LEICESTERSHIRE
ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Recording hoverflies in Leicestershire & Rutland

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Fig 1. *Episyrphus balteatus*, Asfordby Hill 2014 (Paul Ruddoch, NatureSpot)

LESOPS 47 (February 2022)
ISSN 0957 - 1019

Preface

For over twenty years Brian Wetton has diligently been recording the hoverflies from Leicestershire & Rutland sites, many of which are nature reserves in the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust portfolio. However, this activity is not restricted to our two counties as he has been carrying out similar surveying in our neighbouring counties of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire with occasional reports in the publications of the Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Entomological Society (DANES) and also in Sorby Record (Sorby Natural History Society, Sheffield). His recording is meticulous and he has also contributed records of other fly families during his work.

The following series of papers from Brian serves to show how a wide range of hoverfly species can be expected to be found in Leicestershire & Rutland (VC55). This LESOPS brings together his overall experiences of recording these familiar insects and also presents more detailed reports on some of the sites he has visited.

[Images of hoverflies are from NatureSpot with permission. The records presented here are from Brian's personal observations and do not necessarily reflect the current distribution of the Syrphidae throughout VC55. Due to difficulty of separating Melangyna compositarum and M. labiatarum these have been considered as a single species aggregate when identity is uncertain for this LESOPS].

Ray Morris, LESOPS Editor

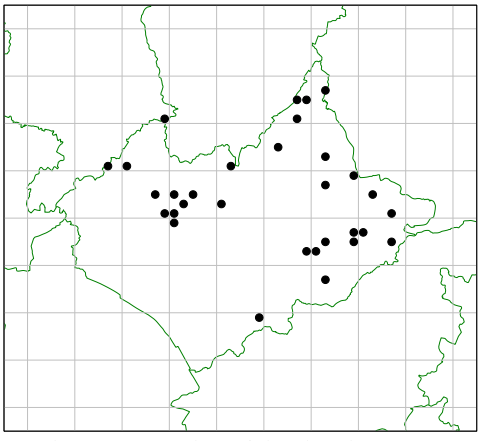

Figure 1: Location of sites in this LESOPS

1. The hoverflies of Leicestershire & Rutland: an overview

The last full review of the status of hoverflies in Leicestershire was in 1998 (Sumner, 1998), followed by a partial update in 2009 (Woodward & Ikin, 2009). I began recording in Leicestershire and Rutland in 1998 at the time of the Sumner review and have continued (204 visits to 33 sites up to the end of 2021) with 64 of the visits having been to the Rutland Water Egleton NR (Wetton, 2015). The full list of sites is given in Table 1:1 and their locations are shown in Figure 1. The dates show a preponderance of summer visits.

Table 1:1. Sites visited

Site	Number of visits	Visit dates	Number of species
1. Armley Wood NR	1	21/6	10
2. Bloody Oaks Quarry NR	2	23/5, 4/8	16
3. Bradgate Park, Cropston Reservoir	2	19/7, 6/9	11
4. Charley Woods NR	1	19/8	20
5. Charnwood Lodge NNR	9	31/5 – 13/9	60
6. Cloud Wood NR	17	12/5 – 19/9	81
7. Cossington Meadows NR	3	21/6, 5/9. 13/9	32
8. Cribbs's Meadow NNR	1	24/9	4
9. Dimminsdale NR	1	27/5	7
10. Egleton NR	64	29/3 –10/10	102
11. Foxton Locks	1	12/8	16
12. Grantham Canal (Plungar)	2	11/7, 23/8	29
13. Grantham Canal (Redmile)	8	17/5 – 30/8	40
14. Great Merrible Wood NR	3	22/7, 11/8, 28/8	24
15. Hambleton Wood NR	2	21/6, 8/7	21
16. Holwell NRs	17	4/5 – 19/9	81
17. Ketton Quarry NR	9	5/5 – 8/8	55
18. Launde Big Wood NR	4	4/6, 25/6, 31/8	40
19. Launde Park Wood NR	1	10/9	16
20. Lea Meadows NR	2	8/6, 31/8	33
21. Lockington Marshes	1	20/7	23
22. Lyndon NR	3	5/5, 16/6, 21/8	36
23. Merry's Meadow NR	2	31/7, 24/9	12
24. Muston Meadows NNR	1	4/6	11
25. Outwoods	1	19/7	11
26. Prior's Coppice NR	9	11/6 – 10/9	47
27. Stathern Wood	5	4/7 – 23/8	41
28. Stonesby Quarry NR	3	4/6, 16/8, 5/9	28
29. Swithland Reservoir	1	25/10	6
30. Swithland Wood	1	9/9	8
31. Twenty Acre Piece NR	1	3/8	5
32. Wymondham Rough NR	2	28/8, 24/9	8
33. Ulverscroft NR	2	8/6, 31/8	8

Fig 2. *Chrysotoxum bicinctum,* Rutland Water 2013 (Paul Roberts, NatureSpot)

Fig 3. *Sphaerophoria scripta* (male), Cropston 2014 (Kate Nightingale, NatureSpot)

Table 1:2. Species recorded at ten or more sites

Baccha elongata	*Melanostoma mellinum, scalare*
Cheilosia albitarsis, illustrata, pagana, proxima, variabilis	*Myathropa florea*
Chrysogaster solstitialis	*Neoascia podagrica*
Chrysotoxum bicinctum (Fig 2)	*Platycheirus albimanus, angustatus, clypeatus, granditarsus, manicatus. scutatus*
Epistrophe eligans, grossulariae	*Sphaerophoria scripta* (Fig 3)
Episyrphus balteatus	*Syrphus ribesii,torvus,vitripennis*
Eristalis arbustorum, intricarius, nemorum, pertinax, tenax	*Rhingia campestris*
Eupeodes corollae, latifasciatus, luniger	*Syritta pipiens*
Helophilus pendulus	*Volucella bombylans, pellucens*
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	*Xylota segnis*
Meliscaeva auricollis	

In total 121 species have been recorded. Of these, 41 are of widespread distribution having been recorded at ten or more sites (Table 1:2). Table 1:3 gives details of 81 species recorded at nine or less sites with an indication of the sites where noted.

Nationally, most of the recorded species are considered to be either "widespread" or "frequent" (Ball & Morris, 2013). Two species are classed as "local" - *Eupeodes nielseni* (Egleton 25 May 2014) and *Platycheirus europaeus (*Egleton 21 August 2002). Both may be under-recorded as they are easily confused with other species in their respective genera. A further four species are classed as "nationally scarce" these being -

(a) *Mallota cimbiciformis* – a female was found feeding on bramble near Heron Bay at Egleton on 24 June 2000;
(b) *Triglyphus primus* - four were caught at Lockington Marsh on 26July 2011;
(c) *Xylota tarda* – a male was caught at Cloud Wood on 11 July 2020; and
(d) *Neoascia interrupta* - this has expanded its range since the 1980s and whilst its status is "nationally scarce" it may be in need of review. It has been recorded a number of times at Egleton and on 26 July 2011 at Lockington Marsh.

Whilst *Eristalis similis* is classed as a possible vagrant, which is "nationally rare", it could easily be overlooked amongst numerous *Eristalis*. A male was caught at Launde Big Wood on 25 June 2014.

The interest in hoverflies is increasing and the literature now available for their identification is much improved. It is hoped that this report, and those following, will stimulate more recording in the county. Undoubtedly more species are there to be found and the status of many is currently only provisional. Moreover, the ranges and abundance of species are dynamic and there is a need for continuing monitoring of these important pollinators.

