Ivy: Autumn Food for Honey Bees & Flower-Visiting Insects

vy is one of the most abundant and widely distributed U plants t is also native to most of urope vy is known for its distinctive leaves and for climbing on trees and walls ess well known is the fact that ivy flowers which bloom in autumn are a major source of nectar and pollen for flower visiting insects



any flowers are large and brightly coloured Those of ivy are small and green The only colourful part isis(s) (ATJTO, 4r(s) (u) () () (u) ((b) a k r TT Tf4 s(s) 8 colour

preferences this is not why they visit flowers They visit to feed vy flowers may be harder to see initially but if there is nectar and pollen a bee will return vy flowers occur in clusters n insect may satisfy its needs in a small area

You can probably find ivy in bloom near where you live n a sunnv aut umn day you may be surprised by how many insects visit both in numbers and variety-ivy nectar is accessible to insects with both long tongues such as bees and butterflies and short tongues such as flies and wasps oney bees are usually abundant collecting both nectar and pollen vy bees a species that recently colonised ritain from urope is abundant in many areas umble bees are usually scarce as most colonies have already completed their annual cycle Wasps are abundant in some years few butterflies especially the ed over flies are usually abundant dmiral are often seen ost species mimic either bees or wasps f you see an insect that looks like a wasp or honey bee look closer as it may be a hover fly ther types of flies can also be abundant including the oon fly with its distinctive yellow wing markings

We should probably appreciate ivy more than we do as it helps wildlife Without its abundant autumn flowers flower visiting insects would have far less nectar and pollen vy can start blooming as early as ugust and in a mild autumn insects for age on ivy as late as ecember There is probably no other native ritish plant species that has such a long and copious T TT Tf To Did You Know? S research found