



# **Hoverflies of the East Neuk of Fife**

**S.T. Buckland**



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These are the hoverfly species of the East Neuk of Fife that I have so far identified and photographed. I would like to thank the remarkable support given by Roger Morris and colleagues through the UK Hoverflies Facebook page. Any remaining errors of identification are mine alone! I have taken the East Neuk to be the area bounded by the coast from East Sands (St Andrews) to Lower Largo, and inland by a line along the Lade Braes, past Magus Muir, through Pitscottie to Ceres, then along the road south to Lower Largo.

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## Common dainty *Baccha elongata*

A small species of woodland. This female was at a patch of wild strawberries at Magus Muir.





Buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia albitarsis* /

bulbous buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia ranunculi*

Widespread. Identified by the paler segments above the black front feet. This male (above) and female were at Magus Muir.





Primrose blacklet *Cheilosia antiqua* /

lady's mantle blacklet *Cheilosia vicina*

*C antiqua* larvae feed in the stems of primrose, and as the male below right was in a large primrose patch at Cameron Reservoir, that seems the more likely species. The other two males shown here were at Magus Muir.





## Ragwort blacklet *Cheilosia bergenstammi*

Widespread. This male (above) and female were at Magus Muir.





## Greater spring blacklet *Cheilosia grossa*

An uncommon early-season species. The above female was at Magus Muir on 25 March 2019, while the male below was one of several at Cameron Reservoir on 2 April 2019.





## Bumblebee blacklet *Cheilosia illustrata*

Widespread. These females were at Cameron Reservoir.





## Yellow-winged blacklet *Cheilosia impressa*

This female was at Magus Muir in late May 2017. The orange-yellow base to the wings of the female and the all-black legs are distinctive. This is the second record for Fife. The first was in 2008.



## Parsley blacklet *Cheilosia pagana*

A fairly common species. These (male above, female below) were in the Lade Braes in St Andrews.





## Bolete blacklet *Cheilosia scutellata*

Uncommon in Scotland. The above female was at Bankhead Moss in early September 2019, the female below right was at Magus Muir in late July 2018, and the male below left was at Cambo Gardens in mid-August 2025..





## Figwort blacklet *Cheilosia variabilis*

A species of damp woodland. This male was at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024.





## Dark-winged wrinklehead *Chrysogaster solstitialis*

A widespread species in summer, although seldom numerous. These (female above, male below) were at Magus Muir.





## Little meadow fly *Chrysotoxum arcuatum*

Sparingly distributed in Fife. These females were at Bankhead Moss in early September 2019.





## Two-banded meadow fly *Chrysotoxum bicinctum*

A distinctive species. The above male was at Ruddon's Point in June 2019 while the female below was at Cameron Reservoir in late July, 2016.





## Stripe-backed brusheye *Dasysyrphus albostriatus*

Not common in Fife. The above male was at Kilconquhar in August 2020, while the male below was at Magus Muir in late August 2019.





Black-spotted brusheye *Dasysyrphus pinastri*

Not a common species. These shots of females were taken at Magus Muir.





Yellow-girdled brusheye *Dasysyrphus tricinctus*

Occurs in small numbers. These females were at Magus Muir.





## Broad-barred brusheye *Dasysyrphus venustus*

A species group. They are more common than the very similar black-spotted brusheye. This male (above and below left) and female were at Magus Muir.





## Pale-knobbed lucent *Didea fasciata*

A scarce and mostly southern woodland hoverfly. The female above and below left was at Magus Muir at the end of August and the female below right in mid-July 2018.





## Dark-knobbed lucent *Didea intermedia*

Very similar to the previous species, but mostly northern. This male was at Magus Muir near the car park on 17 June 2019. It is the second record for Fife; the first was at Tentsmuir in 1982.





Black-horned smoothtail *Epistrophe grossulariae*

A fairly widespread species usually in small numbers.





## Marmalade hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus*

Very common. One of the first hoverflies to appear in spring. The above female was at Kilconquhar Loch on 25 March 2018. The male was at Magus Muir.





## Eurasian drone fly *Eristalis arbustorum*

A widely-distributed drone fly. The above female was at Magus Muir, and the male was at Ruddons Point.





## Stripe-winged drone fly *Eristalis horticola*

Another widely-distributed drone fly. The female above was at Cameron Reservoir, while the male below was at Magus Muir.





## Furry drone fly *Eristalis intricaria*

Less common than the other species of drone fly shown here. The above female was at Bankhead Moss in early September 2019, while the male was there in late July 2019.





## Stripe-faced drone fly *Eristalis nemorum*

A common drone fly. This female was at Cameron Reservoir.



## Tapered drone fly *Eristalis pertinax*

A widespread drone fly. These individuals (female above, male below) were at Cameron Reservoir.





## Common drone fly *Eristalis tenax*

A common drone fly. These are females.





## Migrant aphideater *Eupeodes corollae*

A common small hoverfly that often migrates in large numbers.