Fig 4. *Volucella inflata*, Ketton Quarry 2013
(Mark Skevington, NatureSpot)

Fig 5. *Sericomyia silentis* Ulverscroft 2016
(Kate Nightingale, NatureSpot)

Table 1:3. Species recorded at less than 10 sites

Species (Number of sites)	Seen at site number	Species (Number of sites)	Seen at site number
Platycheirus peltatus (9)	5,10,12,13,14,16,17,18,22	*Epistrophe diaphana* (3)	6,10,18
Xylota sylvarum (8)	1,5,6,10,16,18,26,27	*Leucozona glaucia* (3)	6,16,25
Leucozona laternaria (7)	5,6,13,15,16,18,26	*Neoascia meticulosa* (3)	10,13,16
Cheilosia bergenstammi (6)	6,7,10,13,16,17,	*Parhelophilus versicolor* (3)	10,13,16
Cheilosia ranunculi (6)	10, 13,16, 20, 22,24	*Pipiza bimaculata* (3)	6,12,27
Cheilosia vernalis (6)	6,7,10,15,16,17	*Pipiza noctiluca* (3)	6,10,16
Eristalis horticola (6)	6,7,10,16, 27,28	*Platycheirus fulviventris* (3)	7,10,12
Helophilus trivittatus (6)	2,10,14,16,20,27	*Riponnensia splendens* (3)	6,7,10
Merodon equestris (6)	5,10,16,17,20,26	*Sericomyia silentis* (3) (Fig 5)	4,5,20
Platycheirus rosarum (6)	4,5,10,11,28,26	*Tropidia scita* (3)	10,12,13
Rhingia rostrata (6)	10,16,17,18,28,33	*Volucella inflata* (3) (fig 4)	6,17,26
Xanthandrus comtus (6)	6,10,16,26,27,33	*Volucella inanis* (3)	6,10,16
Cheilosia fraterna (5)	5,6,16,23,26	*Anasimyia contracta* (2)	10,13
Cheilosia impressa (5)	10,18,22,26,28	*Cheilosia lasiopa* (2)	10,17
Dasysyrphus venustus (5)	6,10,16,20,22	*Chrysotoxum cautum* (2)	2,17
Eristalinus sepulchralis (5)	5,10,12,21,22	*Dasysyrphus pinastri* (2)	5,10
Ferdinandea cuprea (5)	6,7,17,18,26	*Dasysyrphus tricinctus* (2)	6,17
Helophilus hybridus (5)	6,10,12,16,26	*Didea fasciata* (2)	4,27
Lejogaster metallina (5)	5,10,17, 20,22	*Epistrophe nitidicollis* (2)	6,10
Melanogaster hirtella (5)	5,6,10,20,28	*Eumerus funeralis* (2)	5,6
Neoascia tenur (5)	10,16,20,21,22	*Neoascia interrupta* (2)	10,21
Parhelophilus frutetorum (5)	5,10,12,16,22	*Pipiza austriaca* (2)	6,10
Platycheirus tarsalis (5)	2,5,10,13,16	*Portevina maculata* (2)	9,20
Scaeva pyrastri (5)	6,10,16,17,26	*Xanthogramma citrofasciatum* (2)	16,17
Xanthogramma pedissequum (5)	3,6,10,16,17	*Anasimyia transfuga* (1)	10
Cheilosia vulpina (4)	16,18,27,28	*Cheilosia latifrons* (1)	10
Chrysogaster festivum (4)	5,6,16,17	*Criorhina floccosa* (1)	16
Criorhina berberina (4)	5,6,16,18	*Eristalis similis* (1)	18
Dasysyrphus albostriatus (4)	5,10,11,16	*Eumerus strigatus* (1)	20
Melangyna umbellatarum (4)	6,7,10,16	*Eupeodes nielseni* (1)	10
Meliscaeva cinctella (4)	5,10,26,27	*Heringia heringi* (1)	6
Orthonevra nobilis (4)	5,6,16,22	*Mallota cimbiciformis* (1)	10
Paragus haemorrhous (4)	2,10,16,17	*Pipizella virens* (1)	10
Pipizella viduata (4)	6,10,16,17	*Platycheirus ambiguous* (1)	10
Sphaerophoria interrupta (4)	5,6,16,23	*Platycheirus europaeus* (1)	10
Volucella zonaria (4)	2,6,7,10	*Scaeva selenitica* (1)	5
Chalcosyrphus nemorum (3)	6,10,16	*Sphegina elegans* (1)	16
Cheilosia griseiventris (3)	10,16,17	*Triglyphus primus* (1)	21
Cheilosia scutellata (3)	5,6,14	*Xylota florum* (1)	27
Chrysogaster cemiteriorum (3)	6,10,16	*Xylota tarda* (1)	6
Chrysotoxum verralli (3)	5,6,10		

2. The hoverflies of Rutland Water 2015-21

Since the publication of my article in the Leicestershire & Rutland Recorder (Wetton, 2015), a further 26 visits have been made to the Egleton Nature Reserve. Visits spanned the season from 15 April to 5 October.

A total of 77 species were recorded of which 12 were new to the site and not recorded in the earlier report. The new species were:

- *Platycheirus occultus* - 20 April 2021, a recently split member of the *Platycheirus clypeatus* aggregate;
- *Eupeodes bucculatus* - 12 September 2021;
- *Sphaerophoria interrupta* - 27 August 2021;
- *Xanthogramma pedissequum* - 16 June 2017 and 16 September 2020, a species expanding its range and becoming quite common;
- *Cheilosia impressa* - 16 June 2017 and 15 August 2021 when it proved to be fairly common in Sharples Meadow;
- *Cheilosia latifrons* - 17 April 2016, 16 September 2020 and 12 May 2021;
- *Cheilosia scutellata* - 27 August 2021, a species breeding in fungi;
- *Cheilosia soror* - 27 August 2021, a locally scarce species more typical of southern downland;
- *Cheilosia vulpina* - 15 August 2021;
- *Orthonevra nobilis* - 15 August 2021;
- *Pipiza fenestrata* - 15 August 2021; and
- *Volucella zonaria* - 4 September 2015 and 27 August 2021, another species which is expanding its range northwards and becoming quite common in this region.

The post-2014 visits have also added further records of some species which had only previously been recorded on one or two occasions: *Dasysyrphus venustus* (1 record); *Epistrophe diaphana* (2); *Cheilosia ranunculi* (2); *Lejogaster metallina* (1); *Anasimyia contracta* (1); *Platycheirus ambiguus* (2); *Melangyna umbellatarum* (1); *Scaeva pyrastri* (1); *Cheilosia griseiventris* (1); and *Volucella inanis* (1).

The total number of species that I have now recorded at Egleton Reserve is 102. The post-2014 species are shown in Table 2:1 ranked according to number of visits when they were seen.

Fig 6. *Leucozona lucorum*, Egleton 2009
(David Nicholls, NatureSpot)

Fig 7. *Syrphus ribesii*, Egleton 2004
(David Nicholls, NatureSpot)

Table 2:1. Post-2014 species added to the Egleton hoverfly list

Species (Number visits)	Visit date range	Species (Number visits)	Visit date range
Eristalis pertinax (20)	15 Apr -5 Oct	*Volucella bombylans* (3)	16 Jun – 27 Jun
Platycheirus albimanus (18)	15 Apr -5 Oct	*Cheilosia bergenstammi* (2)	12 May – 23 May
Syrphus ribesii (17) (Fig 7)	15 Apr -5 Oct	*Cheilosia impressa* (2)	16 Jun – 15 Aug
Helophilus pendulus (15)	22 Apr – 5 Oct	*Cheilosia ranunculi* (2)	12 May – 23 May
Cheilosia pagana (14)	20 Apr – 17 Sep	*Epistrophe diaphana* (2)	22 Jun – 21 July
Melanostoma scalare (14)	15 Apr -5 Oct	*Eupeodes corollae* (2)	10 Aug – 27 Aug
Episyrphus balteatus (12)	16 Jun – 4 Sep	*Meliscaeva auricollis* (2)	16 Jun – 4 Jul
Eristalis tenax (12)	16 Jun – 5 Oct	*Neoascia meticulosa* (2)	7 May – 12 May
Sphaerophoria scripta (12)	2 Jun – 17 Sep	*Neoascia podagrica* (2)	15 Aug – 7 Sep
Eristalis nemorum (11)	20 Apr – 17 Sep	*Pipizella viduata* (2)	22 Jun – 15 Aug
*Syritta pipiens (*10)	16 Jun – 17 Sep	*Platycheirus ambiguus* (2)	20 Apr – 22 Apr
Volucella pellucens (10)	16 Jun – 12 Sep	*Platycheirus manicatus* (2)	7 May- 12 May
Eristalis intricarius (9)	16 Jun – 16 Sep	*Tropidia scita* (2)	22 Jun – 6 Jul
Melanostoma mellinum (9)	7 May – 16 Sep	*Volucella zonaria* (2)	27 Aug – 4 Sep
Eristalis arbustorum (8)	22 Jun – 16 Sep	*Xanthogramma pedissequum* (2)	16 Jun – 16 Sep
Myathropa florea (8)	16 Jun – 28 Aug	*Anasimyia contracta* (1)	4 Jul
Platycheirus scutatus (8)	7 May – 16 Sep	*Chalcosyrphus nemorum* (1)	27 Aug
Eupeodes latifasciatus (7)	16 Jun – 5 Oct	*Cheilosia griseiventris* (1)	15 Aug
Rhingia rostrata (7) (Fig 8)	15 Apr – 16 Sep	*Cheilosia lasiopa* (1)	7 May
Leucozona lucorum (6) (Fig 6)	15 Apr – 22 Jun	*Cheilosia scutellata* (1)	27 Aug
Helophilus hybridus (6)	16 Jun – 28 Aug	*Cheilosia soror* (1)	27 Aug
Eupeodes luniger (5)	20 Apr – 17 Sep	*Cheilosia vulpina* (1)	15 Aug
Cheilosia albitarsis (5)	7 May – 4 Jul	*Dasysyrphus venutus* (1)	7 May
Cheilosia illustrata (5)	7 May – 4 Jul	*Epistrophe grossulariae* (1)	7 Jul
Rhingia campestris (5) (Fig 9)	7 May – 12 Sep	*Eupeodes bucculatus* (1)	12 Sep
Eristalinus sepulchralis (5)	12 May – 10 Aug	*Helophilus trivittatus* (1)	10 Aug
Cheilosia vernalis (4)	22 Jun – 16 Sep	*Lejogaster metallina* (1)	22 Jun
Parhelophilus versicolor (4)	16 Jun – 15 Aug	*Neoascia tenur* (1)	12 May
Platycheirus peltatus (4)	12 May – 12 Sep	*Orthonevra nobilis* (1)	15 Aug
Syrphus vitripennis (4)	16 Jun – 15 Aug	*Pipiza fenestrata* (1)	15 Aug
Baccha elongata (3)	7 May – 22 Jun	*Platycheirus angustatus* (1)	16 Jun
Cheilosia latifrons (3)	17 Apr – 16 Sep	*Platycheirus clypeatus* (1)	27 Aug
Cheilosia proxima (3)	7 May – 27 Aug	*Platycheirus occultus* (1)	20 Apr
Chrysotoxum bicinctum (3)	16 Jun – 21 Jul	*Melangyna umbellatarum* (1)	27 Aug
Epistrophe eligans (3)	7 May – 23 May	*Scaeva pyrastri* (1)	10 Aug
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum (3)	22 Jun – 27 Aug	*Sphaerophoria interrupta* (1)	27 Aug
Neoascia interrupta (3)	27 Apr – 12 Sep	*Volucella inanis* (1)	12 Sep
Pipiza noctiluca (3)	20 Apr – 15 Aug	*Xylota segnis* (1)	12 Sep

