

Shieldbug Fly

Phasia hemiptera

Identification:

Unlike most tachinid flies, this one is not particularly bristly, and can be passed over as a hoverfly. The male (pictured) is very easy to identify - squat, robust, large-eyed, and notably with broad, curved, dark-patterned wings. Females are rather less distinctive, though they have a conspicuous thorn-like ovipositor. Record only males unless confirmed by a specialist.

Distribution:

There is a theory that this insect may have spread north into Highland recently following a potential host, the Hawthorn Shieldbug *Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale*. It might be expected anywhere in Highland where hosts occur. It will certainly be more widespread than the map shows.

When to look for it:

June to July, especially when nectaring on the flowering heads of Hogweed.

Similar Species:

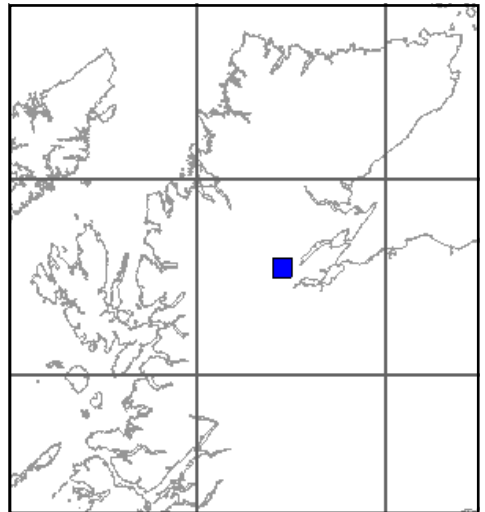
The male should be unmistakable.

Notes:

All tachinids are parasitic as larvae, and this one develops in shieldbugs. There seem to be no confirmed hosts in Britain, but in Europe they have been reared from several species including Forest Bug *Pentatoma rufipes*.



Photo © Richard Bartz
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6e/Phasia_hemiptera_top.jpg/600px-Phasia_hemiptera_top.jpg



The National Biodiversity Network records are shown on the map (see terms and conditions at <http://data.nbn.org.uk>). Data providers and the NBN Trust bear no responsibility for any further analysis or interpretation of the information in the map.