

# Bee-fly

## *Bombylius major*

### **Identification:**

Bee-flies are easily recognised from a combination of a stout furry body, long proboscis, wings with a clear black stripe along the leading edge, and their hovering flight. They are true flies, but get their name from a superficial resemblance to bumblebees. Larval Bee-flies are parasitoids on the larvae of solitary bees. Adults feed on nectar.

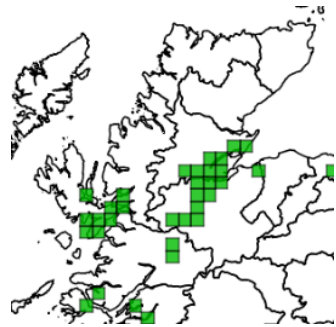


Bee-fly *Bombylius major*.

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### **Distribution:**

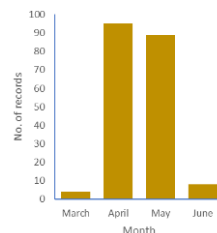
It is common in the Inverness area, but there are gaps in the N and NW, and - surprisingly - in Strathspey.



The distribution of records of the Bee-fly in the HBRG database.

### **When to look for it:**

Late March to early June (Extreme dates 25 March and 9 June). Bee-flies are active only in sunshine, and are rarely seen before late morning. Sunlit bare earth banks where the hosts nest are good places to look. They are frequent visitors to gardens.



### **Similar species:**

No other Highland insect has a combination of the long proboscis and black-striped wings. Some bees and hoverflies have a superficial resemblance.

### **Notes:**

Photographs or specimens of solitary bees associated with Bee-flies would also be welcome. More information is on our [Focus on Highland Wildlife](#) pages.