Fig 8. *Rhingia rostrata*, Cropston 2015
(Kate Nightingale, NatureSpot)

Fig 9. *Rhingia campestris*, Twenty Acre Piece 2012
(David Nicholls, NatureSpot)

3. The hoverflies of Cloud Wood Nature Reserve

Cloud Wood, an ancient semi-natural woodland (SK4121) just south of the A42 between Breedon-on-the-Hill and Worthington in north-west Leicestershire, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which became a reserve of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust in 1993 (LRWT, 2021) and is best known for its flora and lepidoptera. A wide-ranging account of its history and natural history has been written by Anthony Squires and published by the LRWT in 2017 (Squires, 2017). However, certain groups of fauna are absent from this publication, the hoverflies being one. It is in an attempt to rectify this gap that this provisional assessment of the family at the site is written.

Between 2014 and 2020, 16 visits were made to the reserve, 13 of them in the summer months of June–August with two being in May and one in September. The need for more spring visits makes this assessment a provisional one. The duration of visits has varied from two to five hours and this, together with seasonal and weather conditions, explains the variation in number of species per visit from 8 to 32. The total number of identified species recorded in this period was 76. None are national rarities but one, *Xylota tarda*, is classed as *nationally scarce*. Several species which are considered as ancient woodland indicators by Alan Stubbs (Stubbs, 1982) have been found while others are locally scarce or at the edge of their geographical range, some actively spreading north as a result of climate change.

Table 3:1 ranks species in descending order of frequency of occurrence, expressed as number of visits in which each was found. Maximum numbers were also estimated on each visit. The assessment of status is for the East Midlands counties of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire based on some 30,000 records. Undoubtedly further taxa will be found in the course of additional visits, especially in the spring months. Moreover, the local status of many will become clearer with more visits. Three species experiencing northward expansions are noteworthy both in terms of monitoring national climate change and local dynamics.

Footnote:

Since writing this, an early season visit on 4 April 2021 produced four additional species: Platychierus sticticus, Epistrophe eligans, Parasyrphus punctulatus and Criorhina ranunculi. Thus the total number I have recorded at the site has increased to 80.

Platycheirus sticticus is classed as nationally scarce and Darwyn Sumner considered it a "lost species" in Leicestershire (Sumner, 1998). The new record brings the number of nationally scarce species recorded at Cloud Wood to two.

Criorhina ranunculi is classed as "widespread" nationally but is fairly scarce locally and was not recorded in Leicestershire by either Darwyn Sumner (Sumner, 1998) or John Kramer (Kramer, 1989).

[Brian's report of Xylota tarda from Cloud Wood on 11 July 2020 seems to be the fifth for this taxon in VC55. The previous records were from Martinshaw Wood in 1986 by John Kramer while Neil Frankum noted the hoverfly at Sheepy Wood, Hinckley in 1989, Owston Wood in 1990 and Polly Botts Lane, Ulverscroft on 1992 - Editor]

Table 3:1. Cloud Wood hoverflies

Taxon	No visits when seen	Date range	Max number	East Midlands status & comments
Eristalis pertinax	15	May-Sep	100+	Common
Melanostoma scalare	15	May-Sep	20	Common
Syrphus ribesii	14	May-Sep	100+	Common
Episyrphus balteatus	13	Jun-Aug	100+	Common
Myathropa florea	13	Jun-Sep	20+	Common
Cheilosia pagana	12	May-Sep	10+	Common
Helophilus pendulus	12	Jun-Aug	50+	Common
Platycheirus albimanus	11	May-Sep	50+	Common
Volucella pellucens	11	Jun-Sep	20+	Common
Xylota segnis	11	May-Sep	6	Common
Cheilosia illustrata	10	Jun-Jul	50	Common
Syritta pipiens	9	May-Aug	20+	Common
Eristalis tenax	8	Jun-Sep	10+	Common
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	8	May-Sep	2	Common
Chrysogaster solstitialis	7	Jun-Sep	5+	Common
Eristalis intricarius	7	Jun-Aug	6+	Common
Eristalis nemorum	7	Jun-Sep	50	Common
Sphaerophoria scripta	7	May-Sep	50	Common
Baccha elongata	6	Jun-Sep	3	Common
Cheilosia proxima	6	May-Aug	10	Common
Platycheirus scutatus	6	May-Sep	4	Common
Sphaerophoria females	6	Jun-Aug	3	Females currently unidentifiable to species
Rhingia campestris	6	May-Sep	50	Common
Volucella bombylans	6	Jun-Jul	3	Common
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	5	Jul-Aug	3	Common
Epistrophe grossulariae	5	Jun-Aug	5	Common
Eupeodes luniger	5	May-Sep	3	Common
Leucozona lucorum	5	May-Jun	6+	Common
Melanostoma mellinum	4	Jul-Sep	2	Common
Leucozona laternaria	4	Jun-Jul	5	Fairly common
Xanthandrus comtus	4	Jun-Jul	2	Scarce
Cheilosia albitarsis	3	May-Jun	10	Common in spring
Cheilosia variabilis	3	May-Jun	2	Common in spring
Eristalis arbustorum	3	Jun-Aug	10+	Common
Leucozona glaucia	3	Jun-Jul	2	Fairly common (western)
Meliscaeva auricollis	3	Jul-Aug	2	Fairly common
Orthonevra nobilis	3	Jun-Sep	1	Fairly common
Syrphus torvus	3	Jun-Jul	2+	Fairly common
Volucella inflata	3	Jun	1	Scarce; ancient wood indicator
Xanthogramma pedissequum	3	Jun-Jul	2	Range expanding
Xylota sylvarum	3	Jun-Jul	5	Common
Cheilosia scutellata	2	Aug-Sep	3	Fairly common
Chrysotoxum festivum	2	Jul-Aug	1	Fairly common
Criorhina berberina	2	Jun	3	Ancient wood indicator
Dasysyrphus albostriatus	2	Aug-Sep	3	Fairly common
Dasysyrphus venustus	2	May-June	1	Fairly common
Ferdinandea cuprea	2	Jun-Sep	3	Ancient wood indicator
Helophilus hybridus	2	Jun-Aug	1	Fairly common in wetland
Melangyna umbellatarum	2	Jul-Sep	1	Fairly common
Neoascia podagrica	2	May-Aug	1	Common
Pipizella viduata	2	Jun-Jul	2	Fairly common
Platycheirus manicatus	2	May-Jun	1	Common
Platycheirus peltatus	2	Aug-Sep	4	Fairly common
Scaeva pyrastri	2	Jul	2	Fairly common
Volucella inanis	2	Aug-Sep	5	Range expansion
Cheilosia bergenstammi	1	May	1	Common in spring
Cheilosia fraterna	1	May	1	Scarce
Cheilosia vernalis	1	Jul	1	Fairly common
Chalcosyrphus nemorum	1	Jun	1	Fairly common
Chrysogaster cemiteriorum	1	Jul	2	Fairly common in moorland)
Chrysotoxum verralli	1	Aug	1	Fairly scarce
Dasysyrphus tricinctus	1	Jun	1	Fairly common (conifers)
Epistrophe diaphana	1	Jun	1	Range expansion
Epistrophe nitidicollis	1	Jun	1	Fairly scarce
Eristalis horticola	1	Jun	1	Fairly common (western)
Eumerus funeralis	1	Aug	1	Fairly common in spring
Eupeodes corollae	1	Jul	3	Common
Heringia heringi	1	Jul	1	Fairly scarce; ancient wood indicator
Melanogaster hirtella	1	Jun	1	Fairly common in wetland
Pipiza austriaca	1	Jun	1	Fairly scarce
Pipiza bimaculata	1	May	1	Scarce
Pipiza noctiluca	1	Jun	2	Fairly common
Platycheirus angustatus	1	May	1	Fairly common in wetland
Ripponnensia splendens	1	Sep	1	Fairly common
Sphaerophoria interrupta	1	May	1	Fairly common in grassland
Volucella zonaria	1	Jul	1	Range expansion
Xylota tarda	1	Jul	1	Nationally scarce; ancient wood indicator

