



Genus: *Sericomyia*



Sericomyia silentis male

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Genus: *Sericomyia* Meigen, 1803

Family: Syrphidae

Subfamily: Milesiinae

Tribe: Sericomyni

Number of species of this genus found in Europe: 10

Description

Head

The antenna is shorter than the head and the arista is plumose, i.e., it is covered with very long hairs (about 5-6 times longer than the basal width of the arista) lying in a single plane. The face is usually yellow medially and dark brown to black laterally, conically produced downward. The eye is bare.

Thorax

The scutum is dark brown to black, without dusted stripes; the scutellum is black to orange/light brown. The thorax may be covered with very long and dense hairs (bumblebee mimics), or with short hairs (wasp mimics).

Wings

Completely covered with microtrichia, in some species the wings have infuscated areas medially or apically.

Legs

The legs in the bumblebee mimics are mainly black, while in the wasp mimics the legs are mainly yellow-brown, with at least black apical tarsomeres on all legs.

Abdomen

The abdomen is oval, much broader than the scutellum. The abdominal tergites may be covered with very long and dense hairs (bumblebee mimics), or with short hairs (wasp mimics). Tergites

2-4 have pairs of yellow (or white in *S. lappona*) bands.



Sericomyia superbiens male head



Sericomyia lappona male habitus



Sericomyia superbiens male habitus

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General comments on identification to species level

Differential diagnosis

Sericomyia are large flies with a strongly plumose arista, whose abdomens are either brown with long, dense hairs, or black with yellow (or white in *S. lappona*) markings on tergites 2–4, while. It is most similar to genus *Volucella*, but in *Volucella* the patterns of yellow markings on the tergites are different, and *Sericomyia* has wing cell r_1 open, and vein M_1 is processive apically or meeting the vein R_{4+5} at right angles, while in *Volucella* the wing cell r_1 is closed and vein M_1 is strongly recessive. *Copestylum melleum* (Jaennicke, 1867) may look also similar to *Sericomyia* with long hairs on the arista but, as in *Volucella*, the wing cell r_1 is closed.



Copestylum melleum male habitus



Sericomyia bombiformis male habitus



Volucella elegans male habitus

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Geographical distribution and global diversity

Sericomyia is most common in Fennoscandia and in northern Europe through European Russia and Siberia to Japan, additionally distributed in mountainous regions of central Europe, and on the Iberian and Balkan Peninsulas, while outside of Eurasia is found in the Nearctic region.

Presence in Europe

Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation -


European Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Biology

Adult behaviour and flower preferences. *Sericomyia* species prefer open ground in both deciduous and coniferous forest, valley bogs, fens, wetlands and tundra, close to freshwater streams or flushes in *Fagus* or *Picea* forest and upwards into subalpine grassland. Flowers visited by this species include white umbellifers and yellow composites, such as *Achillea millefolium*, *Aegopodium podagraria*, *Angelica archangelica*, *Berberis vulgaris*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Caltha*, *Cardamine*, *Cardueae*, *Carduus*, *Centaurea*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Crataegus*, *Echium vulgare*, *Filipendula*, *Knautia*, *Lathyrus japonicus*, *Ligustrum*, *Malus domestica*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Pachypleurum alpinum*, *Polygonum cuspidatum*, *Ranunculus*, *Rubus*, *Salix repens*, *Scabiosa*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Sonchus*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Taraxacum*, *Trifolium*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Valeriana*, *Verbascum* and *Viburnum opulus*.

Reproduction and larval biology. The single *Sericomyia* species with the described larva is *S. lappona*, which is aquatic. The developmental stages of other species are still undescribed, but it is very likely they too are rat-tailed larva and live in semi-liquid mud, small pools or puddles.

Seasonal life cycle. Adults fly from March to October, but with an absolute peak between June and August. Most species have restricted flight period of 2-3 months but, for example, *Sericomyia silentis* and *S. superbiens* are active from late spring to late autumn with 2-3 generations during this time.

 **Type species:** *Musca lappona* Linnaeus, 1758

Common names:

FI - luhtaset

SV - torvblomflugor

List of species found in Europe:

1. *Sericomyia arctica* Schirmer, 1913
2. *Sericomyia hispanica* Peris, 1962
3. *Sericomyia bequaerti* (Hervé-Bazin, 1913)
4. *Sericomyia jakutica* (Stackelberg, 1927)
5. *Sericomyia nigra* Portschinsky, 1873
6. *Sericomyia tolli* (Frey, 1915)
7. *Sericomyia bombiformis* (Fallén, 1810)
8. *Sericomyia lappona* (Linnaeus, 1758)
9. *Sericomyia silentis* (Harris, 1776)
10. *Sericomyia superbiens* (Müller, 1776)

References

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Attributions

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Authors

Photographs: Sander Bot (Taxo-Fly team)

Text: Ximo Mengual & Laura Likov (Taxo-Fly team)

Reviewer: Roger Morris (Taxo-Fly team)

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