



Hoverflies of Gaddon and Birnie Lochs

S.T. Buckland

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This shows those species of hoverfly at Gaddon and Birnie Lochs that I have been able to identify and photograph. The species list is quite remarkable, with several rare species occurring. I would like to thank the excellent support given by Roger Morris and colleagues through the UK Hoverflies Facebook page. Any remaining errors of identification are mine alone!

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Waisted swamp fly *Anasimyia contracta*

These individuals were at Birnie Loch in summer 2019.





Common dainty *Baccha elongata*

A small and fairly scarce species of woodland. These males were at Gaddon Loch.





Buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia albitarsis* /

Bulbous buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia ranunculi*

These individuals were at Gaddon Loch. They are probably *Cheilosia albitarsis*, which is far more widespread than *C. ranunculi*.





Primrose blacklet *Cheilosia antiqua* /

lady's mantle blacklet *Cheilosia vicina*

Two similar species that are very small. This image was taken at Gaddon Loch, and is probably a primrose blacklet.



Ragwort blacklet *Cheilosia bergenstammi*

Widespread. These images were taken at Gaddon Loch, where there is plenty of ragwort.





Greater spring blacklet *Cheilosia grossa*

Locally distributed. This male kept landing on my sun hat, so I hung the hat on a bush to get the above shot. It was one of two males near Gaddon Loch in early April 2019.





Bumblebee blacklet *Cheilosia illustrata*

A relatively large hoverfly and bee mimic, common in mid-summer, mainly on common hogweed, its food plant. Male above, females below.





Parsley blacklet

Cheilosia pagana

A fairly common species, though seldom numerous. Females are identifiable by their large, orange antennae.





Dull-bellied blacklet *Cheilosia proxima*

This species cannot be identified with certainty from photographs, but this female (above) and male show the features of *C proxima*.





Bolete blacklet *Cheilosia scutellata*

A scarce hoverfly. This male was at Birnie Loch on 7 August 2019.





Figwort blacklet *Cheilosia variabilis*

A large, black hoverfly. This female was at Birnie Loch in late July — a late date for this species.





Dark-winged wrinklehead *Chrysogaster solstitialis*

A small, red-eyed hoverfly. Occurs widely, but never in large numbers.





Little meadow fly *Chrysotoxum arcuatum*

Uncommon in the Howe of Fife. This female was at Gaddon Loch in early July 2020.



Two-banded meadow fly *Chrysotoxum bicinctum*

An attractive species that is not often encountered. This female was at Gaddon Loch in July 2019.





Stripe-backed brusheye *Dasysyrphus albostriatus*

Note the distinctive parallel stripes on the thorax. This male was at Gaddon Loch.



Black-spotted brusheye *Dasysyrphus pinastri*

Not a common species. The male and female below were at Gaddon Loch, while the female above was at Birnie Loch.





Yellow-girdled brusheye *Dasysyrphus tricinctus*

Uncommon in the Howe of Fife. This male was at Gaddon Loch in late July 2019.





Broad-barred brusheye *Dasysyrphus venustus*

Similar to *Dasysyrphus pinastri*, and now considered to be a group of species. This female was at Gaddon Loch.



Spring smoothtail *Epistrophe eligans*

An early-season species that is scarce in Scotland. These males were at Gaddon Loch in May 2018 and April 2020.





Black-horned smoothtail *Epistrophe grossulariae*

A widespread species that is not numerous. These two males were at Gaddon Loch in early July.





Marmalade hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus*

Extremely common, variable in size, shape and brightness, but consistent in its distinctive markings. Female above, male below.





Eurasian drone fly *Eristalis arbustorum*

A widespread drone fly. This is a female.



Stripe-winged drone fly *Eristalis horticola*

Similar to the previous species, but usually larger, and with a distinct stripe in each wing, and a stripe on the face.



Furry drone fly *Eristalis intricaria*

This dronefly sometimes occurs in good numbers at Gaddon Loch.





Stripe-faced drone fly *Eristalis nemorum*

Another common drone fly, which can be numerous at Gaddon Loch.





Tapered drone fly *Eristalis pertinax*

A large, widely-distributed drone fly. Female above, male below.





Common drone fly *Eristalis tenax*

A common, large drone fly.