4. The hoverflies of the Holwell Nature Reserves

Five miles north of Melton Mowbray at Holwell, are three adjoining LRWT reserves: North Quarry, Brown's Hill Quarry and Holwell Mineral Line. The quarries and mines were a source of ironstone sent *via* the mineral line to Holwell Ironworks at Asfordby. The reserves now comprise a patchwork of habitats including rock faces, lime-rich grassland, woodland, scrub, rough grassland, small marshes, ponds and streams.

Between 2012 and 2021, 17 visits were made to survey the hoverfly fauna of the reserves. The usual transect combined a circuit of Brown's Hill Quarry and a walk along the Holwell Mineral Line. Very little attention was paid to North Quarry. All the visits were between 4 May and 24 September thus probably missing some early spring and late autumn species. Two visits were made in May, six in June, two in July, four in August and three in September.

As a result of the patchwork of small habitats, the reserves are more renowned for the variety of species and do not have a concentration of specialist indicator species such as might be found in ancient woodlands, heathlands or extensive wetlands. The surveys need to continue to fully evaluate the reserves and in particular more visits are needed in spring and late autumn. The value of the sites in terms of the variety of species (Table 4:2) shows the number in each family compared with the whole country.

A total of 81 species have been recorded (Table 4:1). Although no nationally rare or notable species were found, several are locally scarce and the overall assemblage contains a good variety of species representing many different families. Further recording would certainly discover other species. Even common species, such as *Epistrophe grossulariae,* have not yet been recorded and several species with early spring flight periods could be found. It is hoped that this provisional account stimulates further study.

Fig 10. *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum*, Broughton Astley 2017 (Craig Mabbett, NatureSpot)

Fig 11. *Xanthogramma pedissequum,* Narborough 2014 (David Gould, NatureSpot)

In addition, the attractiveness of many species is illustrated in the variety present. The body patterns are important to understand in relation to their need for camouflage and mimicry, both serving their survival strategies. Different species also adopt different behaviour in their territorial strategies, courtship, feeding and defence. Notwithstanding the absence of national rarities, the reserves are probably important for some locally scarce species *Sphegina elegans* being one example. All specimens of this species have been found in damp trackside vegetation along the Holwell Mineral Line. Another local species, *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum* (Fig. 10), breeds in association with ants and appears to be declining in the region whilst its relative, *Xanthogramma pedissequum* (Fig. 11), is expanding - is there inter-specific competition between them? Two locally scarce species of *Cheilosia* (*griseiventris* and *vulpina*) have phytophagous larvae but the plants on which they feed are not known.

Table 4:1. Holwell hoverflies

Species	Number of visits	Maximum count	Notes
Eristalis pertinax	16	50	Common generalist
Helophilus pendulus	14	50+	Common generalist
Melanostoma scalare	14	50+	Common generalist
Platycheirus albimanus	14	10+	Common generalist
Episyrphus balteatus	13	100+	Common generalist/migrant
Syritta pipiens	13	100+	Common generalist
Eristalis tenax	12	20	Common generalist
Myathropa florea	12	10	Common generalist (rot hole breeder)
Chrysogaster solstitialis	11	50+	Common
Eristalis nemorum	10	30+	Common generalist
Rhingia campestris	9	100+	Common in pastures
Syrphus ribesii	9	10+	Common generalist
Cheilosia illustrata	8	20	Common
Eristalis arbustorum	8	30+	Common generalist
Sphaerophoria scripta	8	20+	Common in grassland
Volucella pellucens	8	15	Common
Cheilosia albitarsis	7	100+	Common on buttercups
Melanstoma mellinum	7	5	Common in grassland
Platycheirus scutatus	7	4	Common
Xylota segnis	7	1	Common in mature woods
Platycheirus clypeatus	6	3	Common in grassland
Rhingia rostrata	6	8	Expanding (near badger latrines)
Sphegina elegans	5	6+	Local in wet woodland
Volucella bombylans	5	3	Common (a bumblebee mimic)
Cheilosia pagana	4	4	Common
Cheilosia proxima	4	6	Fairly common
Cheilosia variabilis	4	2	Fairly common in spring
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	4	8	Fairly common in grassland
Dasysyrphus albostriatus	4	3	Fairly common
Eristalis horticola	4	1	Commoner in west
Leucozona lucorum	4	6	Common in spring
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	4	5	Fairly common
Syrphus vitripennis	4	5	Fairly common
Baccha elongata (Fig 12)	3	1	Fairly common in woodland shade
Cheilosia bergenstammi	3	4	Fairly common in spring
Cheilosia ranunculi	3	50+	Recent split (on buttercups)
Cheilosia vernalis	3	2	Fairly common
Eristalis intricarius	3	4	Fairly common
Eupeodes latifasciatus	3	3	Fairly common (summer migrant)
Eupeodes luniger	3	2	Common
Merodon equestris	3	3	Fairly common (larvae on bulbs)
Neoascia tenur	3	2	Fairly common in wetlands
Pipizella viduata	3	1	Fairly common
Cheilosia vulpina	2	1	Local and scarce
Chrysogaster cemiteriorum	2	10	Locally common
Criorhina berberina	2	2	Local in woodland
Epistrophe eligans	2	3+	Common spring
Eupeodes corollae	2	5	Fairly common (summer migrant)
Neoascia podagrica	2	2	Common
Orthonevra nobilis	2	1	Regular in small numbers
Parhelophilus versicolor	2	6	Fairly common
Platycheirus manicatus	2	2	Common
Platycheirus peltatus	2	2+	Fairly common in small numbers
Platycheirus tarsalsis	2	2	Fairly common in woodland
Syrphus torvus	2	2	Mixed with other *Syrphus* species
Xanthandrus comtus	2	1	Local and scarce
Xanthogramma citrofasciatum	2	2	Local and scarce
Xanthogramma pedissequum	2	3	Range expanding in grassland
Xylota sylvarum	2	1+	Fairly common in woodland
Chalcosyrphus nemorum	1	1	Old woodland species
Cheilosia fraterna	1	1	Uncommon
Cheilosia griseiventris	1	1	Local and scarce
Chrysotoxum festivum	1	1	Local in grassland
Criorhina floccosa	1	1	Old woodland species
Dasysyrphus venustus	1	3	Fairly common woodland
Helophilus hybridus	1	1	Wetland species
Helophilus trivittatus	1	1	Erratic migrant
Leucozona glaucia	1	1	Fairly common in woodland
Leucozona laternaria	1	1	Fairly common in woodland
Melangyna umbellatarum	1	1	Small numbers not uncommon
Meliscaeva auricollis	1	2	Fairly common in woodland
Neoascia meticulosa	1	1	Local and scarce in wetlands
Pararge haemorrhous	1	1	Tiny so uncommon or overlooked
Parhelophilus frutetorum	1	1	Not common
Pipiza noctiluca	1	1	Fairly common
Pipizella virens	1	1	Local and scarce
Platycheirus angustatus	1	1	Local in wet grasslands

Scaeva pyrastri	1	1	Erratic migrant
Sphaerophoria interrupta	1	1	Grassland and heathland species
Tropidia scita	1	1	Local in wetland
Volucella inanis	1	1	Expanding and more common

The variety of families represented (Table 4:2), with their different habitat requirements and especially different feeding requirements of both adults and their larvae, would make the reserves highly suited to introducing budding entomologists and invertebrate ecologists to this family of flies. Adult flies feed at different plants to obtain nectar and pollen but the exact plants used by each are often still unknown. Greater study of this aspect would enhance knowledge of their important role as pollinators. Larvae feed variably on aphids, micro-lepidoptera larvae, wasp larvae, various parts of plants (leaves, stems and roots), detrital bacteria (in rotting wood, plant litter, dung and slurry) and tree sap. Knowledge of the breeding ecology could aid management of the reserves by determining the importance of different plants for feeding and breeding and the importance of dead wood and wet habitats for breeding.

