volunteer identification skills of key species, whilst significantly increasing our knowledge of rare species distributions in the area.

If you are within the Cairngorms and would like to get involved, please email [lucy.duerdoth@bumblebeeconservation.org](mailto:lucy.duerdoth@bumblebeeconservation.org)



Insh Marsh field session and project target species: the Broken-belted bumblebee *B. soroensis* (© Annie Ives).

## Conservation and engagement projects

The Trust have a range of conservation and engagement projects across Britain, and monitoring bumblebees using BeeWalk is built into almost all of them. If you'd like to know more about any of them or to get involved, please see the Projects page on the main Trust website for more details at <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/what-we-do/our-projects/current-projects/>

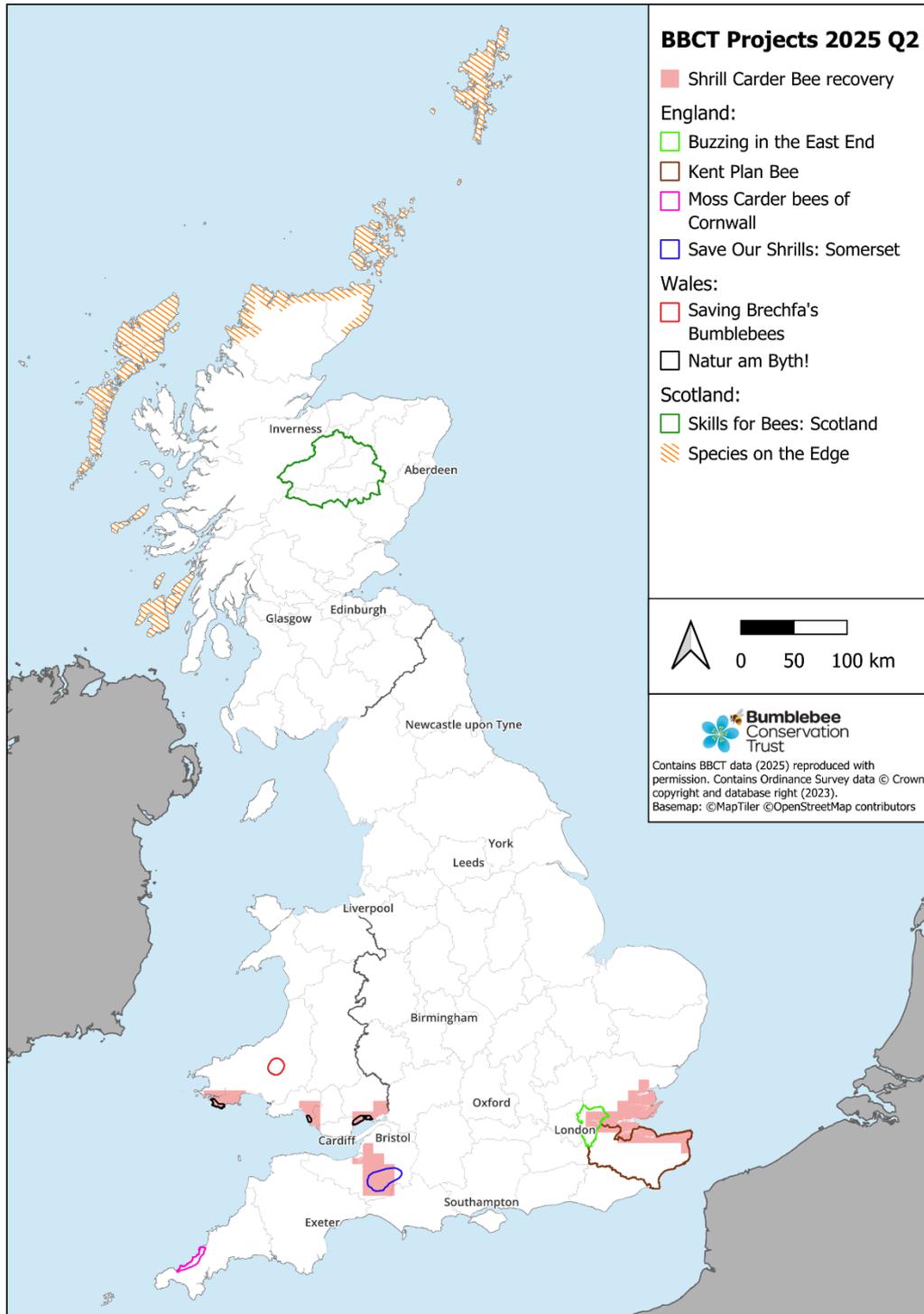


Figure 7. Bumblebee Conservation Trust local project locations, 2025



Southern cuckoo bumblebees *B. vestalis* (© Lucy Roberts)

This report should be cited as Comont, R.F., & Dickinson, H. (2025). BeeWalk Annual Report 2026. Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Stirling, UK. It can be downloaded from [www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk).

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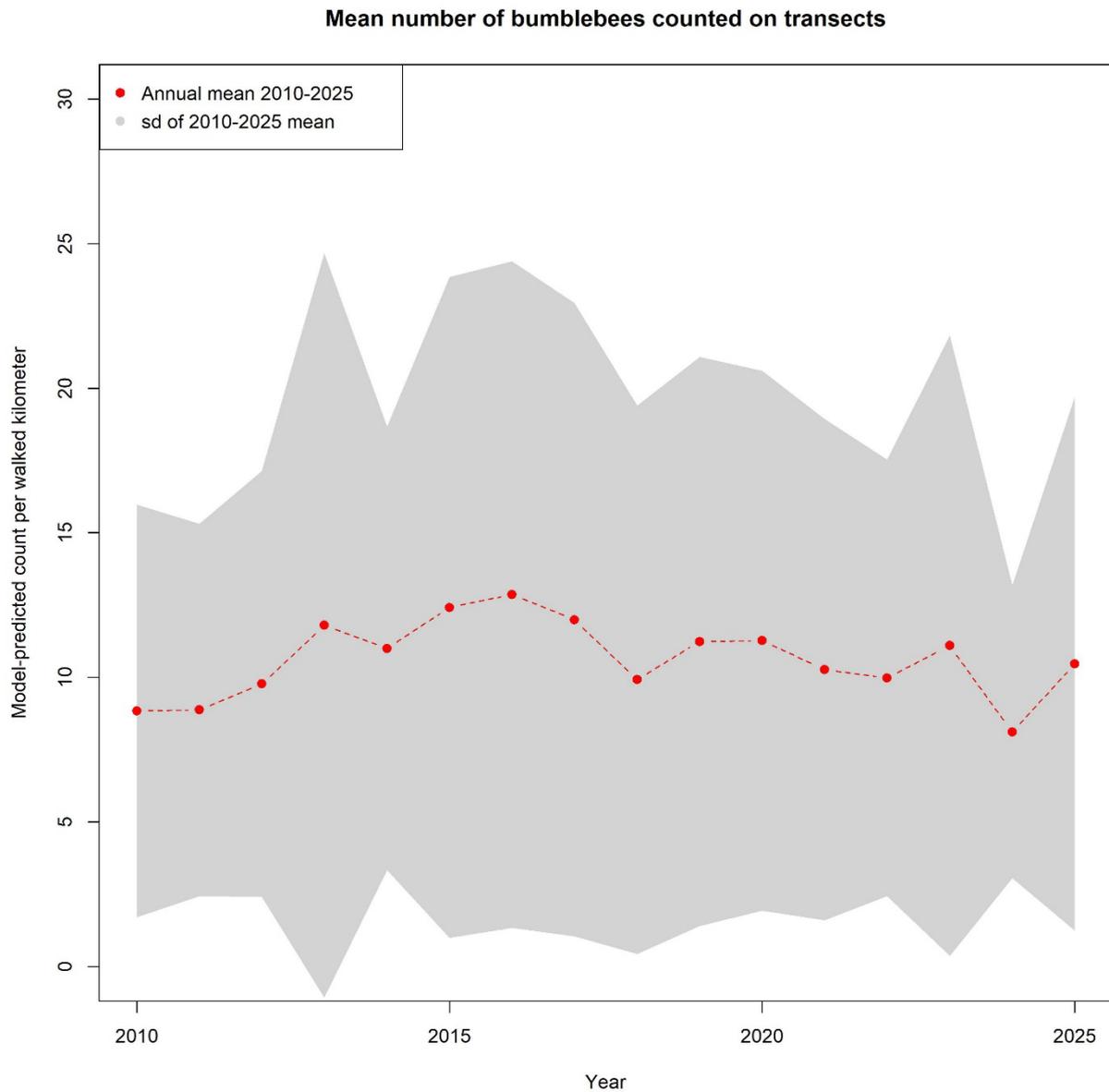
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The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is a registered charity (England & Wales 1115634 / Scotland SC042830). Company registration number 05618710 (England and Wales).

