



Hoverflies of Carphin

S.T. Buckland

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This shows those species of hoverfly on Carphin Farm that I have been able to identify and photograph. I'm grateful to Stuart Paul, Briony Marcus, Ross Stuart and Billy Walker for welcoming me to Carphin, and giving me free access.

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Buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia albitarsis* /

Bulbous buttercup blacklet *Cheilosia ranunculi*

These two species cannot be separated reliably from photos. *Cheilosia albitarsis* is common, and this female is likely to belong to that species.





Ragwort blacklet

Cheilosia bergenstammi

Common in late spring and again in late summer.





Greater spring blacklet

Cheilosia grossa

An early spring species that is patchily-distributed in Fife. Females on the right and below, males above and below right.





Bumblebee blacklet *Cheilosia illustrata*

Common in summer, usually on hogweed flowers.





Parsley blacklet *Cheilosia pagana*

Common from spring until autumn. Often seen in spring on yellow flowers such as celandine and dandelion. Male above, female below.





Dull-bellied blacklet *Cheilosia proxima*

A common species in summer. These are probably of this species, but they cannot be identified with certainty from photos.





Figwort blacklet *Cheilosia variabilis*

This species is quite scarce in Fife. This male was at Carphin in early May 2025.





Dark-winged wrinklehead *Chrysogaster solstitialis*

A small, red-eyed hoverfly. Occurs widely, but seldom numerous. Male above, female below.





Little meadow fly *Chrysotoxum arcuatum*

A species that can occur in quite large numbers in suitable habitat such as around Black Craig, but which is absent from most of Fife. These are males.





Stripe-backed brusheye *Dasysyrphus albostriatus*

A sparsely-distributed species of woodlands. These are males.





Yellow-girdled brusheye *Dasysyrphus tricinctus*

A scarce species of woodlands, sometimes recorded in gardens. This female was at Carphin in mid-August 2025.





Spring smoothtail *Epistrophe eligans*

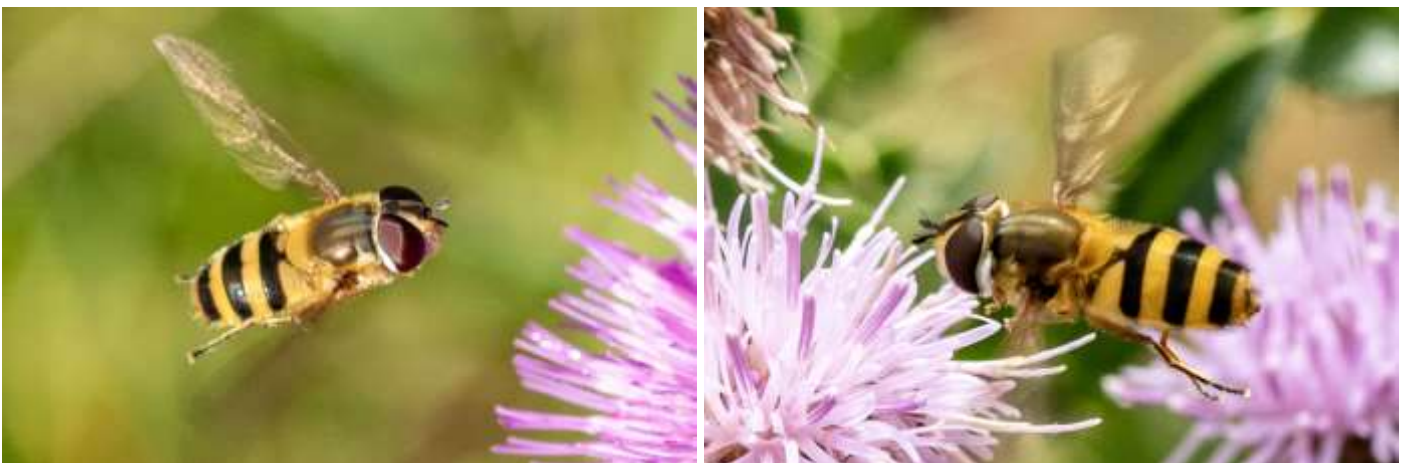
A spring species that is not common in Fife. Female above, male below.





Black-horned smoothtail *Epistrophe grossulariae*

A widespread species that is seldom numerous. These are females.





Marmalade hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus*

This species occurs through most of the year, and is often abundant in late spring and summer, enhanced by large migrations from southern Europe. This is a familiar hoverfly with gardeners.





Eurasian drone fly *Eristalis arbustorum*

A common species of open habitats, occurring mostly in summer. Males above and below left, female below right.





Stripe-winged drone fly

Eristalis horticola

A common species, mostly in or near wet habitats.





Furry drone fly

Eristalis intricaria

Fairly common in wet habitats. Male above and below left, female right and below right.





Stripe-faced drone fly *Eristalis nemorum*

A widespread species. Males will hover above a female, as above and below left, sometimes with four or five males stacked vertically.





Tapered drone fly *Eristalis pertinax*

A common hoverfly across a variety of habitats from March to November. Males above and below right, female below left.





Common drone fly *Eristalis tenax*

A common species especially in late summer and autumn. Female above, male below.





Migrant aphideater *Eupeodes corollae*

A common species that can be very numerous in summer, with populations enhanced by large numbers of migrants.





Lunuled aphideater *Eupeodes luniger*

A common species across a range of habitats.





Eurasian copperback *Ferdinandea cuprea*

A scarce species in Scotland, occurring in habitats with mature trees. These females were at Carphin in mid-August 2025.





Woolly-tailed marsh fly *Helophilus hybridus*

A relatively uncommon species of wet habitats.





Tiger marsh fly *Helophilus pendulus*

A very common species of wet habitats. These are males.