Table 4:2. Comparison of presence of Holwell hoverfly sub-family occurrence with the British list

Tribe	Holwell NRs		Britain	
	Number species	% of Holwell total	Number species	% of British total
Bacchini	11	13.6	30	10.6
Paragini	1	1.2	4	1.4
Syrphini	23	28.4	86	30.3
Calicerini	0	0	3	1.1
Cheilosini	13	16.0	43	15.1
Chrysogastrini	7	8.6	29	10.2
Eristalini	12	14.8	28	9.9
Merodontini	1	1.2	6	2.1
Pelecocerini	0	0	3	1.1
Pipizini	3	3.7	20	7.0
Sericomyini	0	0	3	1.1
Volucellini	3	3.7	5	7.0
Xylotini	7	8.6	20	7.0
Microdontini	0	0	4	1.4
Totals	81		284	

Fig 12. *Baccha elongata*, Leicester 2013 (HA Peacock, NatureSpot)

5. Hoverfly Recording at Charnwood Lodge National Nature Reserve

Charnwood Lodge, a National Nature Reserve of some 134 hectares managed by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust, is situated on ancient and volcanic rocks in Charnwood Forest. It has a mixture of habitats including mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland, heathland and acid grassland together with a reservoir, small ponds and streams with associated wet habitats as well as some bare rocks. For several recent years I have run hoverfly identification workshops for the enthusiastic volunteer group at the reserve. In connection with these and additional personal visits, nine visits in total have been made - one in May, one in June, four in July, one in August and two in September.

Table 5:1 Hoverflies at Charnwood Lodge NR

Species	No visits when seen	Date range	Maximum number	Comments
Episyrphus balteatus	9	31 May – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist and migrant
Eristalis pertinax	9	31 May – 13 Sep	30+	Common generalist
Platycheirus albimanus	9	31 May – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist
Syrphus ribesii	9	31 May – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist
Helophilus pendulus	8	30 Jun – 13 Sep	10+	Common generalist
Melanostoma scalare	8	31 May – 13 Sep	30+	Common generalist
Syritta pipiens	8	31 May – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist
Eristalis nemorum	7	31 May – 13 Sep	20+	Common generalist
Eupeodes luniger	6	3 May – 6 Sep	6+	Common generalist
Melanostoma mellinum	6	31 May – 13 Sep	6+	Common in grassland
Neoascia podagrica	6	30 Jun – 13 Sep	30+	Common in woodland
Platycheirus clypeatus	6	31May – 6 Sep	10+	Common in grassland
Sphaerophoria scripta	6	31 May – 13 Sep	100+	Common in grasslands and heath
Eristalis tenax	5	30 Jun – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist
Xylota segnis	5	31 May – 30 Aug	6	Common in woodland
Baccha elongata	4	31 May – 13 Sep	2	Fairly common in woodland
Eupeodes corollae	4	31 May – 11 Jul	2	Fairly common in grassland
Volucella pellucens	4	30 Jun – 19 Jul	10	Common in woodland
Xylota sylvarum	4	30 Jun – 19 Jul	3	Fairly common in woodland
Eristalis arbustorum	3	30 Jun – 13 Sep	100+	Common generalist
Myathropa florea	3	31 May – 9 Jul	5	Common in woodland
Platycheirus angustatus	3	31 May – 30 Aug	6	Wet grassland
Platycheirus rosarum	3	31 May – 6 Sep	3	Wet grassland
Rhingia campestris	3	31 May – 30 Aug	6+	Common in pastures
Sphaerophoria interrupta	3	9 Jul – 30 Aug	5	Grassland and heathland
Volucella bombylans	3	31 May – 11 Jul	6	Fairly common
Cheilosia fraterna	2	11 Jul – 30 Aug	1	Local
Cheilosia illustrata	2	30 Jun – 9 Jul	6	Common generalist
Chrysogaster solstitialis	2	30 Jun – 9 Jul	5	Common in woodland
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	2	9 Jul – 7 Jul	2	Fairly common in grassland
Chrysotoxum festivum	2	30 Jun – 11 Jul	2	Fairly common in grassland
Epistrophe grossulariae	2	9 Jul – 19 Jul	2	Common in summer (migrant)
Leucozona laternaria	2	11 Jul – 19 Jul	1	Fairly common in woodland
Meliscaeva cinctella	2	6 Sep – 13 Sep	1	Conifer woodland
Merodon equestris	2	31 May – 9 Jul	6	Breeds in wild and garden bulbs
Platycheirus granditarsis	2	31 May – 30 Aug	2	Wet grassland
Sericomyia silentis	2	30 Jun – 9 Jul	8	Common in heathland
Syrphus vitripennis	2	30 Jun – 9 Jul	No count	Fairly common
Cheilosia albitarsis	1	31 May	3	Common in spring on buttercups
Cheilosia bergenstammi	1	19 Jul	1	Fairly common
Cheilosia scutellata	1	11 Jul	1	Breeds in fungi
Criorhina berberina	1	31 May	1	Local in woodland
Chrysotoxum verralli	1	11 Jul	1	Local
Dasysyrphus albostriatus	1	6 Sep	1	Conifer woodland
Dasysyrphus pinastri	1	31 May	1	Conifer woodland
Eristalinus sepulchralis	1	30 Jun	4	Wetland
Eristalis intricarius	1	30 Jun	1	Common generalist
Eumerus funeralis	1	9 Jul	2	Breeds in bulbs
Eupeodes latifasciatus	1	6 Sep	1	Fairly common in grassland
Lejogaster metallina	1	30 Jun	1	Woodland
Melanogaster hirtella	1	31 May	1	Wetland
Meliscaeva auricollis	1	30 Jun	1	Fairly common
Orthonevra nobilis	1	30 Jun	1	Fairly common in small numbers
Parhelophilus frutetorum	1	31 May	1	Wetland
Platycheirus occultus	1	13 Sep	1	Local (recent taxonomic split)
Platycheirus peltatus	1	31 Mauy	1	Fairly common in small numbers
Platycheirus scutatus	1	30 Aug	1	Common in small numbers
Platycheirus tarsalis	1	31 May	1	Local in woodland
Scaeva selenitica	1	9 Jul	1	Local in conifer woodland
Syrphus torvus	1	30 Jun	No count	Fairly common generalist

None of the 60 species recorded are nationally rare or scarce but they represent a number of species with varying degrees of habitat specialisation as well as numerous common

generalists. The number of species recorded in relatively few visits is testament to the rich biodiversity of the site and no doubt others are available to be found on future visits especially in spring. Indeed, in addition to my records, the late Annie Smith, a volunteer and avid recorder at the reserve, caught and photographed *Melangyna quadrimaculata* (Fig 13) by Colony Reservoir in March 2021. Annie's recording of several hoverflies on the reserve and elsewhere will be greatly missed. Table 5:1 ranks the species in accordance with their frequency of occurrence.

Fig 13. *Melangyna quadrimaculata, Sapcote 2011 (Graham Calow, NatureSpot)*

6. Hoverfly Recording on the Grantham Canal

Sections of the disused Grantham Canal are managed by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust. They retain water and have lush aquatic and waterside vegetation which attracts feeding hoverflies. Some species also breed in the shallow water, wet mud and plant litter (especially Eristalines) as well as in some of the plants themselves (notably members of the Cheilosini tribe).

Between 1988 and 2015 I visited the Plungar and Redmile sections of the canal on ten occasions. Only one visit was in May, the remainder in the summer months of July and August. The recording has, therefore, been biased towards species with a summer flight period. The counting of numbers has also been inconsistent, some visits concentrating on feeding behaviour rather than population numbers.

Of the 45 species recorded, most are common and widespread nationally, the only locally scarce species being *Pipiza bimaculata*. The most interesting group has been the wetland indicator species (Whiteley, 1995) including *Platycheirus angustatus*, *Platycheirus fulviventris*, *Neoascia meticulosa*, *Anasimyia contracta*, *Eristalinus sepulchralis*, *Helophilus hybridus*, *Parhelophilus frutetorum*, *Parhelophilus versicolor* and *Tropidia scita*.

