

ON THE DIPTEROUS INSECTS OF THE DISTRICT  
AROUND LIVERPOOL,

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(READ 18TH FEBRUARY, 1858.)

FAMILY 25. SYRPHIDÆ, Leach.

The Syrphidæ form a moderately large family which is divided into thirty-one genera. One hundred and fifty-three species are described in the *Insecta Britannica*; of these fifty-nine are generally distributed, forty-seven are more or less local, and forty-seven are rare. Sixty-two species have been found by me in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, and of these with one exception, specimens are deposited in the Museum of the Royal Institution. It is probable that several species have yet to be added to our local list.

The larvæ of the Syrphidæ are in their habits extremely various; some are found in decayed wood, others inhabit stagnant pools and are furnished with long tails used in respiration; in a considerable number of species the larvæ are found on leaves where they feed on Aphides, and are thus of great service to the plants on which they live. The eggs of the genus *Volucella* are deposited in the nests of humble-bees; when hatched the larvæ feed upon the larvæ of bees. In many species the skin of the larva hardens and becomes the case of the pupa.

The perfect insects feed on the nectar of flowers, or on the sticky exudation known as honey dew left by the Aphides upon the leaves of trees. There is one habit so characteristic of the Syrphidæ as to deserve especial notice, more particularly because it can hardly have escaped the observation of many who are not Entomologists. Whoever has walked during a sunny hour through woods where the foliage overhead admitted the beams of light to fall on the ground only here and there in scattered patches, must have seen high in the slanting pencil of rays, an insect poised so steadily that but for the vibration of its wings it might seem to be at rest; at the slightest alarm in a moment it has vanished, for the eye cannot follow it into the shade; but scarce a minute will pass if all is

still before it will be there again poised and stationary as before, as if the sunbeam were its home. This habit pertains to many of the species, but is I believe peculiar to the family of the Syrphidæ.

Genus CERIA, Fab.

*C. conopsoides*, L.—A specimen seen by me at Bidston, Sep., 1856.

Genus ERISTALIS, Latr.

*E. tenax*, L.—In hedges and on palings near houses, common.

*E. sepulchralis*, L.—Borders of ponds, Rainhill, Bold, &c., probably not uncommon.

*E. intricarius*, L.—Lanes and hedges, generally distributed.

*E. nemorum*, L.—Generally distributed.

*E. arbustorum*, Dg.—Common, especially on *Senecio Jacobæa*.

*E. horticola*, Dg.—Found with the last species but not so common.

*E. fossarum*, Mrle.—Near stagnant water, not rare.

*E. florens*, L.—Woods and gardens, rare in 1855 and 1857, common in 1856.

Genus HELOPHILUS, Mg.

*H. pendulus*, L.—Near watery places, common.

*H. versicolor*, Fb.—Stated in the *Insecta Britannica* to be rare; not uncommon near ponds at Rainhill, but active and very shy.

*H. leineatus*, Fb.—By ponds, Huyton quarry and near Tarbock.

Genus SYRITTA, St. F.

*S. pipiens*, L.—Common everywhere.

Genus XYLOTA, Mg.

*X. sylvarum*, L.—Woods, Knowsley.

*X. segnis*, L.—Woods and gardens, not uncommon.

Genus CRIORHINA, Hms.

*C. oxyacantha*, Mg.—Wood, Halsnead, 1856.

*C. regula*, Fln.—Wood, Halsnead, 1855.

Genus VOLUCELLA, Gf.

*V. pellucens*, L.—Woods and lanes, not plentiful.

*V. bombylans*, L.—Woods and lanes, not rare.

Genus SERICOMYA, Mg.

*S. borealis*, Fln.—Bold wood. The beacon, Billinge. Huyton quarry.

*S. superbiens*, Mr.—In a lane, Tarbock, and at Rainhill.

