

The pine hoverfly (*Blera fallax*)

[The pine hoverfly](#) is closely associated with mature Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). The larva develops and feeds in wet rot-holes in tree stumps with diameter greater than 40 cm and where heartwood has been softened by the rot fungus *Phaeolus schweinitzi*. However, in a giving stand, less than 10% of wood of appropriate size is under the suitable stage of decay because rots tend to dry out. Thus the species depend on a continuous supply of rot-holes for new breeding sites. The pine hoverfly was formerly widespread, but its distribution has shrunk along with the extent of mature pine stands and it is considered to be under threat in Europe. In UK, most historical records and the two remaining populations occur in the Strathspey area, centred between Kingussie and Grantown. In Europe, *B. fallax* is restricted to montane areas. The main threats to this species are inappropriate woodland management and the paucity of breeding sites.

Actions necessary to promote the conservation of the pine hoverfly

- Appropriate management: timing of rotation, avoid damage to existing stumps.
- Felling of mature conifer trees 80 cm above ground create breeding sites.
- Monitor the quality and quantity of stumps with holes at both population sites.
- Test artificial breeding sites to help population recovery and to monitor presence of the species ([SNH Species Action Framework: Pine Hoverfly Management Actions](#)).

More information

Malloch Society's [information page](#).

Rotheray, G.E. & MacGowan, I. 2000. Status and breeding sites of three presumed endangered Scottish saproxylic syrphids (Diptera, Syrphidae). *Journal of Insect Conservation* 4: 215-223.

[UK Biodiversity Action Plan](#).