Table 6:1 ranks all the species in order of frequency encountered. The maximum counts are not entirely reliable since no counts were undertaken on some of the visits.

Table 6:1. Hoverflies of the Grantham Canal

Species (Number of visits)	Maximum count	Comments
Syritta pipiens (9)	20+	Common generalist
Episyrphus balteatus (8)	100+	Common generalist
Rhingia campestris (8)	30+	Common pastures
Eristalis arbustorum (7)	6	Common generalist
Cheilosia pagana (6)	6	Common generalist
Platycheirus clypeatus (6)	50	Common generalist
Eristalis pertinax (5)	10	Common generalist
Helophilus pendulus (5)	20+	Common generalist
Melanostoma mellinum (5)	50	Common generalist
Platychierus manicatus (5)	2	Common in open habitats
Syrphus ribesii (5)	50+	Common generalist
Eristalis nemorum (4)	20+	Common generalist
Eristalis tenax (4)	3	Common generalist
Platycheirus peltatus (4)	2	Common in small numbers
Syrphus vitripennis (4)	4	Fairly common generalist
Eupeodes corollae (3)	3	Common in grassland
Eupeodes latifasciatus (3)	1	Common in grassland
Eupeodes luniger (3)	2	Common generalist
Neoascia podagrica (3)	1	Common in woodland
Sphaerophoria scripta (3)	6+	Common in grassland
Cheilosia proxima (2)	2+	Common generalist
Chrysotoxum bicinctum (2)	4	Common in grassland
Eristalinus sepulchralis (2)	6	Wetland indicator
Melanostoma scalare (2)	No count	Common generalist
Platycheirus scutatus (2)	No count	Common in small numbers
Tropidia scita (2)	1	Wetland indicator
Volucella bombylans (2)	2	Common in woodland
Anasimyia contracta (1)	No count	Wetland indicator
Baccha elongata (1)	No count	Fairly common in woodland
Cheilosia albitarsis (1)	1	Common on buttercups
Cheilosia illustrata (1)	1	Common generalist
Cheilosia ranunculi (1)	No count	In spring on buttercups
Eristalis intricarius (1)	2	Common generalist
Helophilus hybridus (1)	3	Wetland indicator
Leucozona lucorum (1)	No count	Common spring species
Meliscaeva auricollis (1)	2	Fairly common
Neoascia meticulosa (1)	No count	Wetland indicator
Parhelophilus frutetorum (1)	1	Wetland indicator
Pipiza bimaculata (1)	1	Local
Platycheirus angustatus (1)	1	In wet grassland
Platycheirus fulviventris (1)	1	Wetland indicator
Platycheirus tarsalis (1)	No count	Fairly common in woodland

7. The Hoverflies of Ketton Quarry Nature Reserve

Ketton Quarry NR is situated in the south-east of Rutland; 28 hectares of the quarry complex are old workings which have been restored to nature and are managed by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust. The old quarry faces, holes, mounds and trackways now form a wonderful mixture of limestone habitats: calcareous grassland, scrub, rock outcrops, mixed and beech woodland.

The reserve is renowned for its plants, reptiles and lepidoptera. This account of its hoverfly fauna will, hopefully, begin to add further to the reputation of the reserve. Between 2014 and 2021 nine visits were made. Most were in late spring with five in May and one in June. Two July and August visits have begun to record the summer species but early spring (March and April) and autumn (September and October) have still to be explored. To date 55 species have been recorded but the above limitations of the visit schedule mean that many more species should be present. The most notable species fall into two categories, woodland specialists and species of calcareous grassland.

In the first group, the two special species are *Ferdinandea cuprea* (Fig 14) and *Volucella inflata*. Both have been described as ancient woodland indicators (Stubbs, 1982) although the woodlands on the site are not true ancient woodlands. Both species have larvae which live in sap runs. *Ferdinandea cuprea* occurs widely but always in small numbers and has a southern bias to its distribution. *Volucella inflata* is even more restricted to southern Britain with Leicestershire on the northern edge of its range. It is unusual in breeding in sap runs since the rest of the genus breed in the nests of bees, wasps and hornets.

Fig 14. *Ferdinandea cuprea*, Sheet Hedges Wood 2021 (Ian Harding, NatureSpot)

Fig 15. *Chrysotoxum festivum*, Empingham 2017 (Andrew Dejardin, NatureSpot)

Among the calcareous grassland species the most notable are: *Chrysotoxum cautum*, *Chrysotoxum festivum* (Fig 15), *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum*, *Xanthogramma pedissequum*, *Cheilosia griseiventris* and *Cheilosia soror*.

Chrysotoxum cautum, *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum* and *Cheilosia soror* are at the northern edge of their ranges. *Xanthogramma pedissequum* has shown recent northward expansion in its distribution and this may also be true of *Cheilosia griseiventris*. The *Chrysotoxum* and *Xanthogramma* species are believed to live in association with ants and probably feed on aphids living commensally with ants. The breeding habits of the two *Cheilosia* species are less well known but their larvae are likely to be phytophagous as with others of the genus.

None of the locally notable and uncommon species qualify as nationally rare or scarce but are local and scarce in our region. They are also aesthetically attractive species. Several other, more widespread, grassland species complement them. All the species recorded so far are ranked according to their frequency of occurrence in Table 7:1

Table 7:1. Hoverflies of Ketton Quarry NR

Species	Number of visits	Maximum count	Notes
Eristalis pertinax	7	50+	Common in grassland
Sphaerophoria scripta	7	10	Common generalist
Platycheirus albimanus	6	6+	Common generalist
Volucella pellucens	6	5	Common in woodland
Cheilosia albitarsis	5	6	Common in spring on buttercups
Chrysotoxum cautum	5	56	Locally scarce in grassland
Episyrphus balteatus	5	100+	Common generalist & migrant
Helophilus pendulus	5	4	Common generalist
Melanostoma scalare	5	2+	Common generalist
Epistrophe eligans	4	5	Common in spring
Cheilosia proxima	3	2+	Common generalist
Leucozona lucorum	3	5	Common in spring
Myathropa florea	3	1	Common in woodland
Pipizella viduata	3	1	Common in grassland
Platycheirus scutatus	3	1	Common in small numbers
Rhingia rostrata	3	3	Expanding, with badger latrines
Syriita pipiens	3	5	Common generalist
Syrphus ribesii	3	100+	Common generalist
Xanthogramma citrofasciatum	3	3+	Locally scarce in grassland
Baccha elongata	2	6	Fairly common in woodland
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	2	3	Fairly common in grassland
Chrysotoxum festivum (fig 15)	2	10+	Local in grassland
Cheilosia lasiopa	2	1	Uncommon but widespread
Cheilosia pagana	2	2	Common generalist
Cheilosia variabilis	2	No count	Common in small numbers
Cheilosia vernalis	2	3	Common
Eristalis tenax	2	4	Common generalist
Merodon equestris	2	1	Fairly common (breeds in bulbs)
Neoascia podagrica	2	2	Common in woodland
Platycheirus manicatus	2	No count	Common in grassland
Platycheirus peltatus	2	No count	Common in small numbers
Volucella bombylans	2	3	Common
Xanthogramma pedissequum	2	2	Expanding in grassland
Cheilosia bergenstammi	1	No count	Fairly common in spring
Cheilosia griseiventris	1	1	Locally scarce in grassland
Cheilosia scutellata	1	1	Fairly common (breeds in fungi)
Cheilosia soror	1	1	Local scarce in grassland
Dasysyrphus tricinctus	1	No count	Woodland (often conifers)
Eristalis arbustorum	1	No count	Common generalist
Eristalis intricarius	1	No count	Common generalist
Eristalis nemorum	1	No count	Common generalist
Eupeodes corollae	1	1	Common in grassland
Eupeodes luniger	1	5	Common generalist
Ferdinandea cuprea (Fig 14)	1	1	Small numbers in woodland
Lejogaster metallina (Fig 16)	1	No count	In wet grassland
Melanostoma mellinum	1	1	Common in grassland
Meliscaeva auricollis	1	1	Fairly common in small numbers
Parargus haemorrhous	1	1	Local in grassland
Platycheirus clypeatus	1	1	Common in grassland
Rhingia campestris	1	No count	Common in pastures
Scaeva pyrastri	1	2	Erratic migrant
Syrphus vitripennis	1	1+	Fairly common
Volucella inflata	1	2+	Locally scarce in woodland
Xylota segnis	1	2+	Common in woodland

Fig 16. *Lejogaster metallina*, Spearwort Field, Aylestone 2013
(David Gould, NatureSpot)

8. The hoverflies of Prior's Coppice Nature Reserve

Prior's Coppice Nature Reserve, west of Oakham, is a residual part of the ancient Forest of Leighfield. It comprises mixed oak and ash and covers some 29 hectares. This ancient woodland has a rich plant (230 species), invertebrate, bird and mammal assemblage and is managed by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust.