Registered address: International House, 109-111 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JA.  
Correspondence address: Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Beta Centre, Stirling University Innovation Park, Stirling, FK9 4NF.

# Appendix

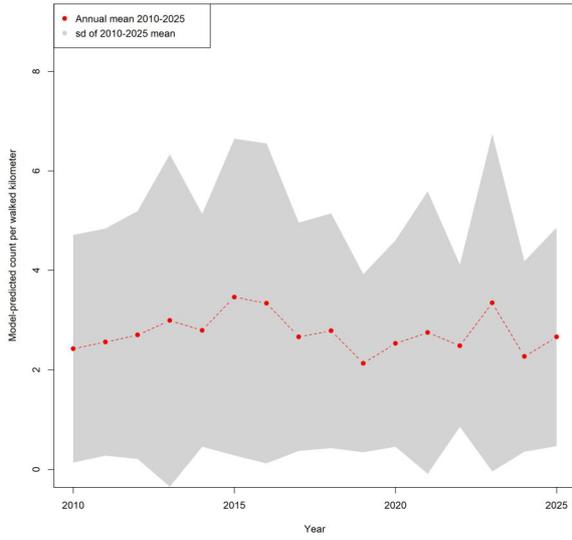
## Yearly abundance trends



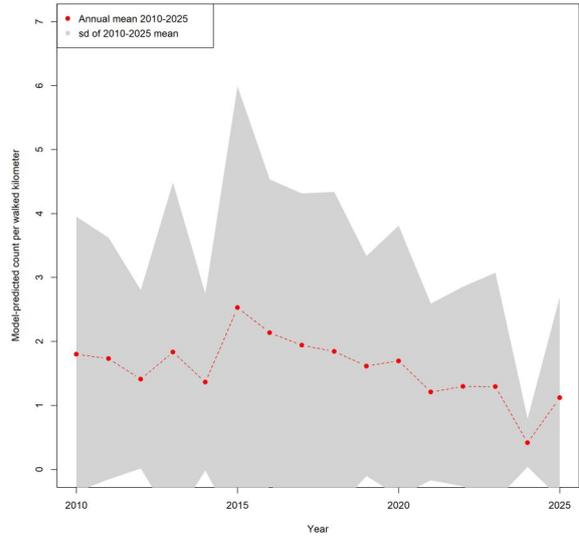
The abundance trend of all bumblebees recorded on BeeWalk transects between 2010 and 2025, including individuals not identified to caste or to species. This is shown as the mean number of bumblebees counted per kilometre walked each year (red line). The grey cloud is a measure of the annual variation around this average (standard deviation).

Widespread bumblebees

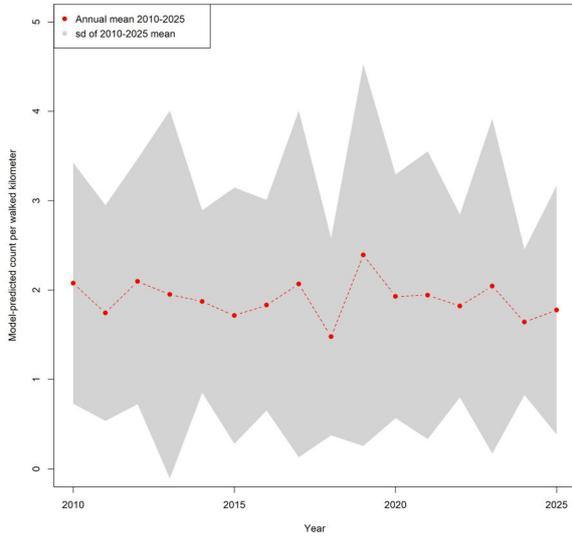
Mean number of *B. pascuorum* counted on transects



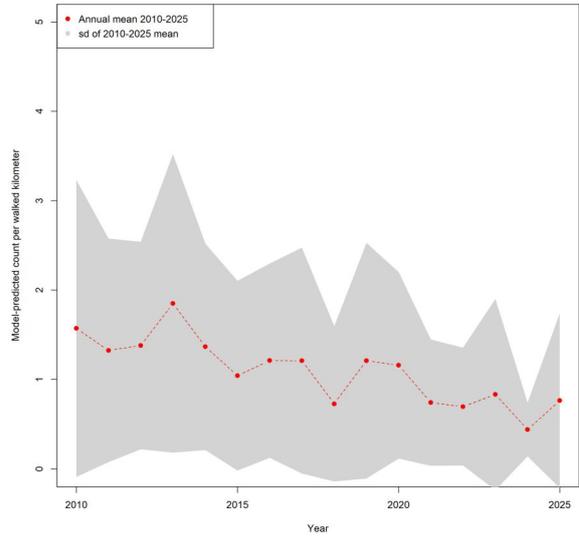
Mean number of *B. lapidarius* counted on transects



