



Hoverflies of the Howe of Fife

S.T. Buckland

Hoverflies of the Howe of Fife

S.T. Buckland

This shows those species of hoverfly in and around the Howe of Fife that I have been able to identify and photograph. 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!

Steve Buckland

steve@st-andrews.ac.uk

2/May/2024

Contents

<i>Anasimyia contracta</i>	4	<i>Eupeodes corollae</i>	34	<i>Platycheirus albimanus</i>	63
<i>Baccha elongata</i>	5	<i>Eupeodes latifasciatus</i>	35	<i>Platycheirus ambiguus</i>	64
<i>Cheilosia albitarsis/ranunculi</i>	6	<i>Eupeodes luniger</i>	36	<i>Platycheirus angustatus</i>	65
<i>Cheilosia antiqua/vicina</i>	7	<i>Helophilus hybridus</i>	37	<i>Platycheirus clypeatus</i>	66
<i>Cheilosia bergenstammi</i>	8	<i>Helophilus pendulus</i>	38	<i>Platycheirus fulviventris</i>	67
<i>Cheilosia grossa</i>	9	<i>Helophilus trivittatus</i>	39	<i>Platycheirus manicatus</i>	68
<i>Cheilosia illustrata</i>	10	<i>Heringia</i> sp	40	<i>Platycheirus peltatus</i>	69
<i>Cheilosia pagana</i>	11	<i>Leucozona glaucia</i>	41	<i>Platycheirus scambus</i>	70
<i>Cheilosia proxima</i>	12	<i>Leucozona laternaria</i>	42	<i>Platycheirus scutatus</i>	71
<i>Cheilosia scutellata</i>	13	<i>Leucozona lucorum</i>	43	<i>Platycheirus tarsalis</i>	72
<i>Cheilosia variabilis</i>	14	<i>Melangyna compositarum</i>	44	<i>Portevinia maculata</i>	73
<i>Cheilosia vernalis</i>	15	<i>Melangyna lasiophthalma</i>	45	<i>Pyrophaena granditarsa</i>	74
<i>Chrysogaster solstitialis</i>	16	<i>Melangyna quadrimaculata</i>	46	<i>Pyrophaena rosarum</i>	75
<i>Chrysotoxum arcuatum</i>	17	<i>Melangyna umbellatarum</i>	47	<i>Rhingia campestris</i>	76
<i>Chrysotoxum bicinctum</i>	18	<i>Melanogaster hirtella/aerosa</i>	48	<i>Riponnensia splendens</i>	77
<i>Dasysyrphus albostriatus</i>	19	<i>Melanostoma mellinum</i>	49	<i>Scaeva pyrastris</i>	78
<i>Dasysyrphus pinastri</i>	20	<i>Melanostoma scalare</i>	50	<i>Scaeva selenitica</i>	79
<i>Dasysyrphus tricinctus</i>	21	<i>Meliscaeva auricollis</i>	51	<i>Sericomyia lappona</i>	80
<i>Dasysyrphus venustus</i>	22	<i>Meliscaeva cinctella</i>	52	<i>Sericomyia silentis</i>	81
<i>Didea fasciata</i>	23	<i>Merodon equestris</i>	53	<i>Sericomyia superbiens</i>	82
<i>Epistrophe eligans</i>	24	<i>Myathropa florea</i>	54	<i>Sphaerophoria scripta</i>	83
<i>Epistrophe grossulariae</i>	25	<i>Neoascia meticulosa</i>	55	<i>Sphegina clunipes</i>	84
<i>Episyrphus balteatus</i>	26	<i>Neoascia podagrica/obliqua</i>	56	<i>Syrpitta pipiens</i>	85
<i>Eristalis arbustorum</i>	27	<i>Neoascia tenur</i>	57	<i>Syrphus ribesii</i>	86
<i>Eristalis horticola</i>	28	<i>Parasyrphus malinellus</i>	58	<i>Syrphus torvus</i>	87
<i>Eristalis intricaria</i>	29	<i>Parasyrphus punctulatus</i>	59	<i>Syrphus vitripennis</i>	88
<i>Eristalis nemorum</i>	30	<i>Parhelophilus versicolor</i>	60	<i>Tropidia scita</i>	89
<i>Eristalis pertinax</i>	31	<i>Pipiza luteitarsis</i>	61	<i>Volucella bombylans</i>	90
<i>Eristalis tenax</i>	32	<i>Pipiza</i> sp	62	<i>Volucella pellucens</i>	91
<i>Eumerus funeralis/strigatus</i>	33			<i>Xanthandrus comtus</i>	92
				<i>Xylota segnis</i>	93
				<i>Xylota sylvarum</i>	94