## Genus CHRYSOTOXUM, Mg.

- C. bicinctum*, L.—Plantation, Windle Moss. Peaty plantation, Knowsley.  
*C. intermedium*, Mg.—Sand hills, New Brighton. Southport.  
*C. marginatum*, Mg.—In a lane, Halsnead. Rare I. B.\*

## Genus PIPIZA, Fln.

- P. binaculata*, Mg.—Amongst grass, Rainhill. Halsnead.  
*P. guttata*, Mg.—At the bottom of a hedge, Rainhill.  
*P. melancholica*, Mg.—Wood, Knowsley, 1856.  
*P. noctiluca*, L.—Swept from grass, Halsnead.

## Genus CHRYSOGASTER, Mq.

- C. cœmeteriorum*, L.—On Umbelliferæ, not rare.  
*C. metallica*, Fb.—On flowers in moist places.  
*C. discicornis*, Mg.—On Umbelliferæ, not rare.

## Genus RHINGIA, Fb.

- R. rostrata*, L.—Plantations and hedges, on herbaceous plants, common.

## Genus CHRYSOCLAMIS, Rondani.

- C. cuprea*, Spl.—On the trunk of a tree, Rainhill, 1854.

## Genus CHELOSIA, Mg.

- C. lucorum*, L.—Woods, generally distributed.  
*C. grossa*, Fln.—Hedges, soon after the first appearance of the leaves.  
*C. means*, Fb.—Plantation, Rainhill, 1856.  
*C. variabilis*, Pz.—Moist woods, not uncommon.  
*C. mutabilis*, Fln.—Moist woods, not uncommon.

## Genus SYRPHUS, Fb.

- S. pyrastris*, L.—Amongst grass, end of June, generally distributed.  
*S. ribesii*, L.—Gardens and woods, common.  
*S. vitripennis*, Mgrle.—Closely allied to the preceding species, and equally common.  
*S. bifasciatus*, Fb.—Hedges and on shrubs, not rare.  
*S. buniger*, Mg.—On flowers among grass.  
*S. corollæ*, Fb.—On the banks of a pond, Rainhill. Eastham wood.  
*S. balteatus*, Dg.—Appears about midsummer, not uncommon.  
*S. tricinctus*, Fln.—Plantation, Windle moss. Wood, Halsnead. Rare I. B.  
*S. glaucius*, L.—On Umbelliferæ, Knowsley.

- S. laternarius*, Mr.—On Umbelliferæ, not very common.  
*S. albostratus*, Fln.—Hedges and on flowers, common.  
*S. umbellatarum*, Fb.—On Umbelliferæ, not uncommon. Rare I. B.  
*S. cinctus*, Fln.—Very common in woods, Cheshire.  
*S. auricollis*, Mg.—Woods, Knowsley, Rainhill.  
*S. manicatus*, Mg.—On flowers, common all the summer.  
*S. clypeatus*, Mg.—On flowers, common.  
*S. cyaneus*, Mr.—On flowers, common.  
*S. granditarsus*, Fstr.—Moist places, often in the shade, not rare.  
*S. rosarum*, Fb.—Garden, Rainhill, 1855.  
*S. scalaris*, Fb.—Amongst grass, not uncommon.

Genus DOROS, Mg.

- D. citrofasciatus*, Dg.—Plantation, Windle moss, 1855.

Genus MELITHREPTUS, Lw.

- M. menthastri*, L.—On flowers amongst grass, not uncommon.

Genus BACCHA, Fb.

- B. obscuripennis*, Mg.—Amongst grass, not rare.

Genus ASCIA, Mgrle.

- A. podagrica*, Fb.—May be swept from grass anywhere in summer.

FAMILY 26. CONOPIDÆ, Leach.

This family contains but one genus, in which are nine British species. It is chiefly remarkable for the parasitic habits of the larvæ, which come to maturity in the abdomen of humble-bees, the perfect insect escaping through the segments.

Genus CONOPS, Fb.

- C. rufipes*, L.—Swept from flowers, not common.