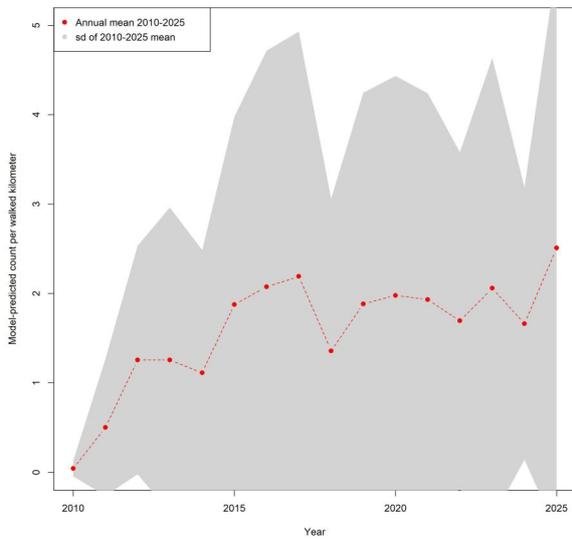
Mean number of *B. terrestris* counted on transects



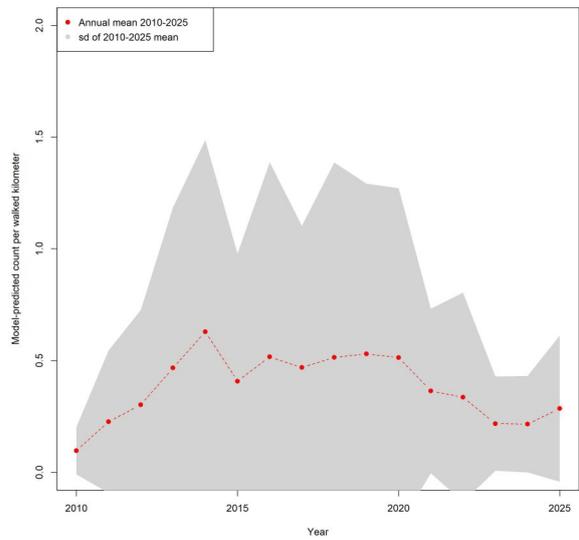
Mean number of *B. lucorum* counted on transects



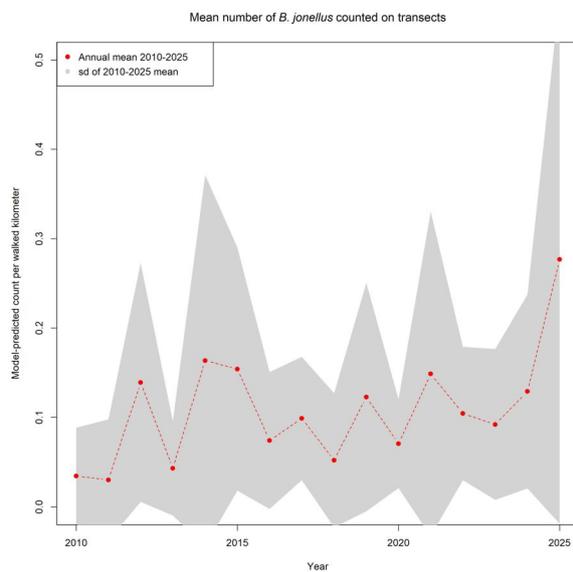
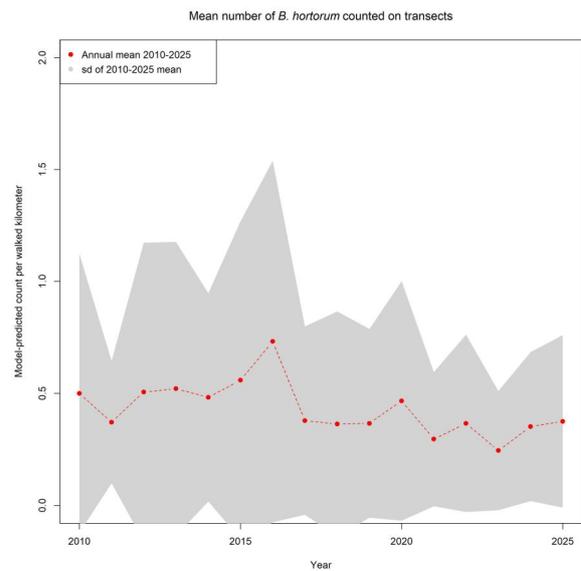
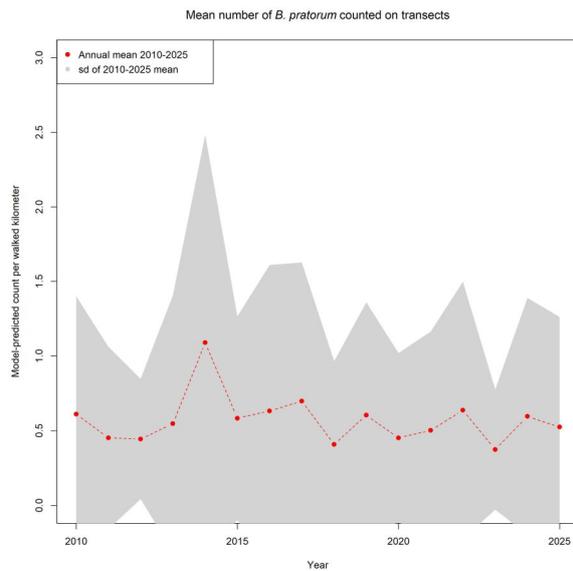
Mean number of *B. lucorum/terrestris* counted on transects



