BIODIVERSITY on your Farm

The National Biodiversity Data Centre has set a challenge for farmers to record some of the amazing biodiversity found on your farm during the year. We have 40 species for you to record. Are you up for the challenge?

Species: Common Snout Hoverfly

Scientific Name: *Rhingia campestris*

Group

1 of around 180 hoverfly (syrphids) species in Ireland.

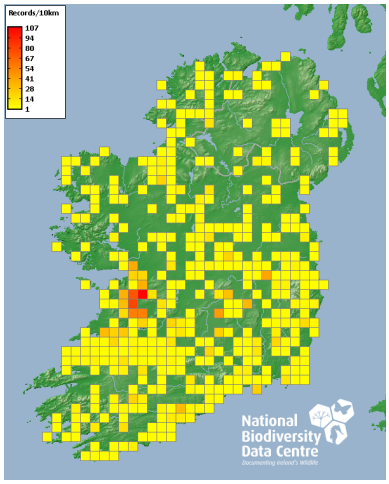
Hoverflies are important pollinators of plants and crops, the second most important after wild bees.

How common on farms

Biodiversity surveys were carried out across 40 farms within the National Biodiversity Data Centre's 'Protecting Farmland Pollinators' EIP project (*https://biodiversityireland.ie/projects/protecting-farmland-pollinators/*). The 40 farms were chosen to reflect farms of differing types and intensity levels. The Common Snout hoverfly was present on some of the 40 farms.

Distribution

Widespread and fairly common.



Source: The Common snout records as viewed on Biodiversity Maps, 2023.

Common Snout Hoverfly. Note: Long snout and a stiped orange

Identification Tips

- A distinct long snout (rostrum).
- Striped thorax and orange abdomen.
- Wing length of 6 to 9.5cm.
- Can be seen from March to November.
- They're associated with cow dung, where their larvae breed.

Biodiversity Tip No. 9
Reduce anthelmintic use

The Common Snout Hoverfly larval stage depend on cow dung.

Consider an integrated pest management system as part of animal management.

This can help to improve animal and soil health on the farm.

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Conservation Status

Red Lists are an internationally recognised methodology for assessing conservation status. A European Red List was published in 2022. It found that the Common Snout Rhingia campestris was not threatened with extinction in Europe. Based on the Red List, it is 'Least Concern'.

The report noted that the Common snout is much more specialised in its flower-visiting than most other hoverflies.

Management Tips

Food for Common Snout:

- Encourage native wild flowers, including Dandelion, Bluebell, Bramble, Bugle, Ground Ivy, Meadowsweet, Common heather/Ling, Buttercup.

Larval development sites for Common Snout:

- Reduce anthelmintic use on the farm.

- Bruce Thompson, a dairy farmer from Co Laois has some great tips on using dung beetles to manage parasites *https://www.farmingfornature.ie/nominees/bruce-thompson/*

- Other information:

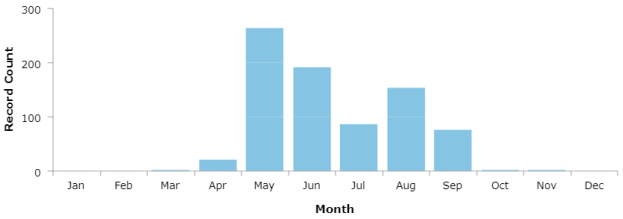
- *https://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/dung-beetles-to-manage-parasites-in-co-laois/*

- *https://www.dungbeetlesforfarmers.co.uk/about-us*

When?

Can be seen between March and November. The earliest it has been recorded in Ireland is 5 March (1943).

Records per month across all datasets



National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, Common Snout, *Rhingia campestris* image, accessed May 2023, *https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Species/87461*

Where on the farm?

It is most common in woodland, hedgerows and field edges, but can be found in almost all parts of the farm, especially on land where cattle are grazed..

Value

- Hoverflies provide valuable 'pollination service' of crops.
- Cross-pollination of our wildflowers, helping them to be resilient, and boosting their fruiting ability for the next generation and wildlife.
- The Common Snout larval stage is associated with cow dung, as a healthy micro-habitat ecosystem, this can help to improve animal and soil health on the farm.

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Further Info

An unmistakeable dumpy orange hoverfly with a very obvious, exceptionally long snout (rostrum) that encloses the proboscis (mouthpart) and allows the fly to feed on nectar and pollen in deep tube flowers, like Red campion and Bluebell, which other hoverfly cannot use.

The Common Snout is a pollinator for many plant species. They are associated with cow dung, where the larvae breed, they're very well camouflaged in the surface layer.

The larval stage of hoverflies is followed by a resting stage, the puparium, which equivalent to the chrysalis or pupa of moths or beetles. Essentially, during this resting phase the insect's tissues are dismantled and reconstructed, so that when it hatches from the puparium it does so as the fully-formed, adult fly.

Adult males feed on nectar, while adult females feed on protein rich pollen, as they need this to develop eggs.

Similar species

It is not similar to any other hoverfly on the island of Ireland.

Affected by a change in climate?

They may be affected by a change in flowering periods.

If climatic change were to result in long, dry summers in Ireland, this species would be expected to decrease in frequency and become restricted to wetter parts of the island.

Need some help with identification?

Just drop us a line, we'll be happy to help:
pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie

Useful Links

Try this course on identifying Ireland's common farmland hoverflies:
https://learn.biodiversityireland.ie/courses/farmlandhoverflies

Hoverflies: Six species common on farmland
https://biodiversityireland.ie/app/uploads/2021/01/Hoverflies-on-Farmland-Flyer-A5-PRINT.pdf

Common Snout species profile:
https://species.biodiversityireland.ie/profile.php?taxonId=87461

Record here

Your records will help us build a picture of farmland biodiversity in Ireland. If you're happy with your identification, you can submit your record.

- On the National Biodiversity Data Centre website:

https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/biodiversity-on-your-farm#7/53.455/-8.016

or

- You could also download our free smartphone App for recording in the field

Android App:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=nbdc.mobile.biodiversity

Iphone App:

https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/biodiversity-data-capture/id906361120

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An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

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All-Ireland Pollinator Plan
www.pollinators.ie

An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

An tSeirbhís Páirceanna Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúlra
National Parks and Wildlife Service