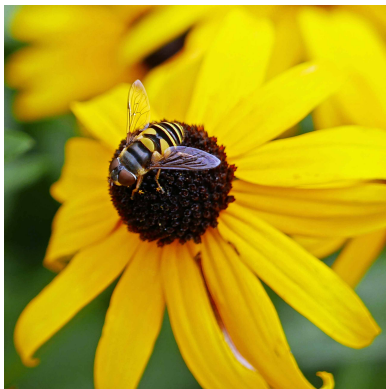


CONGRATULATIONS!



You have chosen the **bee fly** (*Villa*) feeding on *Leucanthemum x superbum* (Shasta daisy). Found mostly in Europe and the United States, it is a member of the Bombyliidae (bee fly family), not the Syrphidae. It is a bee mimic and feeds on nectar, picking up pollen on its tongue and transporting it from flower to flower. Its larvae develop as internal parasitoids of insects like darkling beetles, horse flies, gossamer-winged butterflies, and owl moths.

Syrphid flies, members of the family Syrphidae, are also called hover flies (in Britain) due to their flying ability to hover in place for 5–10 seconds—they can also fly sideways and backwards—and flower flies (in the U.S.) because of their frequent visits to a wide variety of flowers to obtain nectar and pollen. According to the [U.S. Forest Service](#), “About 40% of the world species belong to groups with larvae that eat aphids, scales, and other soft-bodied pests,” so they are valuable in the garden as both pollinators and predators. Transverse flower fly (*Eristalis transversa*), pictured below left feeding on [Rudbeckia fulgida](#) (orange coneflower), is native to the eastern United States. Wasp mimic, *Helophilus*, pictured below center feeding on [Symphyotrichum novae-angliae](#) (New England aster), is widespread throughout the northern hemisphere. Bumble bee mimic, narcissus bulb fly (*Merodon equestris*), pictured below right, was accidentally introduced from Europe and is now widespread wherever narcissus bulbs—of which it is a pest—grow in the United States.



Photos © Mary Free