This account aims to enhance further the knowledge of the species present by presenting the results of my hoverfly recording. Between 2014 and 2020 I made nine summer visits between 11 June and 10 September to the reserve, The results, therefore, give far from a complete picture of the hoverfly fauna, missing all the spring and late autumn species. Future visits will hopefully fill the gaps. To date 47 species have been found representing a good selection of woodland species having their flight periods in the summer months.

No species recorded were classed as nationally rare or scarce but several are locally scarce ancient woodland indicators (Stubbs, 1982). Especially notable are *Ferdinandea cuprea*, *Volucella inflata* and *Xylota sylvarum* (Fig 17).

Fig 17. *Xylota sylvarum*, Clipsham Park Wood 2019
(Matthew Berriman, NatureSpot)
Note golden abdominal hairs

In addition to woodland specialists, the wide rides provide flower-rich feeding opportunities which also attract grassland species. Of note amongst these are ones preferring wet grassland such as *Platycheirus angustatus* and *Platycheirus rosarum*. *Xanthandrus comtus*, previously considered nationally notable but now recognised to be more widespread (albeit still local), has been found (Fig 18). The larvae of this species predate micro-lepidoptera larvae.

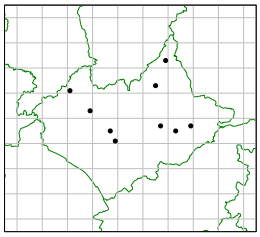

Fig 18. VC55 distribution of *Xanthandrus comtus*
as of end of 2020 (Ray Morris, MapMate)

Table 8:1. Hoverflies of Prior's Coppice NR

Species	Number of visits	Maximum count	Notes
Episyrphus balteatus	9	100+	Common generalist
Eristalis pertinax	8	20	Common generalist
Helophilus pendulus	8	6+	Common generalist
Platycheirus albimanus	8	5	Common generalist
Melanostoma scalare	6	10+	Common generalist
Myathropa florea	6	6	Common in woodlands
Eristalis intricarius	5	4	Common generalist
Platycheirus rosarum	5	8	In wet grassland
Syrphus vitripennis	5	2	Common generalist
Xylota segnis	5	5+	Common in woodland
Cheilosia illustrata	4	10+	Common generalist
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	4	4	Common in grassland
Eristalis nemorum	4	20	Common generalist
Eristalis tenax	4	4+	Common generalist
Sphaerophoria scripta	4	6	Common generalist
Volucella bombylans	4	5	Common in woodland
Xylota sylvarum	4	5+	Fairly common in woodland
Cheilosia pagana	3	4	Common generalist
Euopedes luniger	3	1	Common generalist
Syritta pipiens	3	5	Common generalist
Syrphus ribesii	3	100+	Common generalist
Volucella inflata	3	2	Locally scare in woodland
Volucella pellucens	3	+6+	Common generalist
Baccha elongata	2	3	Fairly common in woodland
Cheilosia albitarsis	2	10+	Common on spring buttercups
Cheilosia impressa	2	1	*Fairly common*
Chrysogaster solstitialis	2	1	Common woodlands
Eupeodes corollae	2	1	Common in grassland
Leucozona laternaria	2	2	Fairly common in woodland
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	2	1	Common in woodland
Meliscaeva auricollis	2	1	Common in small numbers
Merodon equestris	2	2	Common (breeds on bulbs)
Platycheirus clypeatus	2	1	Common in grassland
Platycheirus scutatus	2	1	Common in small numbers
Rhingia campestris	2	1	Common in pastures
Scaeva pyrastri	2	3	Erratic migrant
Cheilosia bergenstammi	1	1	Fairly common in spring
Cheilosia fraterna	1	1	Uncommon
Cheilosia proxima	1	1	Common generalist
Cheilosia variabilis	1	1	In wetlands
Ferdinandea cuprea	1	3	Local in woodlands
Helophilus hybridus	1	1	In wetlands
Leucozona lucorum	1	3	Common in spring
Melanostoma mellinum	1	No count	Common in grassland
Meliscaeva cinctella	1	1	Fairly common woodland
Platycheirus angustatus	1	No count	In wet grassland
Xanthandrus comtus	1	1	Local

9. Summer hoverflies of Stathern Woods

Stathern Woods (including Plungar and Barkestone Woods) lie on the north-facing scarp slope of the Vale of Belvoir and are owned and managed by the Belvoir Estate.

Only five visits, all in July and August, have been made but the site has produced some very interesting and locally scarce flies making it a site worthy of further study. On one occasion (9 July 2014) the woods were alive with *Xylota* species: 50+ *Xylota segnis*, 10 *Xylota sylvarum* and 3 *Xylota florum* this latter being the only ones I have had in Leicestershire; the species was not included in Sumner (1998). *[This is still the sole VC55 record of this species – Ed]*.

Other locally scarce species recorded at Stathern have been *Xanthandrus comtus*, *Didea fasciata*, *Cheilosia vulpina* and *Pipiza bimaculata*. All were recorded on single visits with six specimens of *Cheilosia vulpina* and one of each of the remainder. Sumner (1998) placed *Pipiza bimaculata* in his Group 5, *Didea fasciata* and *Xanthandrus comtus* in Group 8 and had no record of *Cheilosia vulpina*.

All the 43 species recorded to date are listed below in order of frequency (Table 9:1):

John Kramer (1989) reported 30 species at Stathern of which 14 were additional to my records: *Platycheirus tarsalis, Dasysyrphus pinastri, Dasysyrphus tricinctus, Epistrophe eligans, Leucozona lucorum, Melangyna lasiophthalma, Eupeodes bucculatus*, *Cheilosia fraterna, Cheilosia latifrons*), *Cheilosia nebulosa* (a nationally scarce species), *Cheilosia variabilis, Ferdinandea cuprea, Melanogaster hirtella* and *Criorhina floccosa*. Some of these are spring-flying species which my visits would have missed. The addition of these species brings the site total to 57.

Table 9:1. Summer hoverflies of Stathern Woods

Species	Number visits	Maximum number	Species	Number visits	Maximum number
Eristalis pertinax	5	20+	*Cheilosia albitarsis*	1	1
Syrphus ribesii	5	50+	*Cheilosia proxima*	1	1
Episyrphus balteatus	4	1000+	*Cheilosia vulpina*	1	6
Cheilosia illustrata	4	50+	*Didea fasciata*	1	1
Helophilus pendulus	4	10+	*Eristalis arbustorum*	1	2
Melanostoma scalare	4	20+	*Eristalis horticola*	1	1
Platycheirus albimanus	4	100+	*Eupeodes corollae*	1	1
Xylota segnis	4	50+	*Eupeodes latifasciatus*	1	2
Cheilosia impressa	3	20	*Eupeodes luniger*	1	1
Cheilosia pagana	3	5	*Helophilus trivittatus*	1	1
Volucella pellucens	3	20	*Lecozona laternaria*	1	2
Baccha elongata	2	3	*Meliscaeva auricollis*	1	1
Chrysogaster solstitialis	2	2	*Meliscaeva cinctella*	1	1
Epistrophe grossulariae	2	1	*Pipiza bimaculata*	1	1
Eristalis intricarius	2	10	*Platycheirus clypeatus*	1	3
Eristalis nemorum	2	30+	*Rhingia campestris*	1	5
Eristalis tenax	2	20	*Sphaerophoria sp*	1	1
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	2	2	*Syrphus torvus*	1	1+
Melanostoma mellinum	2	10+	*Xanthandrus comtus*	1	1
Myathropa florea	2	10+	*Xylota florum*	1	3
Platycheirus scutatus	2	2	*Xylota sylvarum*	1	10
Syritta pipiens	2	10			

10. The hoverflies of the Launde Woods Nature Reserves

Situated between Launde and Loddington in east Leicestershire are two ancient woodlands: Launde Big Wood and Launde Park Wood. They are owned by the Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance but managed as nature reserves by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust. Together they constitute 99 hectares of ancient and semi-ancient woodland. Launde Big Wood (42 hectares) is on heavy clay soils and is predominantly Ash and Oak with some Wych Elm, Field Maple and Hazel; it is renowned for its rich ground flora. Launde Park Wood (57 hectares) is similar in basic composition but has been damaged in the past by conifer planting and is now being restored.

Launde Big Wood has had some previous hoverfly recording by John Kramer (Kramer, 1989) and by members of the Leicestershire Entomological Society (LES, 1995). I have made four visits to Launde Big Wood (three in June and one in August) with one visit to Launde Park Wood (in September). In the course of these few summer visits I have recorded 42 species with 39 in Launde Big Wood and 16 in Launde Park Wood.

