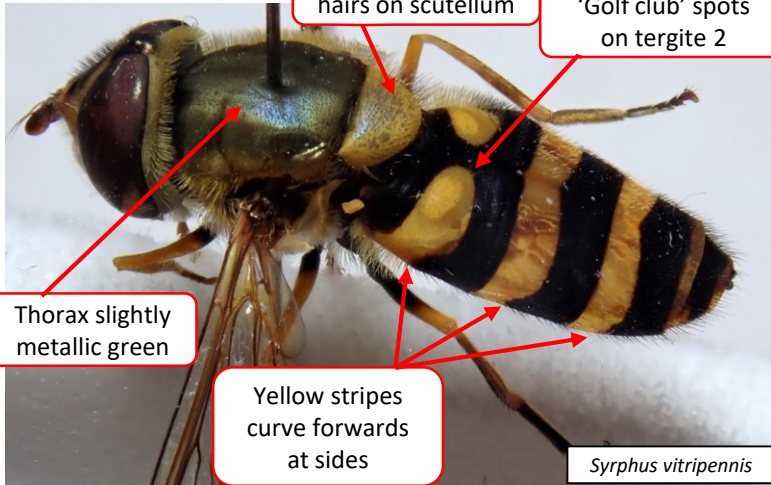


Guide to *Syrphus* hoverflies

Martin C. Harvey, June 2019

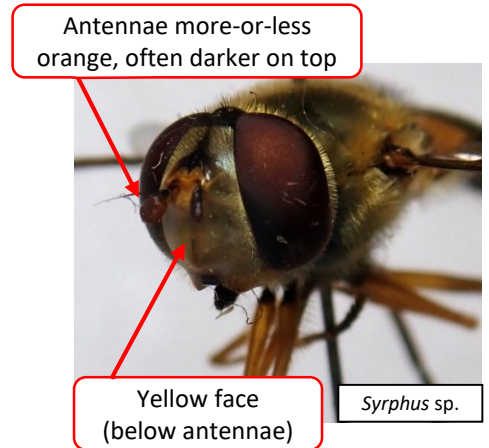
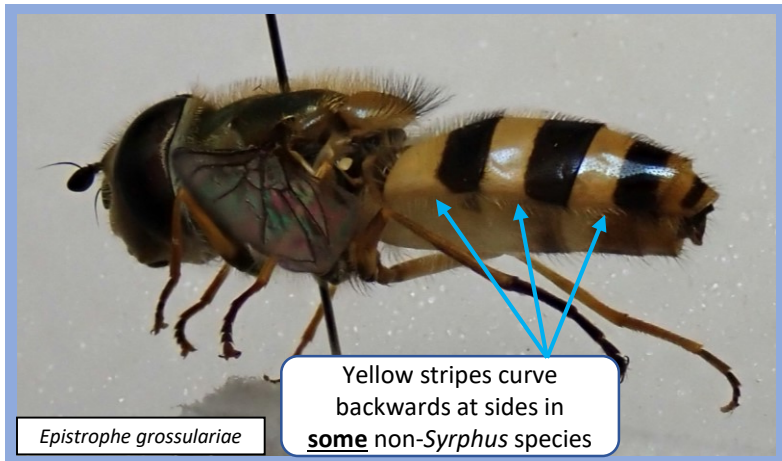
1. Is it *Syrphus*?