Waisted swamp fly *Anasimyia contracta*

The females above and below right were at Birnie Loch in mid-June 2019, while the male below left was at Cairnfield Muir in mid-July 2019.





Common dainty *Baccha elongata*

A small species of woodland that is never numerous. 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. These images were taken at Gaddon Loch and Clatto Reservoir, and are likely to be primrose blacklets.





Ragwort blacklet *Cheilosia bergenstammi*

Widespread. These images were taken at Gaddon Loch, where there is plenty of its food plant, 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 this shot. It was one of two males near Gaddon Loch in early April 2019.





Bumblebee blacklet *Cheilosia illustrata*

A relatively large hoverfly and bumblebee mimic, common in mid-summer, mainly on common hogweed, its food plant.





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 these females show the features of *C proxima*.





Bolete blacklet *Cheilosia scutellata*

A scarce hoverfly. The male below right was at Birnie Loch in August 2019, while the male above and below left was one of several at Kilmany in late June and early July 2020.





Figwort blacklet *Cheilosia variabilis*

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





Yarrow blacklet *Cheilosia vernalis*

A fairly common species that cannot be identified with certainty from photos, so this identity is tentative! These were at the Wilderness in July 2020. Female above and below left, male below right.





Dark-winged wrinklehead *Chrysogaster solstitialis*

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





Little meadow fly *Chrysotoxum arcuatum*

A species that can occur in quite large numbers in suitable habitat, but which is absent from most of the area. Female above and below right, male below left.





Two-banded meadow fly *Chrysotoxum bicinctum*

An attractive species that is not often encountered. The female (above and below left) was at Gaddon Loch in July 2019, while the male was at Edensmuir (Mountcastle) in June 2018.





Stripe-backed brusheye *Dasysyrphus albostriatus*

Note the distinctive parallel stripes on the thorax. The male above was at Gaddon Loch, the female below left was at Edensmuir (Mountcastle), and the female below right was at Kedlock Feus.





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. The above female was at Clatto Reservoir, and the one below was at Gaddon Loch.





Pale-knobbed lucent *Didea fasciata*

Uncommon in Fife. This female was at Clatto Reservoir on 20 July 2020.





Spring smoothtail

Epistrophe eligans

An early-season species that is relatively scarce in Scotland. Females above and below left, males right and below right.





Black-horned smoothtail *Epistrophe grossulariae*

A fairly widespread species that is not numerous. The two males were at Gaddon Loch in early July, while the female below right was at Carphin near Luthrie, also in early July.





Marmalade hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus*

Extremely common, variable in size, shape and brightness, but consistent in its distinctive markings.





Eurasian drone fly *Eristalis arbustorum*

A widespread drone fly with strong markings.





Stripe-winged drone fly *Eristalis horticola*

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





Furry drone fly *Eristalis intricaria*

This drone fly sometimes occurs in good numbers at Gaddon Loch.





Stripe-faced drone fly *Eristalis nemorum*

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





Tapered drone fly *Eristalis pertinax*

A large, common and widely-distributed drone fly.





Common drone fly *Eristalis tenax*

A common, large drone fly.





Lesser roundface *Eumerus funeralis* /

Onion roundface *Eumerus strigatus*

These two tiny species are very similar. They are not common in Scotland, and are not welcome in gardens, as their larvae eat flower bulbs and rhizomes. This female was at Luthrie in May 2020.





Migrant aphideater *Eupeodes corollae*

Small hoverfly that is sometimes extremely common. Females (below) are easier to identify than males (above).





Broad-banded aphideater *Eupeodes latifasciatus*

Fairly small hoverfly; males are similar to male *Eupeodes corollae*. Occurs at Gaddon Loch, Edensmuir, Angle Park and Clatto Reservoir.