Migrant aphideater *Eupeodes corollae*

A small hoverfly that is sometimes very common. Female above, males below.





Broad-banded aphideater *Eupeodes latifasciatus*

Fairly small hoverfly with variable markings.





Lunuled aphideater *Eupeodes luniger*

A medium-sized hoverfly that occurs widely in small numbers.





Woolly-tailed marsh fly *Helophilus hybridus*

Very similar to *Helophilus pendulus* but less common. Female above, male below.





Tiger marsh fly *Helophilus pendulus*

Common, distinctively-marked hoverfly. Gains its common name from its striped thorax.





Lemon marsh fly *Helophilus trivittatus*

Much less common than the two previous species. This male was by Loch Gaddon in early June 2020.



Heringia sp

Species of this genus are seldom recorded in Scotland. They are small, black hoverflies that tend to sun themselves on leaves. This male was at Birnie Loch on 18 June 2019.





Pale-saddled hoary *Leucozona glauca*

This attractive species can sometimes be found at Birnie and Gaddon Lochs.





Dark-saddled hoary *Leucozona laternaria*

Similar to the previous species, but much less common. The female above and below right was at Gaddon Loch on 23 June 2020, while the female below left was at Birnie Loch on 23 July 2019.





Blotch-winged whitebelt *Leucozona lucorum*

A pretty species that is widespread but not numerous.



Matt-backed halfband *Melangyna compositarum*

A scarce mid-summer species. These females were at Gaddon Loch in July 2018.





Spring halfband *Melangyna lasiophthalma*

An early-season species. These were at Gaddon Loch. While the male is certainly of this species, the female (below right) is probably the dark form of the species.





Shiny-backed halfband *Melangyna umbellatarum*

An uncommon species. Slightly out-of-focus shots of a female at Gaddon Loch in early August 2019.





Common wrinklehead *Melanogaster hirtella* /
dark wrinklehead *Melanogaster aerosa*

Two small species that are difficult to tell apart. Not common at Gaddon and Birnie. This female was at Birnie Loch in late May 2020.





Variable duskyface *Melanostoma mellinum*

Common small hoverfly but difficult to distinguish from the next species in photos. It may also be a complex of species.



Long-winged duskyface *Melanostoma scalare*

Very common small hoverfly with a long flying season. Female above and below right, male below left.





Spotted thintail *Meliscaeva auricollis*

A widespread species, but seldom encountered at Birnie and Gaddon Lochs. The male below was at Gaddon Loch on 1 August 2019, and the female above at Birnie Loch on 4 August 2019.





Banded thintail *Meliscaeva cinctella*

Another widespread species that is seldom encountered at Birnie and Gaddon Lochs. This male was towards the end of the path between the two lochs on 1 August 2019.





Narcissus bulb fly *Merodon equestris*

The lochs do not provide good habitat for this species, as the larvae feed on daffodil bulbs, but this male was by the path between the two lochs in early June 2020. The species is thought to have been introduced to Britain with bulb imports in the 19th century.





Common batman fly *Myathropa florea*

Widespread but not numerous. These (female above, male below) were at Gaddon Loch.





Yellow-kneed fen fly *Neoascia meticulosa*

A small species of wetland habitat that is easily overlooked. This female was at Gaddon Loch.



Smudge-veined fen fly *Neoascia podagrica* /

Butterbur fen fly *Neoascia obliqua*

A group of small species that are easily overlooked. The clouded wing veins rule out all but three species, and the lack of spots on tergite 4 rule out *N interrupta*.





Black-kneed fen fly *Neoascia tenur*

This species can be common in wet habitat. This male was at Birnie Loch.



Common spotted bristleside *Parasyrphus punctulatus*

An early-season species. This male and female were on blackthorn at Gaddon Loch.





Marsh stripeback *Parhelophilus versicolor*

These images were taken near the car park at Birnie Loch. The males below are certainly this species. The female above probably is, as the known range of *Parhelophilus fruteorum* does not extend to Fife.





Pipiza sp

A group of species that are difficult to tell apart. The above female was at Gaddon Loch in June 2020, while the female below was there in May 2018.