Mean number of *B. hypnorum* counted on transects



## Widespread bumblebee species

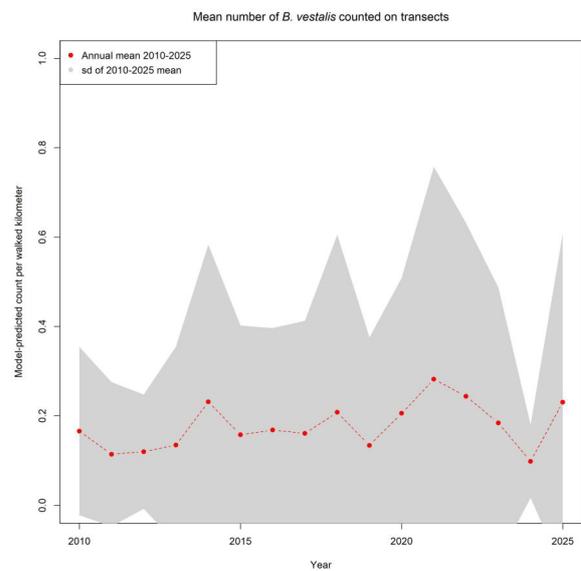
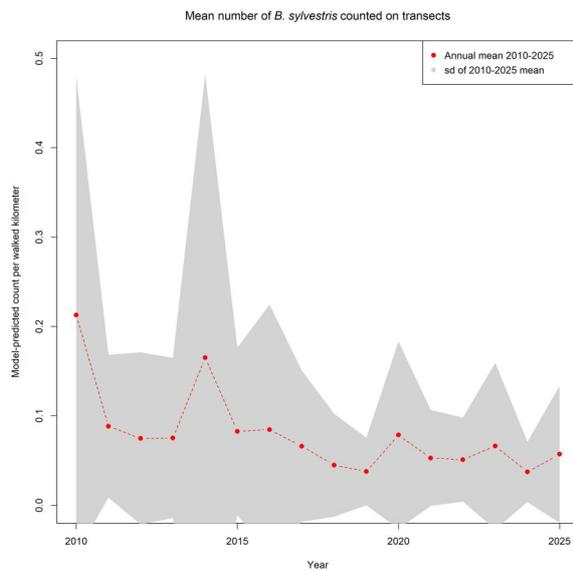
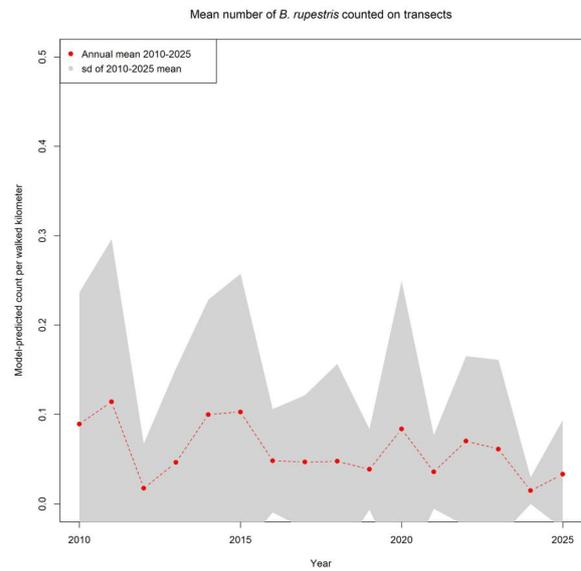
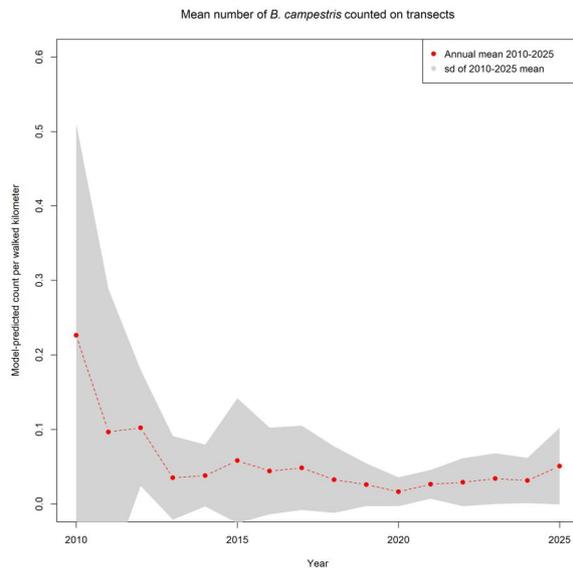
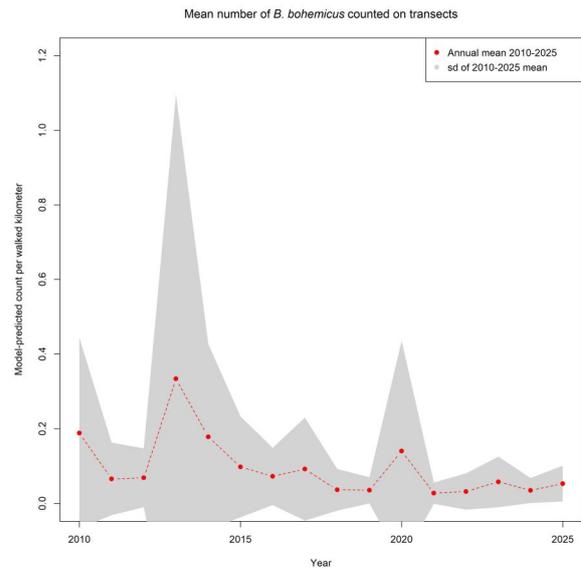
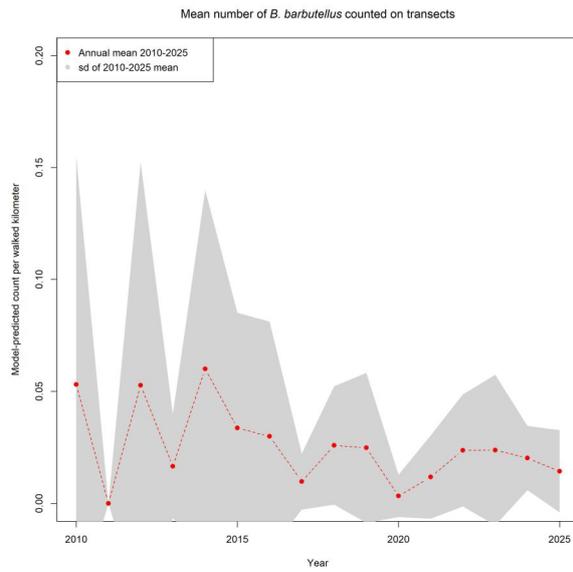


Abundance trends for the eight widespread British bumblebee species 2010-25, shown as the mean number of bumblebees of that species counted per kilometre walked each year on transects where the species has ever been recorded (red line). The grey cloud is a measure of variability (standard deviation).