Lunuled aphideater *Eupeodes luniger*

Quite small, and occurs widely in small numbers. The female has an inverted Y on its frons, and the yellow spots on the abdomen do not leak into the edge.





Woolly-tailed marsh fly *Helophilus hybridus*

Very similar to *Helophilus pendulus* but less common. Distinguished from that species because its hind tibia has more black than yellow, and the male has no black between the two large yellow spots on either side of the abdomen. 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 Gaddon Loch 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. The male above was at Birnie Loch on 18 June 2019, while the male below was at Kedlock Feus on 15 May 2020.





Pale-saddled hoary *Leucozona glaucia*

This attractive species can sometimes be found at Birnie and Gaddon Lochs. The above female was at Gaddon. The male below was at Kilmany.





Dark-saddled hoary *Leucozona laternaria*

Similar to the previous species, but much less common. The above female was at Gaddon Loch and the female below at Edensmuir (Mountcastle).





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*

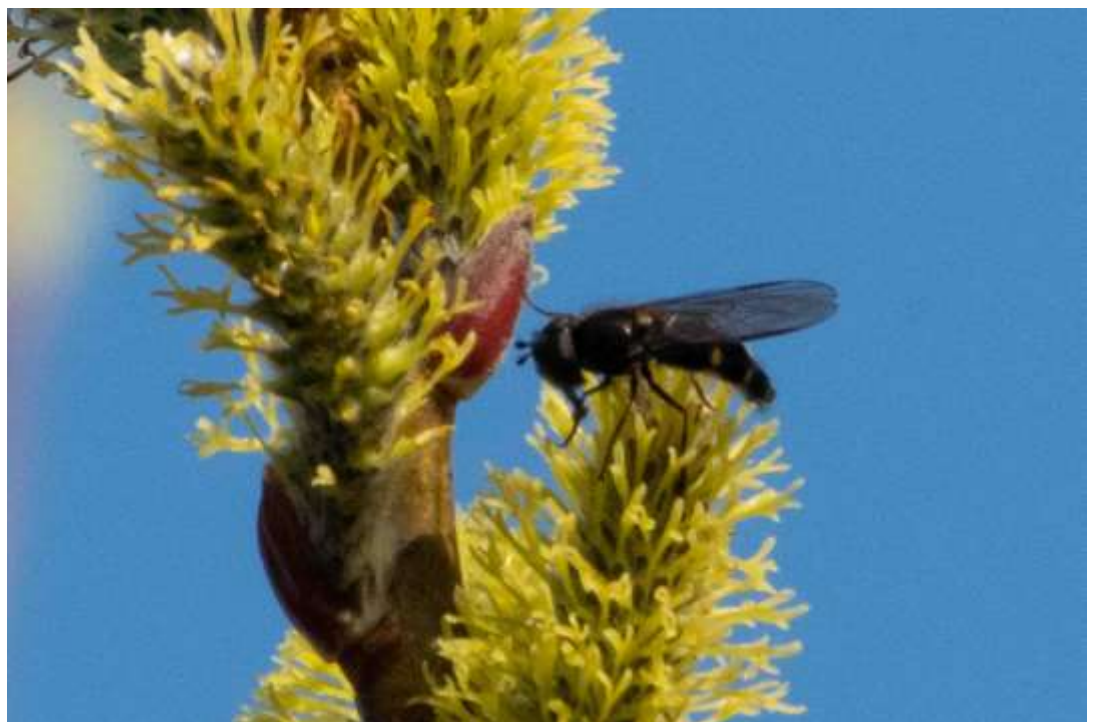
An early-season species. These were at Gaddon Loch. While the male is certainly of this species, the female (below right) is probably the dark form of the species.





Black halfband *Melangyna quadrimaculata*

An uncommon early-season species. This is the first record for the area covered here — a male at Kilmany, high in a willow tree just coming into flower on 17 March 2021.





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*

A species that can be overlooked amongst large numbers of *Cheilosia*. The above female was at Carphin near Luthrie. The male below is probably of this species, but could be *Melanogaster aerosa*. It was at Clatto Reservoir.





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. Male above, female below.





