



Pollinator Academy

# Genus: *Melangyna*



*Melangyna compositarum* male habitus

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**Genus:** *Melangyna* Verrall, 1901

**Family:** Syrphidae

**Subfamily:** Syrphinae

**Tribe:** Syrphini

**Number of species of this genus found in Europe:** 11

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## Description

### Head

The face has an oval shaped facial tubercle, is dusted, covered with long hairs, is without a defined parafacia, and has a black oral margin and median stripe. The eye is bare (except for *Melangyna coei*) and the male is holoptic. The antennal fossa is undivided. The frons is hairy and usually dusted. The basoflagellomere black, is slightly longer than broad, rounded or of rhomboid shape. The arista is inserted dorsally in the basal half of the basoflagellomere, is longer than the basoflagellomere, and has hairs which are shorter than the width of the arista.

### Thorax

The thorax is hairy and dusted. The scutum and scutellum are dull, black, and covered with long hairs. The dorsal and ventral hair patches on the katepisternum are connected by a few short hairs posteriorly.

## Wings

The wing is hyaline and completely covered with microtrichia.

## Legs

The legs are simple, black except occasionally for the base and apex of the tibia, and the tarsi can be brown-reddish. Legs hairs are variable for both length and colour.

## Abdomen

The abdomen is black; tergites 3-4 (and usually 2 as well) have a pair of yellow lateral maculae. Colour, length, and composition of hairs, and the dusting on the tergites and sternites are variable.



*Melangyna lasiophthalma*  
male habitus



*Melangyna coei* female head



*Melangyna umbellatarum* female head

# General comments on identification to species level

The genus *Melangyna* comprises small to average sized hoverflies with virtually bare eyes (except for *Melangyna coei*), a shiny or subshiny thorax and a dark parallel sided abdomen with more or less extensive transverse yellow markings (except for the female of *Melangyna quadrimaculata*). The diagnostic characters are: a bare anterior anepisternum; a calypter which is bare dorsally; a scutum with, at most, poorly defined yellow lateral longitudinal stripes; a bare metasternum; and tergites without a longitudinal, lateral groove.

## Differential diagnosis

The genus *Melangyna* is similar to the genus *Meligramma* from which it differs by having a hind coxa with an apical tuft of hairs set at a postero-medial angle; transverse pale marks on the tergites with those on tergites 2-4 always separated; and a face usually with a black, median stripe. In *Meligramma* species the hind coxa are without such a tuft of hairs, the pale marks on the tergites are usually oblique and often connected, and the face is entirely yellow (except for *Meligramma cingulata*).



*Meligramma triangulifera* male habitus



*Meligramma cingulata* male habitus



*Meligramma triangulifera* male head

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## Geographical distribution and global diversity

Range: Holarctic.

### Presence in Europe

Austria, Andorra, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation - European Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

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## Biology

*Adult behaviour and flower preferences.* Adults prefer forests; acidiphilous *Quercus* forest; *Fraxinus/Salix* gallery woods along rivers; wet forest of *Alnus/Salix*; *Betula/Salix* forest; coniferous forest (*Abies/Picea*) and conifer plantations, plus Atlantic scrub, hedgerows, suburban gardens and orchards. Adult habitat and habits: edges of clearings, tracksides etc.; largely arboreal, females flying round tree foliage from 2m upwards; descends to visit flowers and frequently settles on the trunks of standing trees, in the sun; males hover over tracks, in glades etc., from 2m upwards. Flowers visited: *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Anthriscus*, *Caltha*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Corylus avellana*, *Euphorbia*, *Ilex*, *Lonicera xylosteum*, *Narcissus*, *Oxalis*, *Prunus laurocerasus*, *P.spinosa*, *Ranunculus*, *Salix*, *Sambucus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Taraxacum*, *Tussilago*, *Ulex*.

*Reproduction and larval biology.* Larvae are aphid-feeding.

*Seasonal life cycle.* The flight period is from March/June and on into July at higher altitudes/more northerly latitudes.



**Type species:** *Melanostoma quadrimaculatum* Verrall, 1873

**Common names:**

FI - metsäkirvarit;

NB - krattblomsterfluer;

SV - flickblomflugor

## List of species found in Europe:

1. *Melangyna arctica* (Zetterstedt, 1838)
2. *Melangyna barbifrons* (Fallén, 1817)
3. *Melangyna coei* Nielsen, 1971
4. *Melangyna compositarum* (Verrall, 1873)
5. *Melangyna ericarum* (Collin, 1946)
6. *Melangyna labiatarum* (Verrall, 1901)
7. *Melangyna lasiophthalma* (Zetterstedt, 1843)
8. *Melangyna lucifera* Nielsen, 1980
9. *Melangyna pavlovskyi* Violovitsh, 1956

10. *Melangyna quadrimaculata* (Verrall, 1873)

11. *Melangyna umbellatarum* (Fabricius, 1794)

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## References

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IUCN. 2021. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2021-3. Available at: [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). (Accessed: 04 June 2024).

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## Attributions

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