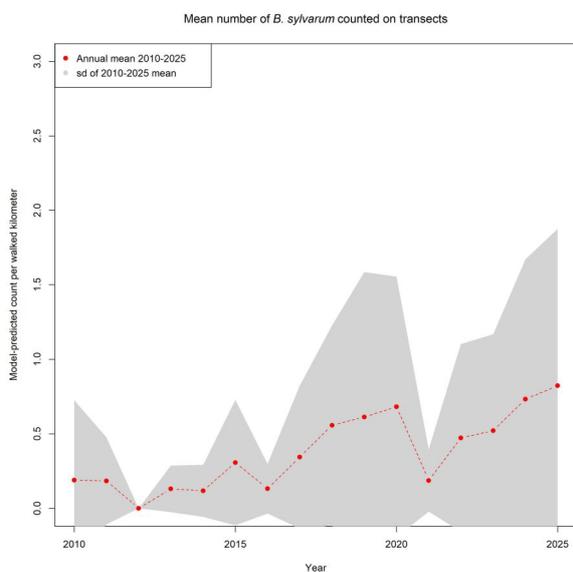
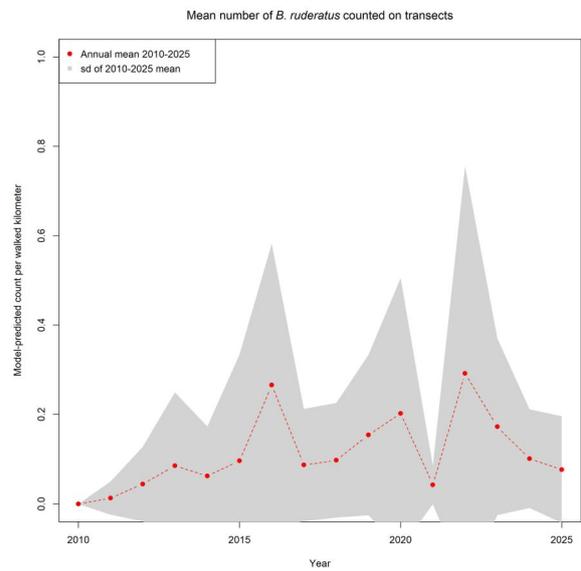
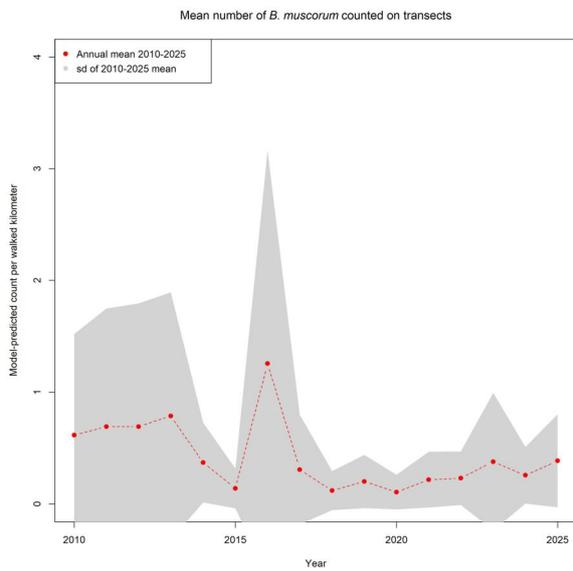
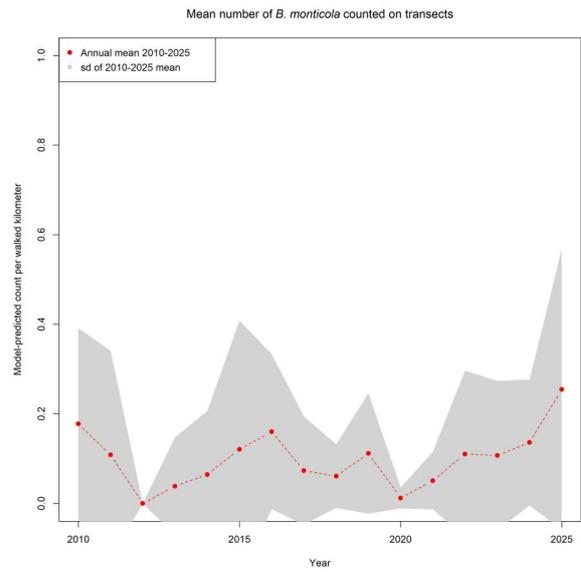
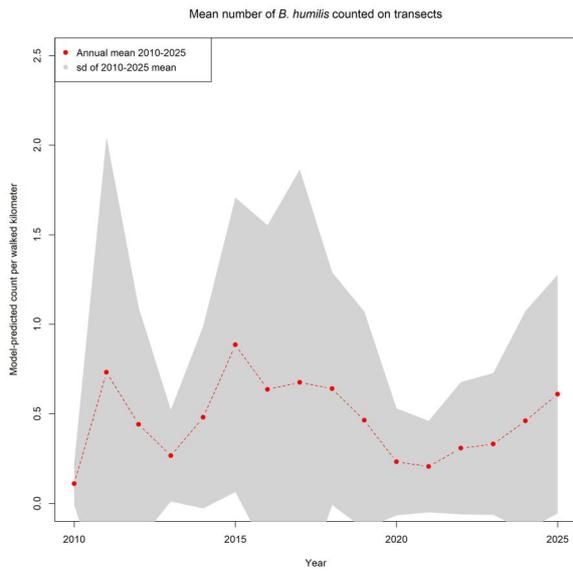
Note: the vertical axis varies with species' abundance and thus differs between plots.

*B. lucorum* & *B. terrestris* often cannot be reliably split as workers, so records submitted as '*B. lucorum/terrestris* workers' are plotted in addition to both species.

## Cuckoo bumblebees



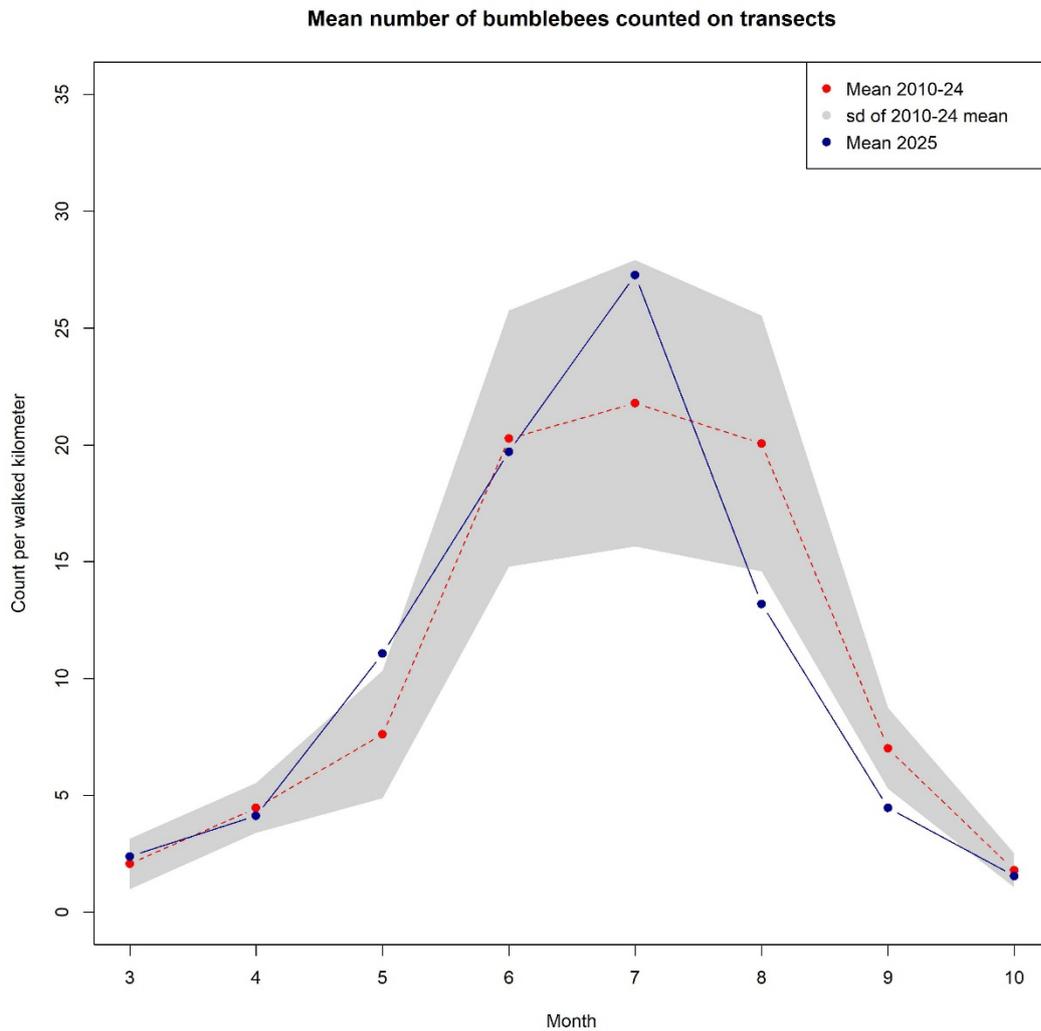
Conservation priority bumblebee species



Abundance trends for five rare or scarce British bumblebee species 2010-25, shown as the mean number of bumblebees of that species counted per kilometre walked each year on transects where the species has ever been recorded (red line). The grey cloud is a measure of variability (standard deviation).