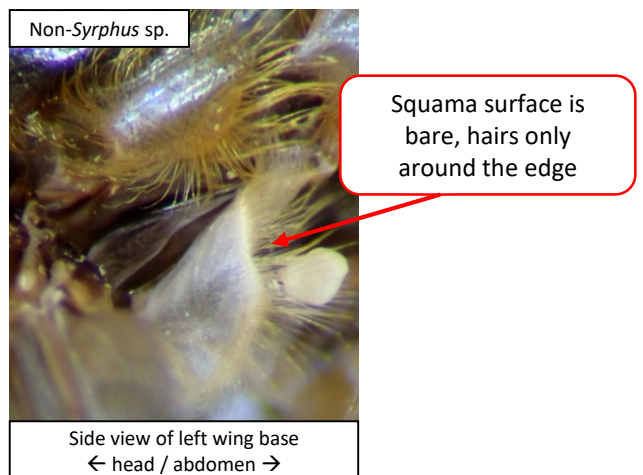
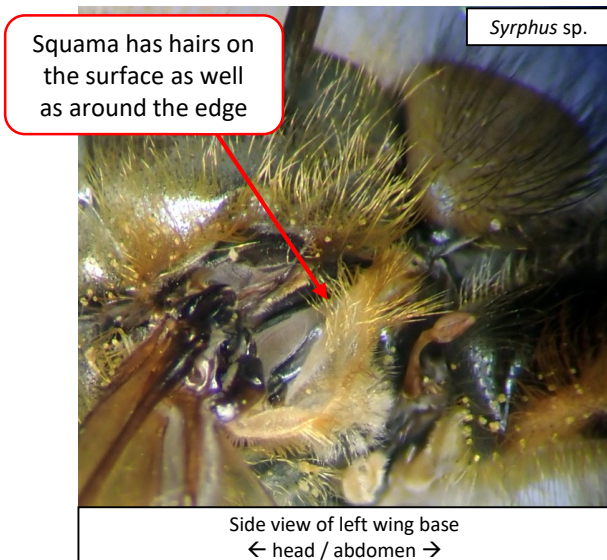
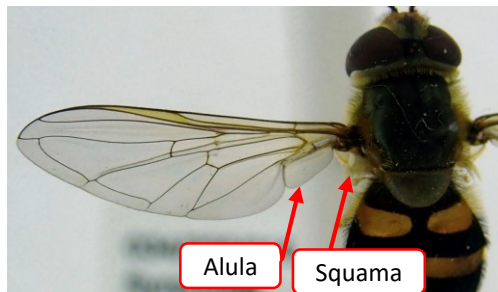
Syrphus have a combination of:

- 'Golf club' spots on tergite 2
- Yellow stripes curve forward where they meet the edge of the abdomen
- Yellow face (below antennae)
- Orange antennae (sometimes darker)

(If your fly has a black face stripe or black antennae it is likely to be another genus such as *Epistrophe* or *Parasyrphus*.)



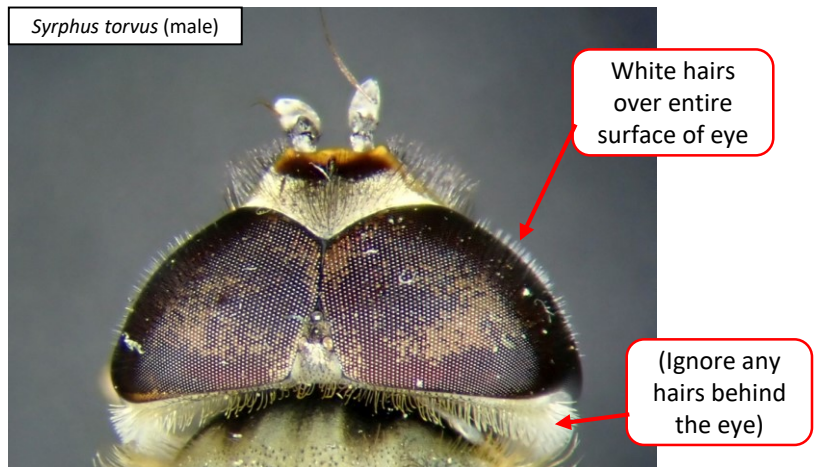
The definitive character is whether the squama, a flap at the base of the wing, has hairs on its surface, or not (but this can only be seen when the wings are stretched forwards).



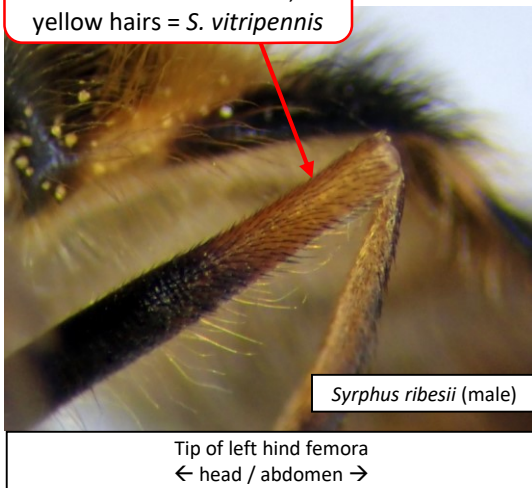
2. Male *Syrphus* (eyes meet at top of head)

Check to see if the eyes have short, dense hairs all over their surface (the hairs are white so show up best against a dark background).

