

# Practice abstract #3.12

## Pollinators as important ecosystem service providers in arable farmland



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### **KEY WORDS**

Pollinators, wildflower mixes

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### **CHALLENGE**

Preserving ecosystem diversity has become crucial for the conservation of pollinators and the maintenance of ecosystem services. The use of parts of agricultural land to increase biodiversity and provide ecosystem services can contribute to the conservation and support of pollinator populations. In this context, the project explores the potential of using wildflower mixes to support pollinators.

### **SOLUTION**

The use of annual, wildflower mixes could help tackle these challenges. It is important to investigate which plant communities and species have the greatest positive impact on pollinators in certain regions. That can be achieved by observing pollinator visits to flowers during particular time intervals. Pollinator counting should be conducted on a weekly basis and last throughout the entire flowering period. This would allow us to determine which plant species attract the most pollinators, as well as to better understand their preferences and behavior.

### **OUTCOME**

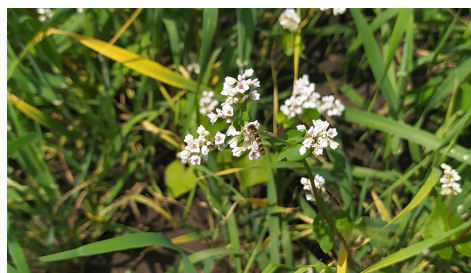
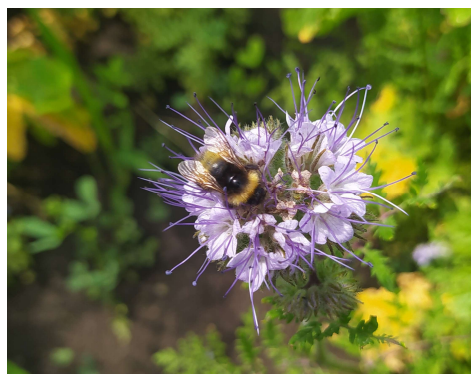
Through systematic pollinator counting, we were able to identify specific plant communities and species that had a significant effect on the number of pollinators. Beside the attractiveness for the pollinators, we made a

selection of plant species in flower mixes depending on the flowering duration and extended the total flowering time of mixes. Overall, our findings underscore the importance of utilizing annual, wildflower mixes as a viable strategy for addressing pollinator decline and promoting ecosystem health.



## PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the current research findings, the use of specific annual wildflower mixes, can be recommended in order to increase pollinator numbers. These mixes, besides boosting pollinator populations, would also contribute to preserving biodiversity within cultivated landscapes.



### About CROPDIVA

CROPDIVA wants to put 6 underused arable crops back in the fields: oats, hull-less barley for human consumption, triticale, buckwheat, faba beans and lupins. 27 European partners are joining forces to enhance agrobiodiversity in Europe. They will achieve this by focusing on crop diversity and creating local value chains. The project is running from September 2021 to August 2025.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement N°1010000847

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