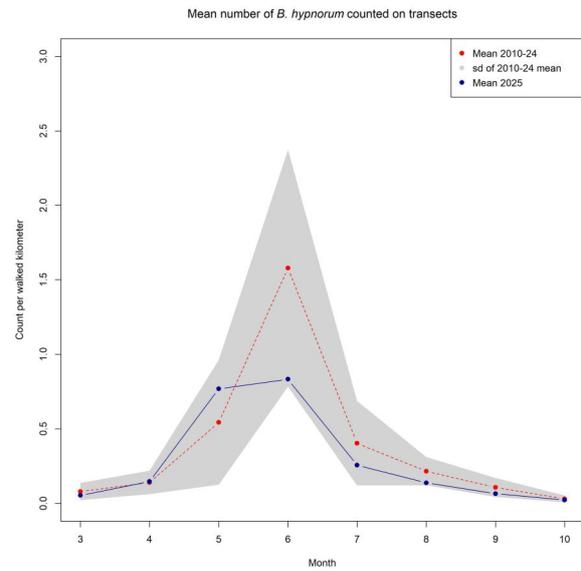
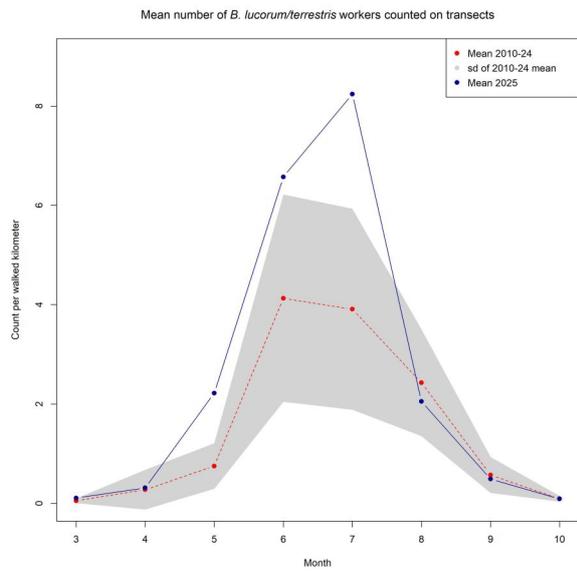
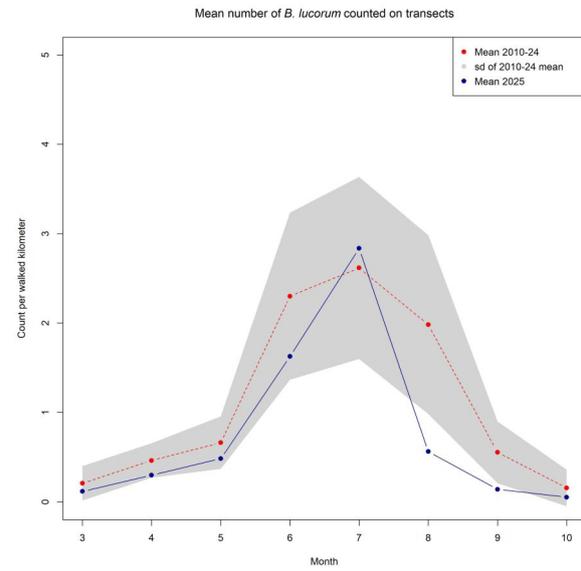
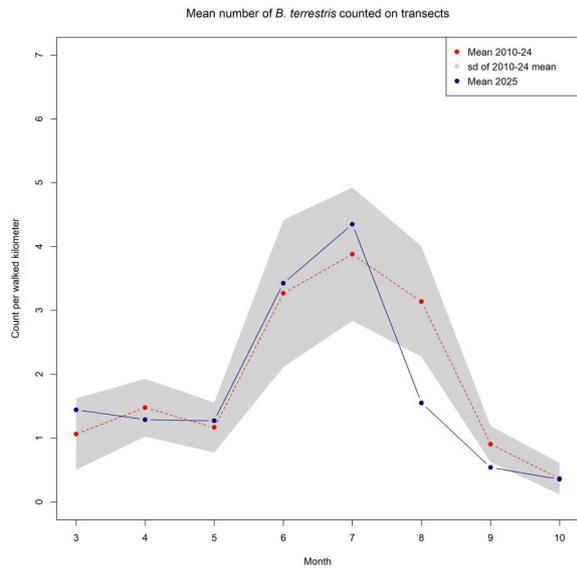
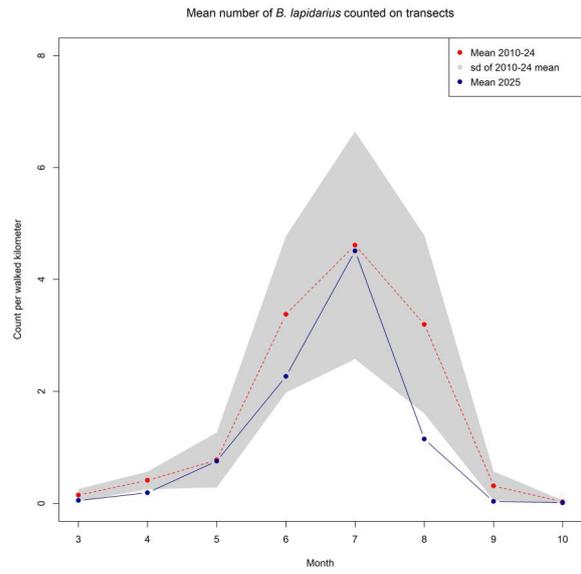
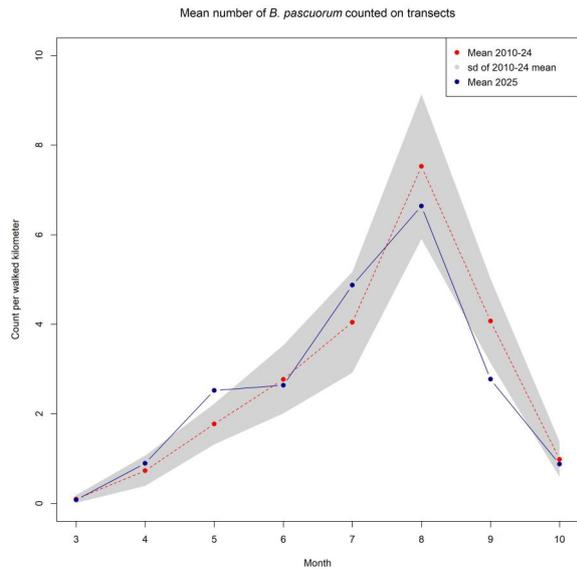
Note: the vertical axis varies with species' abundance and thus differs between plots