## Broad-banded aphideater *Eupeodes latifasciatus*

A relatively uncommon species that can be difficult to spot amongst more common *Eupeodes corollae*. This male was at Magus Muir in late July 2018.





## Lunuled aphideater *Eupeodes luniger*

A widespread species, larger than *Eupeodes corollae*. These females were at Magus Muir, and show the distinctive inverted 'Y' marking between the eyes.





## Snouted duck fly *Eurimyia lineata*

A species of wetlands. This male was by the boardwalk at Bankhead Moss in early June 2019.





## Ringed beech fly *Fagisyrphus cinctus*

A woodland and mostly southern species. This male was at Magus Muir in mid-July 2018. There has previously been just one record from Fife, in 1937.



## Eurasian copperback *Ferdinanda cuprea*

Only previously recorded from two grid squares in Fife. These (female above, male below) were at Keil's Den in July and August 2020.





## Woolly-tailed marsh fly *Helophilus hybridus*

Appreciably less common than the next species. The above female was at Magus Muir in late May 2018, while the male was at Bankhead Moss in early September 2019.





## Tiger marsh fly *Helophilus pendulus*

Widespread. The female above was at Cameron Reservoir, while the male was at Magus Muir.





*Lemon marsh fly Helophilus trivittatus*

Much rarer than the previous two species. Male above, female below. Both were at Kin-craig (Shell Bay) on 17th September 2019.





Dark-haired smoothleg *Heringia heringi* /

Long-horned smoothleg *Heringia senilis*

Two tiny species that cannot be separated from a photograph, although the more likely is *H heringi*. It has only very rarely been recorded in Scotland. This female was at Magus Muir on 7 June 2019.





## Green shimmer *Lejogaster metallina*

A scarce species of marshes, bogs and wet grassland. This female was at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024.





## Pale-saddled hoary *Leucozona glaucia*

A localised hoverfly that can be common in suitable habitat. These were at Magus Muir.  
Female above, male below.





## Dark-saddled hoary *Leucozona laternaria*

An attractive but uncommon hoverfly. These (female above, male below) were at Cameron Reservoir in mid-July 2019.





## Blotch-winged whitebelt *Leucozona lucorum*

An attractive hoverfly. This female was at Cameron Reservoir.



## Dimorphic bumblefly *Matsumyia berberina*

Almost at the northern limit of its UK range in Fife. The female (above) is the usual form, and male (below) is the all-buff form. Both were at Magus Muir in late May 2018. There were only three previous records for Fife, the last in 1980.





## Alder halfband *Melangyna arctica*

A rare woodland species. This male was east of the road at Magus Muir on 13 May 2019.





## Matt-backed halfband *Melangyna compositarum*

A woodland species that is most common in mid-summer. These males were at Cameron Reservoir in July 2019.





## Spring halfband *Melangyna lasiophthalma*

An early-season species. The female (above) was at Magus Muir in April 2018, while the male (below) was there in mid-March 2019.





## Black halfband *Melangyna quadrimaculata*

An early-season species that is not often recorded. This female was sunning itself on winter heliotrope leaves east of the road at Magus Muir on 20 March 2019, and is the first record for Fife.



Shiny-backed halfband *Melangyna umbellatarum*

Identity not certain! This female was at Magus Muir in late May 2019.





## Common wrinklehead *Melanogaster hirtella*

Small very black hoverflies. These were at Bankhead Moss in early June 2019. Male above and females below. The females are certainly this species; the male probably is, but could be *Melanogaster aerosa*.





## Variable duskyface *Melanostoma mellinum*

Very similar to, but appreciably less common than, *Melanostoma scalare*. The above male was at Bankhead Moss, the male below right at Cameron Reservoir, and the female below left at Kilconquhar.





Long-winged duskyface *Melanostoma scalare*

Common. Male above, female below.





## Spotted thintail *Meliscaeva auricollis*

Quite common. This female was at Cameron Reservoir.



## Banded thintail *Meliscaeva cinctella*

Rather local in distribution, but can be common where it occurs. This female was at Bank-head Moss in mid-September 2018.





## Narcissus bulb fly *Merodon equestris*

Larvae of this species feed on daffodil bulbs. It was thought to have been introduced to Britain with bulb imports in the 19th century. They come in several colour forms, mimicking different species of bumblebee. The above male was one of two at Cameron Reservoir, while the male below was at Cambo Garden.





## Common batman fly *Myathropa florea*

A relatively common and distinctive species. Its common name arises from the distinctive marks on its thorax. This female (above) and male were both at Magus Muir.





## Yellow-kneed fen fly *Neoascia meticulosa*

One of several similar, tiny species. The female above was at Bankhead Moss in early June 2019, while the female below was there in early May 2024.





Smudge-veined fen fly *Neoascia podagrica* /

butterbur fen fly *Neoascia obliqua*

A tiny hoverfly that is easily overlooked. These were at Cameron Reservoir (bottom right) and Magus Muir.





## Black-kneed fen fly *Neoascia tenur*

Another tiny hoverfly. These are a few of dozens at Bankhead Moss in late May 2019.