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 relatively common hoverfly with a long flying season.





Banded thintail *Meliscaeva cinctella*

A widespread species, but not often encountered in the Howe of Fife. The male (above and below right) was at Birnie loch, while the female was at Carphin near Luthrie.





Narcissus bulb fly

Merodon equestris

A very variable species which arrived in the UK with daffodil bulb imports in the 1800s. The four colour varieties shown here, with images from Monimail and Kedlock Feus, mimic different bee species.





Common batman fly *Myathropa florea*

Widespread but not numerous. These females were at Black Loch near Collessie (above) and Gaddon Loch (below).





Yellow-kneed fen fly *Neoascia meticulosa*

A small species of wetland habitat that is easily overlooked. The above female was at Edensmuir (Mountcastle), the female below 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. These were at Cairnfield Muir.





Smudge-faced bristleside *Parasyrphus malinellus*

A rare species in the Howe of Fife area, this male was on bird cherry south-west of Kilmany on 7 May 2020, the first record in the area for 40 years.





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 frute-torum* does not extend to Fife.





Pale-fotted pithead *Pipiza luteitarsis*

This male was south-west of Kilmany in late April 2020.





Pipiza sp

A group of species that are difficult to tell apart. The females below were at Edensmuir (Mountcastle) and Gaddon Loch, while the above female was at Kedlock Feus.





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 both its common name and the scientific name '*albimanus*'. Common.





Blackthorn sedge-sitter

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*. The above male was at Gaddon Loch, and the one below at Black Loch.





Blackspine sedge-sitter *Platycheirus scambus*

An uncommon species in Fife. The male below right was at Clubston on 29 May 2020. The other two males were at Kilmany on 9 June 2020. Species ID not certain!





Many-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. The male below was at Gaddon Loch on 14 May 2020, while the above female was at Elmwood Golf Course on 11 May 2022.





Spotted garlic eater *Portevinia maculata*

A specialist of ransom (wild garlic) patches. These were at Monimail.





Hornhand sedge-sitter *Pyrophaena granditarsa*

A species of wetlands, damp meadows and damp woodland rides. The above female was at Black Loch near Collessie in August 2017, while the female below was at Clatto Reservoir in August 2021.





Fourspot sedgesitter *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. A common species especially where patches of white deadnettle or red campion grow. Female above, male below.





Stripe-backed glimmer

Riponnensia splendens

An attractive small species. The two males above and right were at Edensmuir (Mountcastle) in mid-July 2019, while the male below was near Luthrie in late June 2021.





White-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva pyrastris*

Rather large, distinctive hoverfly. Migrants often arrive during summer.





Yellow-bowed smoothwing *Scaeva selenitica*

Similar to the previous species, but much less common. This male was at Cairnfield Muir in early August 2019.





White-barred pond fly *Sericomyia lappona*

A large hoverfly that occurs in wet habitats, but that is seldom recorded in Fife. This male was at Clatto Reservoir in July 2020.





Yellow-barred pond fly *Sericomyia silentis*

Very large hoverfly that occurs in wet habitats.





Furry pond fly

Sericomyia superbiens

A pretty hoverfly that seldom occurs in east Fife. These males were at Clatto Reservoir in mid-August 2020 and 2021.





Common globetail *Sphaerophoria scripta*

This hoverfly has a long abdomen. As can be seen when the wings are folded as below, the abdomen is appreciably longer than the wings in the male. Identification of species of this genus is difficult, but this species appears to be quite common at Edensmuir (Mountcastle) and Gaddon Loch.





Common pufftail *Sphegina clunipes*

A patchily-distributed species that can be very common in suitable damp woodland. This male was by the path between Birnie and Gaddon lochs in early June 2020.



Common compost fly *Syrirta pipiens*

A fairly common species. It is small and easily overlooked. Large numbers of migrants sometimes arrive.





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 these females.





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 bombylans*

A variable bumblebee mimic. The female above was at Gaddon Loch in June 2020, while the male below was there in May 2018.





Pied plumehorn *Volucella pellucens*

A large, very visible species. Its larvae live in wasp and 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. Male above, female below.





Golden-tailed leafwalker *Xylota sylvarum*

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