If the eyes **do** have hairs you have *Syrphus torvus*.



Hairs over yellow area:
black hairs = *S. ribesii*,
yellow hairs = *S. vitripennis*

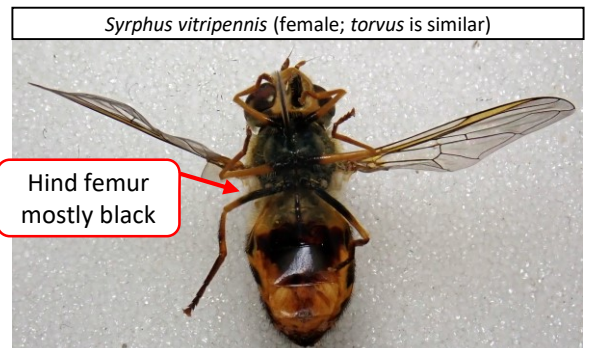
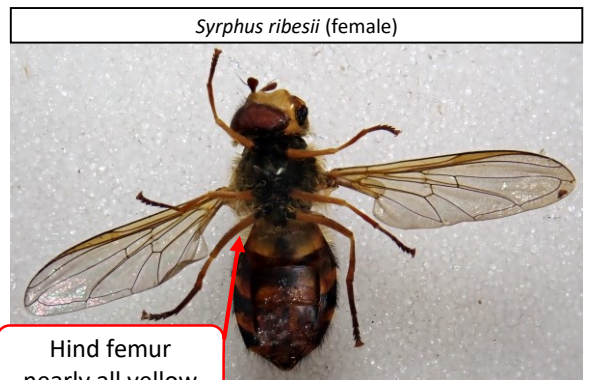
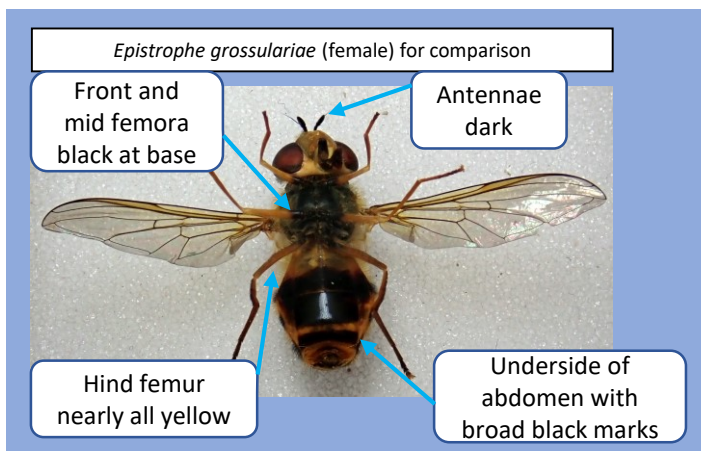


If the eyes **don't** have hairs, look at the yellow area at the tip of the **hind femora**.

- *Syrphus ribesii* hind femur is at least a **third yellow**, and the front surface has at least **some black hairs** arising from the yellow part.
- *Syrphus vitripennis* hind femur is at most a **quarter yellow**, and the **hairs** arising from the front surface of the yellow part are nearly **all yellow**.

3. Female *Syrphus* (gap between eyes at top of head)

Check the colour of the hind femora. If each hind femur is almost **entirely yellow** you have *Syrphus ribesii*. If each hind femur is **over half black** you have either *Syrphus vitripennis* or *Syrphus torvus*, and will need to examine the wing microtrichia under a microscope.



Note that there are one or possibly two other species of *Syrphus*: *S. nitidifrons* is similar to *Parasyrphus punctulatus* and is known from conifer woodland in southern England; *S. rectus* is very hard to distinguish from *S. ribesii*, and is not currently believed to be present in Britain.