Of particular interest are some ancient woodland indicator species (Stubbs, 1982). Amongst my own records are *Ferdinandea cuprea*, *Criorhina berberina* and *Xylota sylvarum*. The LES members additionally found *Brachyopa scutellaris*, *Brachypalpoides lentus* and *Criorhina floccosa*. All of these breed in sap runs and dead wood.

A second group of interest are species whose ranges have been expanding northwards. My records of *Epistrophe diaphana*, *Cheilosia vulpina*, *Rhingia rostrata* and, perhaps, *Eristalis similis* (alternatively a migrant) are in this category.

Twelve species which I have not personally recorded in Launde Big Wood are:

(Kramer, 1989) - *Melanostoma mellinum, Platycheirus tarsalis* (also LES, 1995,) *Cheilosia mutabilis* and
(LES, 1995) - *Dasysyrphus venustus*, *Leucozona lucorum*, *Cheilosia variabilis*, *Neoascia tenur, Pipiza austriaca* (Fig 19), *Brachyopa scutellaris*, *Brachypalpoides lentus, Portevinia maculata* (Figs 21, 22) and *Criorhina floccosa (Fig 20*).

My own records for both woods are listed by rank order of frequency at Launde Big Wood in Table 10:1 along with numbers of some species at Launde Park Wood NR.

Fig 19. *Pipiza austriaca*, Sapcote 2009
(Graham Calow, NatureSpot)

Fig 20. *Criorhina floccosa,* Grantham Canal 2017
(Steve Mathers, NatureSpot)

Table 10:1 Hoverflies of the Launde Woods Nature Reserves

Species	Launde Big Wood NR		Laune Park Wood NR
	Number visits	Maximum number	Maximum number
Episyrphus balteatus	4	10+	-
Melanostoma scalare	4	10	5+
Rhingia campestris	4	2	3+
Cheilosia albitarsis	3	5+	-
Platycheirus albimanus	3	10+	2
Volucella pellucens	3	10+	-
Chrysogster solstitialis	2	3	-
Eristalis nemorum	2	100+	-
Eristalis pertinax	2	50+	20+
Helophilus pendulus	2	10	-
Leucozona laternaria	2	5	-
Platychierus peltatus	2	1	-
Platycheirus scutatus	2	2	1
Syrphus ribesii	2	5+	6
Xylota segnis	2	20+	3
Baccha elongata	1	1	2
Cheilosia illustrata	1	50	-
Cheilosia impressa	1	2	-
Cheilosia pagana	1	1	-
Cheilosia vulpina	1	1	-
Chrysotoxum bicinctum	1	1	-
Epistrophe diaphana	1	1	-
Epistrophe grossulariae	1	2	-
Eristalis arbustorum	1	6+	-
Eristalis intricarius	1	2+	-
Eristalis similis	1	1	-
Eristalis tenax	1	10+	1
Eupeodes corollae	1	No count	-
Eupeodes latifasciatus	1	-	1
Eupeodes luniger	1	2	1
Ferdinandea cuprea	1	3	1
Melangyna compositarum/labiatarum	1	No count	-
Myathropa florea	1	10	1
Neoascia podagrica	1	2	-
Platycheirus angustata	1	-	1
Platycheirus manicatus	1	No count	-
Platycheirus rosarum	1	6	-
Rhingia rostrata	1	1	10
Syritta pipiens	-	-	1
Syrphus vitripennis	1	2	-
Volucella bombylans	1	10+	-
Xylota sylvarum	1	20+	-

Fig 21. *Portevinia maculata*, Lea Meadows NR 2018 (Barbara Cooper, NatureSpot)

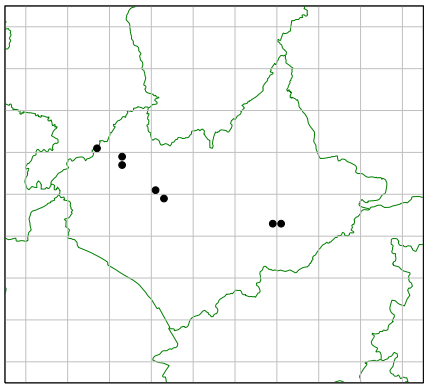

Fig 22. Portevinia maculata VC55 distribution as of 2020 (Ray Morris, MapMate)

11. The hoverflies of some Leicestershire & Rutland grasslands

A few visits have been made to survey the hoverflies of predominantly grassland sites in the two counties.

1. **Cossington Meadows Nature Reserve** of 89 hectares is an area of flood meadows and pastures beside the River Soar north of Leicester. It also contains flooded disused gravel pits and is most renowned for its wetland birds. Two visits have been made in September and 32 species recorded.

2. **Lea Meadows Nature Reserve**, which lies between Newtown Linford and Markfield, comprises 12 hectares of ancient streamside meadows surrounded by conifer woodlands. It is most renowned for its rich plant life including several species of orchids. Two visits have been made in June and August. 37 species were recorded.

3. **Lockington Marsh SSSI** in the valley of the River Soar north of Ratcliffe-on-Soar. It comprises floodplain meadows of 11 hectares. One visit has been made on 26 July 2011 when 23 species were recorded.

4. **Merry's Meadows Nature Reserve** in north-east Rutland comprises ancient flower-rich meadows with some small ponds. The 13 hectares are managed as traditional hay meadows. Two visits have been made in July and September when 12 species were recorded.

5. **Muston Meadows National Nature Reserve** is a nine-hectare site by the side of the Grantham Canal south of Bottesford and Muston villages. It is managed traditionally and is most renowned for its orchids, especially the large numbers of Green-winged Orchids. One visit was made on 4 June 2016 when 11 species of hoverflies were recorded.

6. **Wymondham Rough Nature Reserve** of 13 hectares comprises a patchwork of grassland, small canal-side marshes and ponds, and small copses. One visit was made on 28 August 2016 when eight species were recorded.

Sites 1, 2, 4 and 6 are managed by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust.

A total of 56 species have been recorded at the various sites, two being classed as "Nationally Notable": *Neoascia interrupta* and *Triglyphus primus*. Table 11:1 records all the species discovered at each site.

Table 11:1. Hoverflies at some L&R grasslands

Species	Cossington Meadows NR	Lea Meadows NR	Lockington Marsh SSSI	Merry's Meadow NR	Muston Meadows NNR	Wymondham Rough NR
Baccha elongata		+				
Cheilosia albitarsis		+			+	
Cheilosia bergenstammi	+					
Cheilosia fraterna				+		
Cheilosia illustrata					+	
Cheilosia pagana	+		+			+
Cheilosia proxima			+			
Cheilosia ranunculi		+			+	
Cheilosia vernalis	+					
Chrysogaster solstitialis	+					
Dasysrphus venustus		+				
Episyrphus balteatus	+	+	+	+		+
Eristalinus sepulchralis			+			
Eristalis arbustorum	+	+	+	+		
Eristalis horticola	+					
Eristalis intricarius	+	+				
Eristalis nemorum	+	+		+	+	
Eristalis pertinax	+	+			+	+
Eristalis tenax	+	+	+	+	+	+
Eumerus strigatus		+				
Eupeodes corollae			+		+	
Eupeodes latifasciatus	+	+				
Eupeodes luniger	+		+			
Ferdinandea cuprea	+					
Helophilus pendulus	+	+	+	+		
Helophilus trivittatus		+				
Lejogaster metallina		+				
Melangyna compositarus/labiatarum	+		+			
Melangyna umbellatarum	+					
Melanogaster hirtella		+				
Melanostoma mellinum	+	+	+	+		
Melanostoma scalare	+	+	+			+
Merodon equestris		+				
Myathropa florea	+	+	+			
Neoascia interrupta - **Nationally Scarce**			+			
Neoascia podagrica		+				
Neoascia tenur		+	+			
Platycheirus albimanus	+	+		+		+
Platycheirus clypeatus	+	+	+			
Platycheirus fulviventris	+					
Platycheirus granditarsis		+	+			
Platycheirus manicatus		+			+	
Platycheirus scutatus	+	+		+	+	
Portevinia maculata		+				
Rhingia campestris	+	+			+	
Riponnensia splendens	+					
Sericomyia silentis		+				
Sphaerophora interrupta				+		
Sphaerophoria scripta	+	+	+	+		+
Syrphus ribesii	+		+			
Syrphus vitripennis	+		+			
Syritta pipiens	+	+	+	+		
Triglyphus primus - **Nationally Scarce**			+			
Volucella bombylans					+	
Volucella inanis	+					
Volucella zonaria	+					
Total (= 56)	32	33	23	12	11	8

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