Grey-spotted sedge-sitter *Platycheirus albimanus*

Quite a small species that typically hides its distinctive markings under folded wings when at rest. Note the enlarged, whitish front feet of the male (above) that give it the scientific name '*albimanus*'. Common.





Blackthorn sedgesitter

Platycheirus ambiguus

An early-season species, seldom recorded in Scotland. Males are largely restricted to blackthorn in blossom. Easily overlooked. The curved hair at the end of the line of hairs on the front leg of the above male is a useful diagnostic, but difficult to capture in a photograph! These were on blackthorn at Gaddon Loch in late April 2018. There are no previous records from Fife, and just seven from Scotland.





Slender sedgesitter *Platycheirus angustatus*

A tentative identification! This male was at Gaddon Loch in late May 2018.





Common sedge-sitter *Platycheirus clypeatus*

A species group. This male and female were at Gaddon Loch.





Orange-legged sedge-sitter *Platycheirus fulviventris*

A rare species in Fife, these two (male above and below left, female below right) were in the bulrushes by the car park at Birnie Loch on 31 May 2020.





Dull-backed sedge-sitter *Platycheirus manicatus*

Another species that typically hides its markings under folded wings when at rest. The face profile is distinctive. Quite common.



White-spotted sedge-sitter *Platycheirus peltatus*

Another widespread species , or rather group of species, of *Platycheirus*. These males were at Gaddon Loch.





Multi-tufted sedgesitter *Platycheirus scutatus*

A group of species that are similar to the previous species. These females were at Gaddon Loch.





Shiny-backed sedgesitter *Platycheirus tarsalis*

Seldom recorded in Fife. This male was at Gaddon Loch on 14 May 2020.





Fourspot sedge-sitter *Pyrophaena rosarum*

A local species of wetland. This male (above and below right) was at Birnie Loch in July 2018. The female was at Gaddon Loch in August 2018.





Common snout fly *Rhingia campestris*

A stubby hoverfly with a distinct snout. This female was at Gaddon Loch in May 2017.





White-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva pyrastris*

Rather large, distinctive hoverfly.





Yellow-barred pond fly *Sericomyia silentis*

Very large hoverfly that occurs in wet habitats, although not many occur at Birnie and Gaddon. The above female was at Birnie Loch, and the male and female below were both at Gaddon Loch.





Common globetail *Sphaerophoria scripta*

This hoverfly has a long abdomen. As can be seen when the wings are folded as below right, the abdomen is appreciably longer than the wings in the male. It is fairly common at Gaddon Loch.





Common pufftail *Sphegina clunipes*

Although patchily distributed, these can be very common in suitable damp woodland. This male was between the two lochs in early June 2020.



Common compost fly *Syrirta pipiens*

A fairly common species. It is small and easily overlooked.





Common flower fly *Syrphus ribesii*

Very common, but difficult to distinguish from similar species. The all-yellow hind femur distinguishes females from females of *S. torvus* and *S. vitripennis*.





Hairy-eyed flower fly *Syrphus torvus*

Distinguishable from other *Syrphus* species in that it has hairy eyes. The tiny hairs are visible on this female.



Black-thighed flower fly *Syrphus vitripennis*

The lack of hairs on the eyes together with the pattern of yellow and black on the hind leg of this female suggest this species, but *Syrphus torvus* cannot be conclusively ruled out from photos.





Swamp thickleg *Tropidia scita*

A rare species in Fife, this female was in the bulrushes near the car park at Birnie Loch on 31 May 2020.





Bumblebee plumehorn *Volucella*

A variable bumblebee mimic. This male was at Gaddon Loch in late May 2018.





Pied plumehorn *Volucella pellucens*

A large, very visible species. Occurs along the more shaded paths at Gaddon Loch. Its larvae live in wasp or bee nests.





Migrant flatbelly *Xanthandrus comtus*

A species that is seldom recorded in Scotland. This male was at Birnie Loch on 4 August 2019, and is the third record for Fife.





Orange-belted leafwalker *Xylota segnis*

A widespread species of woodland. The above female was at Gaddon Loch, and the female below at Birnie Loch.





Golden-tailed leafwalker *Xylota sylvarum*

Larger than *Xylota segnis* and much less common. This male was at Gaddon Loch on 23 June 2020.

