



Predators: Hover Flies

Diptera: Syrphidae

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Also known as syrphid flies or sweat-bees, hover flies are common and abundant. Adult hover flies are important pollinators. Larvae are highly effective aphid predators, especially in gardens and small plots. Look for them on the underside of crop leaves and near aphid infestations.



Hover fly larva feeding on aphids

APPEARANCE

- adults resemble small bees or wasps, with black and yellow striping on the abdomen
- larvae maggots are green/grayish and “slug-like”, but move fast when attacking aphids!

VEGETABLE CROPS

Most attacked by aphids, especially:

- tomatoes
- sweet corn
- cole crops
- broccoli

Natural Enemies of Vegetable Insect Pests in Hawaii





WHAT THEY ARE

Predators are beneficial insects that attack, kill, or consume a wide variety of common pests. Males, females, immatures, and adults may all be predatory. Predators include lacewings, flies, spiders, beetles, true bugs, and predatory mites.

Adult hover flies are attracted to all flowering plants that provide pollen and nectar, such as:

- **small-flowered herbs:** wild mustard, coriander, dill, fennel
- **sunflowers, marigolds and daisies**
- **sun hemp**
- **buckwheat**

Allow these flowering plants and weeds to grow between crop plants.

Hoverfly larvae are most noticeable when aphid populations are established.



Adult hover flies on the head of a marigold

WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR YOU



Adult *Allograpta exotica*, a species of hover fly in Hawaii

PESTS ATTACKED

- aphids
- leafhoppers
- mealy bugs
- thrips
- small caterpillars

