

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: Noon Fly or Noonday Fly

Scientific Name: *Mesembrina meridiana*

Irish name: Cuil Nóna

Group

True flies (order Diptera) are an immense group, the Noon fly is a member of the Muscidae (house fly) family of flies, which is in the genus *Mesembrina*.

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 Noon fly was present on some of the 40 farms.



Noon Fly. Note: Jet black in colour, orange-gold on it's wings, feet and face.

Identification Tips

- A large fly, with a stout body, 11 to 12mm long.
- Easily identified by jet black colour.
- Orange-gold at the base of its wings on it's feet and wings.
- Often seen on cow dung, or sunbathing on leaves or flowers.

Biodiversity Tip No. 26

The Noon Fly larval stage depend on cow dung.

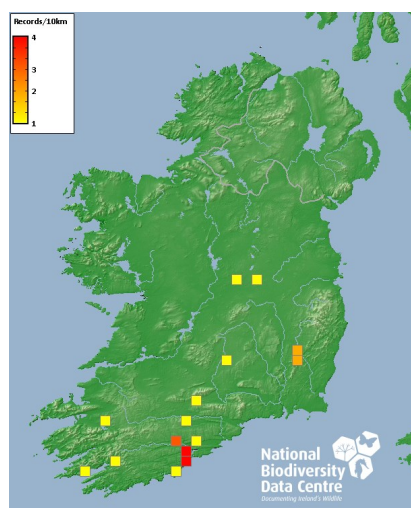
Chat to your vet about an integrated pest management system as part of animal management.

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



Distribution

Widespread and common, probably under recorded.



Source: The Noon Fly records as viewed on Biodiversity Maps, 2023.

Conservation Status

Red Lists are an internationally recognised methodology for assessing conservation status.

There are many species of True flies (order Diptera). The Muscidae (house fly) family of flies conservation status has not been assessed in Europe or in Ireland.

Management Tips

Food for Noon Fly:

- Encourage native wild flowers, including Hogweed, Cow parsley and Ladies Bedstraw.

Larval development sites for Noon Fly

- Chat to your vet about reducing 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.farmingformature.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>



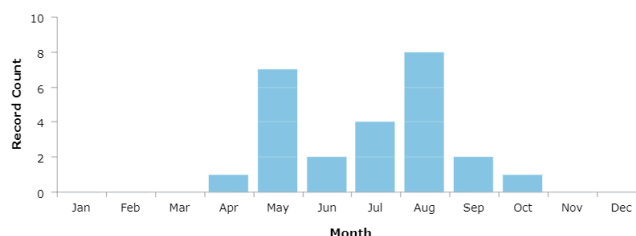
@ Ruth Wilson

Adult Noon Fly sunbathing.

When?

Can be seen between late April to late October. The earliest it has been recorded in Ireland is 23 April (2022).

Records per month across all datasets



National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, Noon Fly, image, accessed May 2023,

Where on the farm?

It is most common in woodland edges, hedgerows and field edges, particularly in cattle-rearing areas, resting on cow dung,

Value

- Its life cycle, is an integral part of agricultural grassland ecology and revolves around defecating cattle.
- The Noon Fly 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.
- The Noon Fly larva hatch in the cow pat and predate the larvae of other species which are feeding within the dung.
- Flies play an important part in decomposing animal matter. They break down large bodies for other organisms, and enable nutrients to be recycled from decaying animal matter – so aiding soil fertility.
- Flies are an abundant source of food for many birds.
- Flies can assist with some ‘pollination service’.

Further Info

Flies are one of the top four species-rich orders of insects and, as such, one of the most species-rich groups found on the planet (12% of the planet's bio-ta).

Noon fly adults are most often seen on cow dung, sunbathing on trees, fences and walls in bright sunlight, or visiting flowers to feed on nectar.

Eggs are laid in cow dung, the female lays a single egg in up to five cow pats, when they hatch the larvae are carnivorous, and feed on other fly larvae within the dung. The female lays up to five eggs in a lifetime, each one in a different pat, at two day intervals.

Similar species

They are distinct, but may be confused with the Giant Tachinid Fly *Trachina grossa*, although it is much larger, at 13 to 19mm in length.



Giant Tachinid Fly *Trachina grossa*

Affected by a change in climate?

Flies can generally move just short distances, so they may be affected by local changes in climate.

Need some help with identification?

Just drop us a line, we'll be happy to help:

pollinators@biodiversityireland.ie

Useful Links

A Dipterists Forum promotes the study, recording and conservation of true flies in the British Isles.

[Dipterists Forum - the society for the study of flies \(Diptera\) | Dipterists forum](#)

The Forum have an interesting leaflet on the benefits of Dipterists.

[Flies - the facts, DF leaflet October 2016.pdf \(dipterists.org.uk\)](#)

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>

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Bia agus Mara
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An Roinn Tithíochta,
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An tSeirbhís Páirceanna Náisiúnta
agus Fiadhúlra
National Parks and Wildlife Service