## Common spotted bristleside *Parasyrphus punctulatus*

An early-season species. This male was on the Lade Braes in late April 2018.





*Pipiza sp*

This female was at Magus Muir in late May 2018.



## Grey-spotted sedge-sitter *Platycheirus albimanus*

A small, very common species.





## Common sedge-sitter *Platycheirus clypeatus*

One of the *P clypeatus* group of very similar species. These females were at Cameron Reservoir.





Dull-backed sedge-sitter *Platycheirus manicatus*

These individuals (male above, female below) were at Cameron Reservoir.





## White-spotted sedgesitter *Platycheirus peltatus*

Now considered a group of species. The female (above) was at Bankhead Moss, and the male was at Magus Muir.





Many-tufted sedgesitter

*Platycheirus scutatus*

The above male was at Balcomie and the others were at Magus Muir. Females cannot be positively identified from photos.





## Shiny-backed sedgesitter *Platycheirus tarsalis*

This species is not often recorded in Fife. This male was at lower Kilminning in mid-May 2022.





## Spotted garlic eater *Portevinia maculata*

A specialist that exploits ransoms. These males were at Balcaskie in late May 2018.





## Hornhand sedge-sitter *Pyrophaena granditarsa*

This attractive hoverfly is locally distributed. These (male above, female below) were at Bankhead Moss in mid-September 2018.





## Fourspot sedge-sitter *Pyrophaena rosarum*

A locally-distributed species of marshes and wet woodland with lush vegetation. This male above was at Bankhead Moss in early July 2024.



## Common snout fly *Rhingia campestris*

A stubby hoverfly with a distinct snout. These were at Cameron Reservoir (above) and Bankhead Moss.





## Stripe-backed glimmer *Riponnensia splendens*

A hoverfly with green eyes, and rare in Fife. This male was at Keil's Den in mid-July 2020.





## White-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva pyrastris*

A large hoverfly that occurs widely, usually in small numbers. Migrants often arrive from across the North Sea. This female was at Cameron Reservoir in June 2018.





## Yellow-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva selenitica*

A large species that is scarce in Fife. Female above, male below.





## White-barred pond fly *Sericomyia lappona*

A large, distinctive hoverfly. This female was at Magus Muir in June 2018. It is the fourth record for Fife.





## Yellow-barred pond fly *Sericomyia silentis*

A large hoverfly, common in boggy locations. These males were at Kilconquhar Loch (above) and Cameron Reservoir.





## Interrupted globetail *Sphaerophoria interrupta*

These males are probably this species, but they cannot be positively identified from photos. These were at Ruddon's Point on 29 August 2020.





## Common globetail *Sphaerophoria scripta*

These males were at Ruddon's Point on 29 August 2020. They can be identified by their long abdomens, which are appreciably longer than the wings.





## *Sphaerophoria* sp

Female *Sphaerophoria* cannot be identified to species. The male (above) is a 'short-bodied' *Sphaerophoria*; only males of the long-bodied hoverfly *Sphaerophoria scripta* can be easily identified to species from a photo. These were at Magus Muir in August 2018.





## Elegant pufftail *Sphegina elegans*

Small hoverflies that occur in damp vegetation. The above female was at Keil's Den on 26 July 2020, and is the first record for Fife of this species. The female below was at Keil's Den on 17 July 2020, and may also be this species.





## Common compost fly *Syritta pipiens*

A tiny but common hoverfly, and frequent migrant. The male above was at Magus Muir, while the female was at Cameron Reservoir.





## Common flower fly *Syrphus ribesii*

Very common, but difficult to distinguish from other *Syrphus* species. Females can be identified by the extent of yellow on the hind leg.





## Hairy-eyed flower fly *Syrphus torvus*

Very common, but difficult to distinguish from other *Syrphus* species. Hairs on the eye of this female (above and below left) and male identify them.





## Black-thighed flower fly *Syrphus vitripennis*

Very common, but cannot be identified with certainty from photos. The pattern of yellow and black on the hind leg of these females identifies them as *S vitripennis* or *S torvus*, and the apparent absence of hairs on the eye indicate that they are more likely to be *S vitripennis*.





## Bumblebee plumehorn *Volucella bombylans*

An attractive bumblebee mimic that is not numerous in the East Neuk. These males were at Fleecefaulds in mid-June 2023.





## Pied plumehorn *Volucella pellucens*

A large, very visible species. Its larvae feed in wasp or bee nests.





## Hornet plumehorn *Volucella zonaria*

This hornet mimic is a recent arrival in Scotland. This female was at Cambo Gardens in mid-August 2025, and is one of the first records from Fife. Its larvae live in hornet nests or nests of some species of wasp.





## Orange-belted leafwalker *Xylota segnis*

Widespread in small numbers in open woodland. This male was at Magus Muir.





## Golden-tailed leafwalker *Xylota sylvarum*

A species of deciduous woodland, scarce in Scotland. This female was at Magus Muir in July 2019.