## Phenology trends

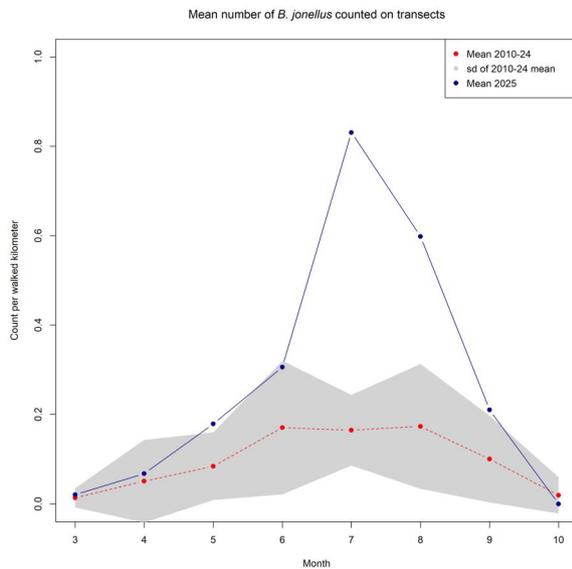
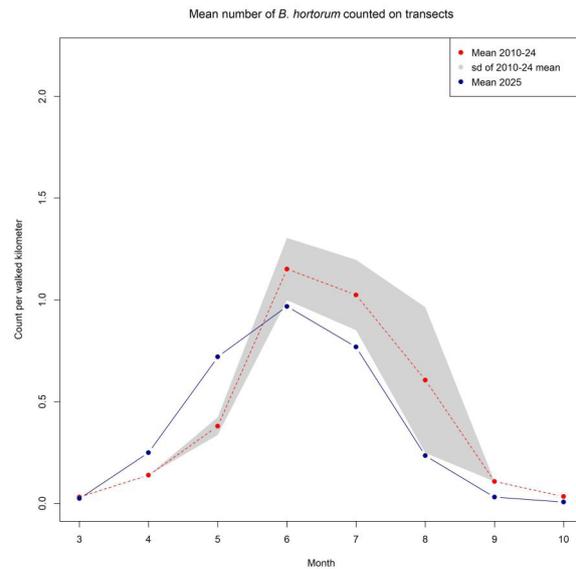
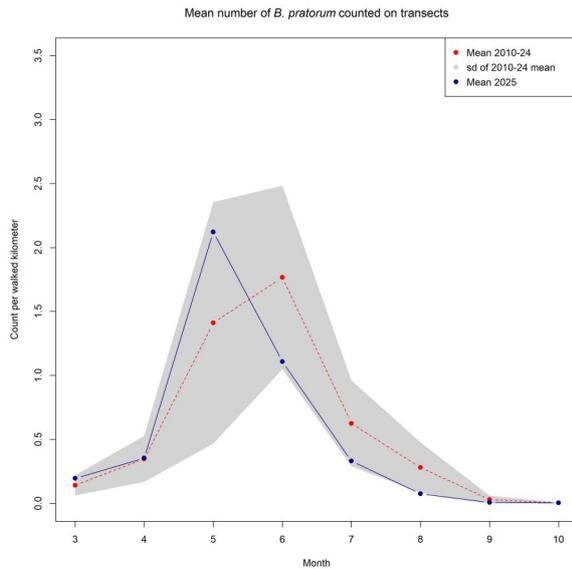


The mean number of bumblebees per kilometre recorded per month (March-October). Results for 2025 (blue line) are plotted against the average monthly abundance for the nine-year period 2010-24 (red line). The grey cloud indicates the variability of the 2010-24 average – where the blue (2025) line is outside this grey area the count is significantly different to what would be expected.