Pale-saddled hoary *Leucozona glaucia*

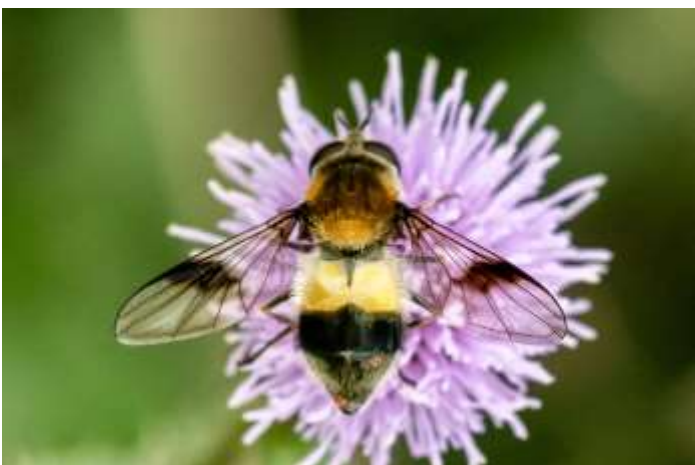
A fairly widespread summer species that is declining rapidly.





Blotch-winged whitebelt *Leucozona lucorum*

A widespread species of late spring and summer, but never numerous.





Matt-backed halfband *Melangyna compositarum*

A sparsely-distributed woodland species.





Common wrinklehead *Melanogaster hirtella*

A species that can be overlooked amongst large numbers of *Cheilosia*. The above female is definitely of this species. The one below is probably of the same species, but could be *Melanogaster aerea*.





Variable duskyface *Melanostoma mellinum*

Widespread in open grassy habitats, but not as numerous as *Melanostoma scalare*. This is a male.





Long-winged duskyface *Melanostoma scalare*

Common and often abundant from April to September. Female above, males below.





Spotted thintail *Meliscaeva auricollis*

A widespread species, but it is seldom numerous. Males above and below left, female below right.





Banded thintail *Meliscaeva cinctella*

A widespread species, but not often encountered in or around the Howe of Fife. Female above and below left, male below right.





Narcissus bulb fly

Merodon equestris

A non-native species that arrived with imported bulbs. Common in parks and gardens, but not often encountered in areas as remote as Carphin. These were not far from the farmhouse.





Common batman fly *Myathropa florea*

A common species, especially in or near broad-leaved woodland.





Black-kneed fen fly *Neoascia tenur*

A widespread species that can be abundant in wet habitats.



Common spotted bristleside *Parasyrphus punctulatus*

A common and often abundant small hoverfly, occurring from March to November. Male above and below left, female below right.





Grey-spotted sedgesitter *Platycheirus albimanus*

A common and often abundant small hoverfly, occurring from March to November. Males above and right, females below.





Common sedge-sitter *Platycheirus clypeatus*

Common in wet habitats. This female was by the wildlife pond down the track from the farmhouse.



Dull-backed sedge-sitter *Platycheirus manicatus*

Widespread in open habitats, often seen on flowers. Its protruding mouth is distinctive. These are females.





White-spotted sedge-sitter *Platycheirus peltatus*

Occurs in marshy habitats. This male was by one of the wildlife ponds on 9 October 2025, a late date for this species.





Many-tufted sedge-sitter *Platycheirus scutatus*

This female is one of the *scutatus* group of species, and is probably *P. scutatus*, which is the most common member of the group.



Fourspot sedge-sitter *Pyrophaena rosarum*

A relatively scarce species of damp habitats. This male was by the wildlife pond next to the path to Norman's Law, where it splits from the track to the farmhouse.





Common snout fly *Rhingia campestris*

A common species, mostly in late spring and again in late summer.





Stripe-backed glimmer *Riponnensia splendens*

An attractive but locally-distributed species. This male was at Carphin in late June 2021.





White-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva pyrastris*

A widespread species with numbers often enhanced by migrants. Male above and below left, female below right.





Yellow-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva selenitica*

A large species that is scarce in Fife. These were alongside the track that runs from the farmhouse to the duck pond in June 2025. Male above, female below.





Interrupted globetail *Sphaerophoria interrupta*

This male is probably of this species, but cannot be positively separated from similar rarer species from photos.





Common globetail *Sphaerophoria scripta*

This species is becoming more common in Fife. The males above and below right are definitely *S scripta*. Females cannot be identified from photos, but the one below left is probably of this species, as it was laying eggs a few inches from a male.





Common compost fly *Syritta pipiens*

A common summer species in a range of habitats. Female above, males below.





Common flower fly *Syrphus ribesii*

There are three common species of this genus that are difficult or impossible to separate from photos. Female common flower flies can be identified from the all-yellow femur of the hind leg, as can be seen in these photos.





Hairy-eyed flower fly *Syrphus torvus*

As its common name suggests, this species can be identified if tiny hairs are visible on the eyes, as is the case for these two females.





Black-thighed flower fly *Syrphus vitripennis*

The black thigh (femur) of the hind leg is clearly visible in these photos, and there is no indication of hairs on the eyes of either. *Syrphus torvus* usually has less black on the hind femur, and has small hairs on the eyes, while *Syrphus ribesii* females have all-yellow hind femurs, which these females do not have. While not certain, these characteristics suggest that these are *Syrphus vitripennis*.





Bumblebee plumehorn *Volucella bombylans*

A bumblebee mimic. The female lays its eggs in a bumblebee nest, where the larvae feed on nest detritus. This male was on the path south of Berry Brae.





Pied plumehorn *Volucella pellucens*

A large hoverfly that is common in summer. Its larvae feed on detritus in wasp nests.





Orange-belted leafwalker *Xylota segnis*

A common species usually seen perched or moving fast on leaves. It occurs mostly in or near woodland.

