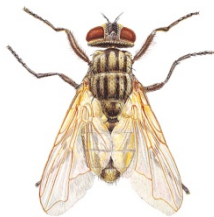


Flies are a very diverse group of insects and contain the most serious insect pests in the world. Many of them spread diseases and mosquitoes are responsible for more deaths in humans (and animals) than any other organism. Many flies can bite and suck our blood; many infest food; others help in the decomposition of dead carcasses; and others hibernate in large numbers in our buildings. The common ones are as follows:

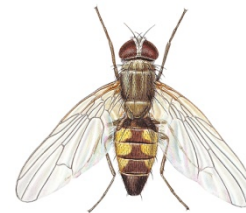
Houseflies: There are two common species of housefly, the common and lesser houseflies. Both will breed on decaying organic matter which includes household food waste but also compost heaps and wild and domestic animal manure. They breed very quickly with adult houseflies being able to complete their life cycle within a week in ideal conditions.



Common Housefly



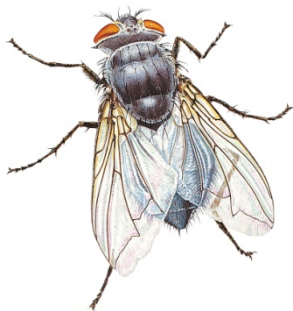
Housefly maggot



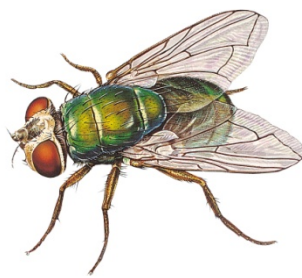
Lesser Housefly

Because of the material houseflies breed in they are capable of picking up harmful bacteria and other disease organisms on their feet and bodies and transmitting them to us via our food. Fortnightly food waste collections by Councils can also lead to fly problems in the summer months.

Blowflies: Blowflies is the common name given to a group of flies that invade dead bodies and help in their decomposition. The countryside would be littered with animal bodies if it wasn't for blowflies. However they can also infest any meat products so food waste and pet food can also become infested as will any animal body which dies indoors (birds or rodents usually). Blowflies include the blue and greenbottles as well as the flesh flies. The adults tend to be large and very noisy. The maggots are commonly used by anglers as bait.



Bluebottle



Greenbottle



Blowfly maggots

Mosquitoes: Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water where their aquatic larvae feed on small organisms living in the water. In domestic situations they commonly breed in water butts or water lying in blocked gutters, flat roofs or even in old containers and garden ponds. It is only the adult females that bite and suck blood, the males being totally harmless and just feeding on nectar. In the UK there are no serious diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, but this could occur in the future with global warming. However, the bites are annoying and outdoor activities can be spoilt by mosquito infestations.



Anopheles Mosquito



Culex Mosquito

Cluster Flies: There are several species of flies called cluster flies that live outdoors for most of the year but cluster together in very large numbers to hibernate in buildings. They frequently arrive in the autumn at domestic properties, usually in the attic or roof space and, if not discovered, will leave again in the spring. They do not feed or spread any diseases but can be quite alarming if discovered in the loft as there can be tens of thousands of individuals.



The Cluster Fly



Cluster Flies on Window Sill

Control of flies is different for the differing groups but a common theme in solving the problem is identification of the adult flies as a first action. This can then lead to a possible source which it may be possible to eliminate. The use of pesticides alone rarely solves any fly problems.