Widespread bumblebee species



## Widespread bumblebee species

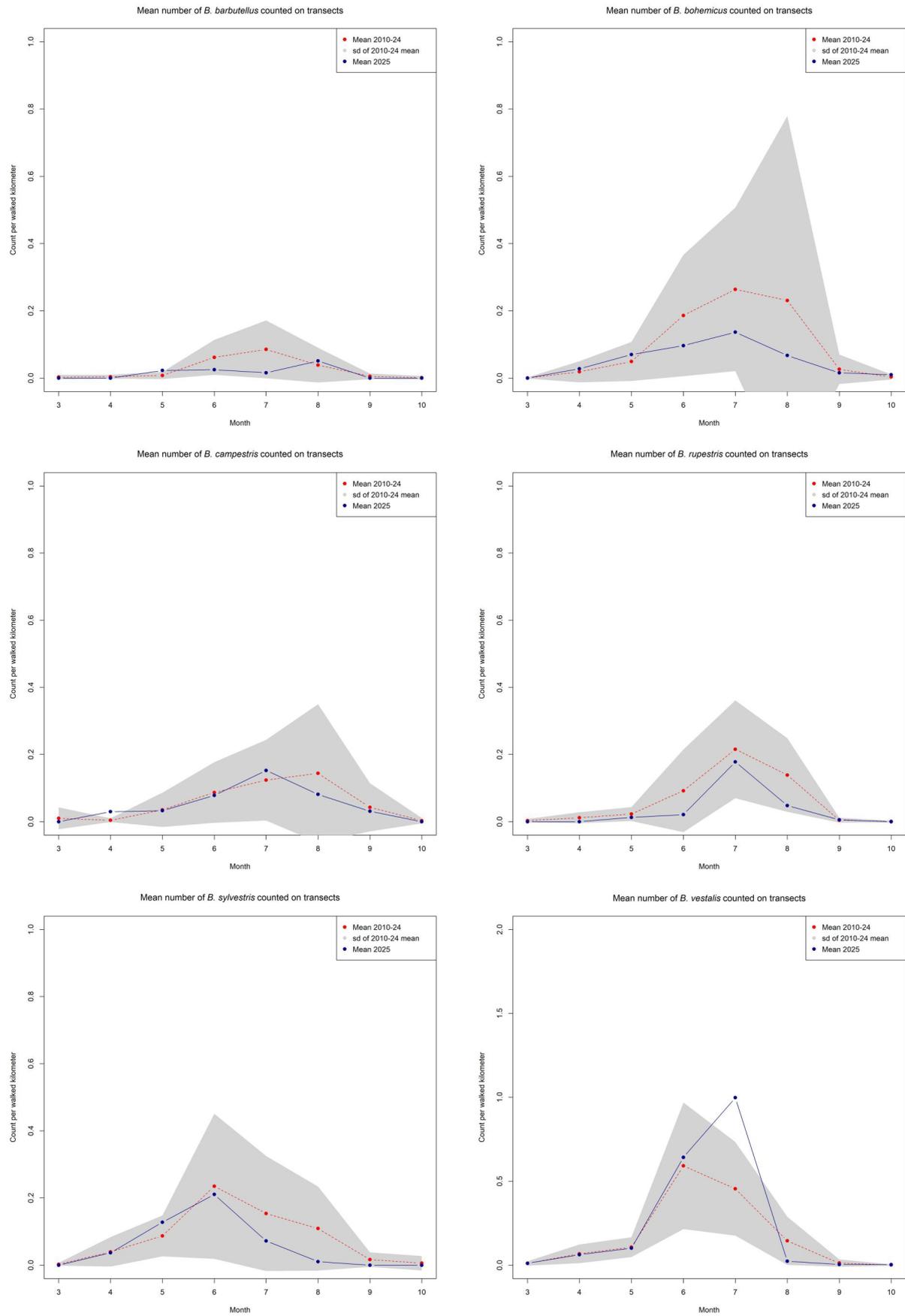


The mean number of bumblebees per kilometre per month between March and October 2025 (blue line), plotted against the average monthly abundance for the nine-year period 2010-24 (red line). The grey cloud indicates the variability of the 2010-24 average (standard deviation).

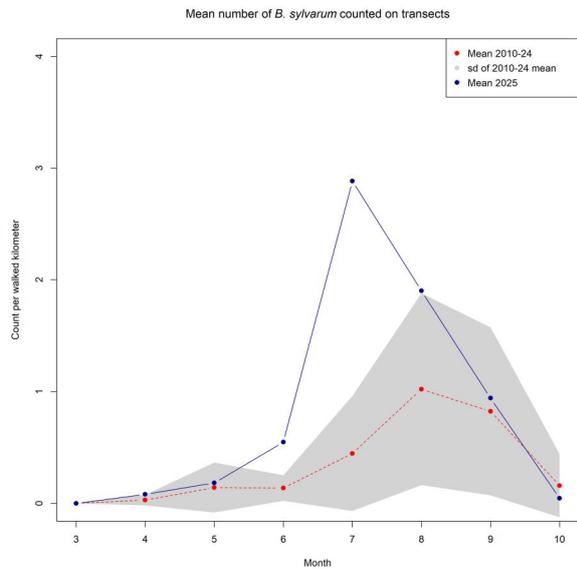
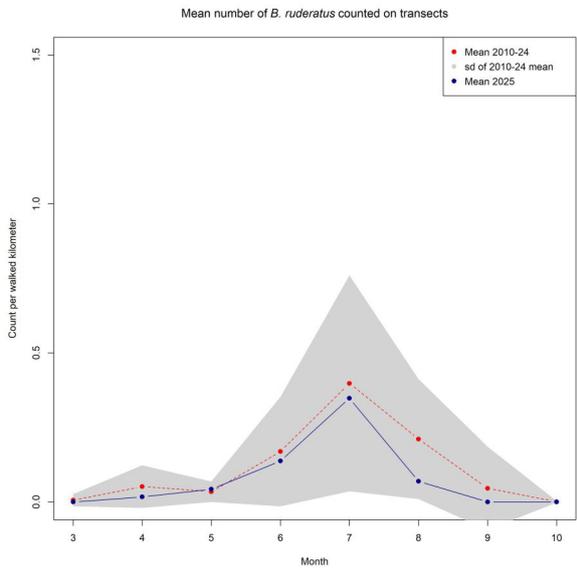
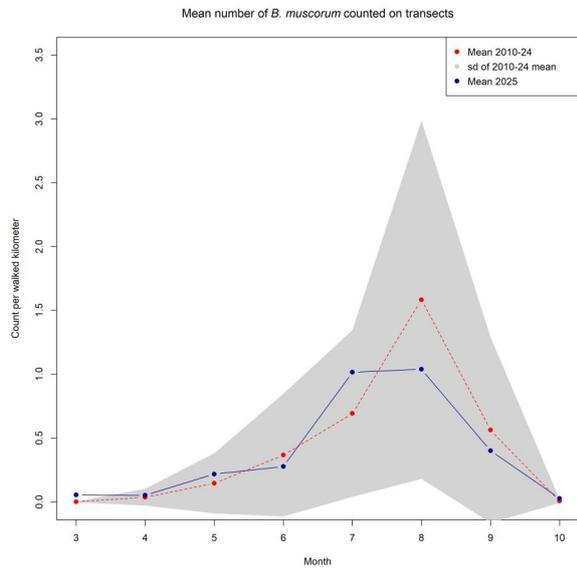
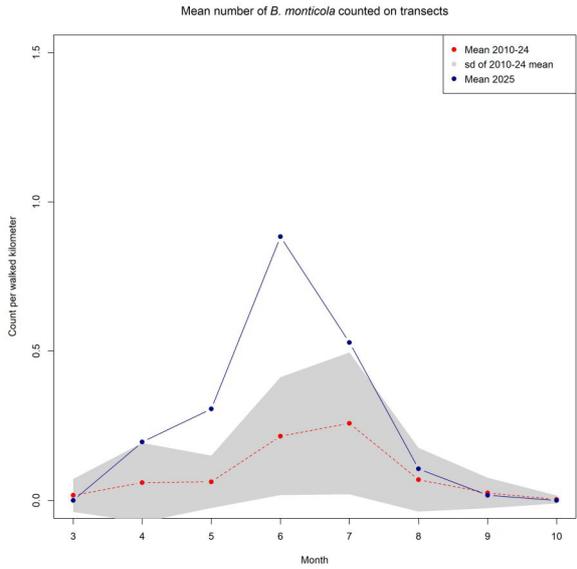
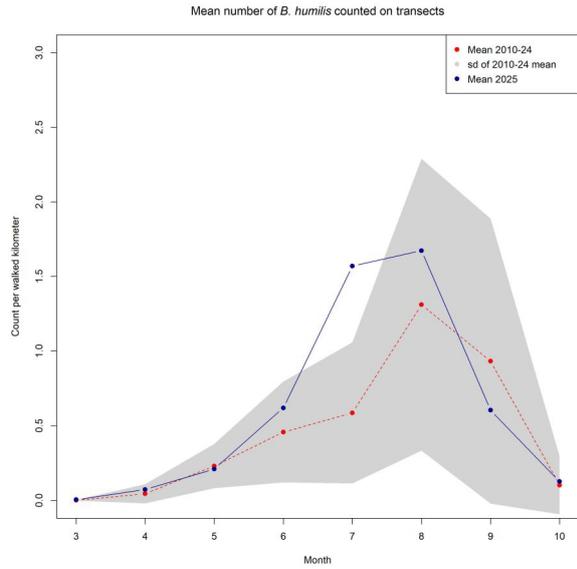
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## Cuckoo bumblebees



Conservation priority bumblebee species



The mean number of bumblebees per kilometre per month between March and October 2025 (blue line), plotted against the average monthly abundance for the nine-year period 2010-24 (red line). The grey cloud indicates the variability of the 2010-24 average (standard deviation).

Note: the vertical axis varies with species' abundance and thus differs between plots.