



HOVERFLY



Other common names: syrphid fly, flower fly
Scientific family name: *Syrphidae*

Description: Ranging in size from 1/4 to 1/2" long, hoverflies have two wings, large eyes, and stubby antennae. Although they don't have stingers, they mimic the color patterns of bees and wasps to scare off predators.

FUN FACTS



-  There are 6,000 species of hoverflies found across the world.
-  They are the second most important pollinator after wild bees.
-  While hoverflies carry less pollen on their bodies than bees, they visit a larger number of flowers and travel longer distances.
-  In addition to being pollinators, hoverflies are beneficial to gardens because their larvae feed on pests like aphids and small caterpillars.
-  In order to attract the help of pollinating hoverflies, the flowers of a certain orchid species release chemicals that are similar to those given off by aphids.
-  Hoverflies are one of the best examples of *Batesian mimicry*, when one species copies the appearance and behavior of another to protect themselves.

FAVORITE COLORS

White and yellow flowers

FAVORITE PLANTS

Small, flat flowers that they can easily "hover" over such as: fennel, daisies, Queen Anne's Lace, alyssum, cosmos, and zinnias

HABITAT

Flowering landscapes, gardens, decaying wood, or sometimes in other insects' nests when there is food for their larvae

POLLINATOR LOOK-ALIKES



Identify each pollinator:

- a) hoverfly
- b) honeybee
- c) yellow jacket

Check your answers on the coloring page!

HELP HOVERFLIES THRIVE

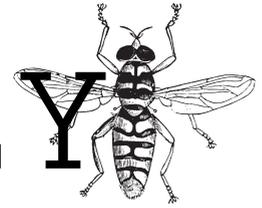
Hoverfly populations are larger in places where a diverse range of pollinator plants grow.

Healthy ecosystems = more hoverflies and pollinators!





HOVERFLY



HOVERFLY LARVAE

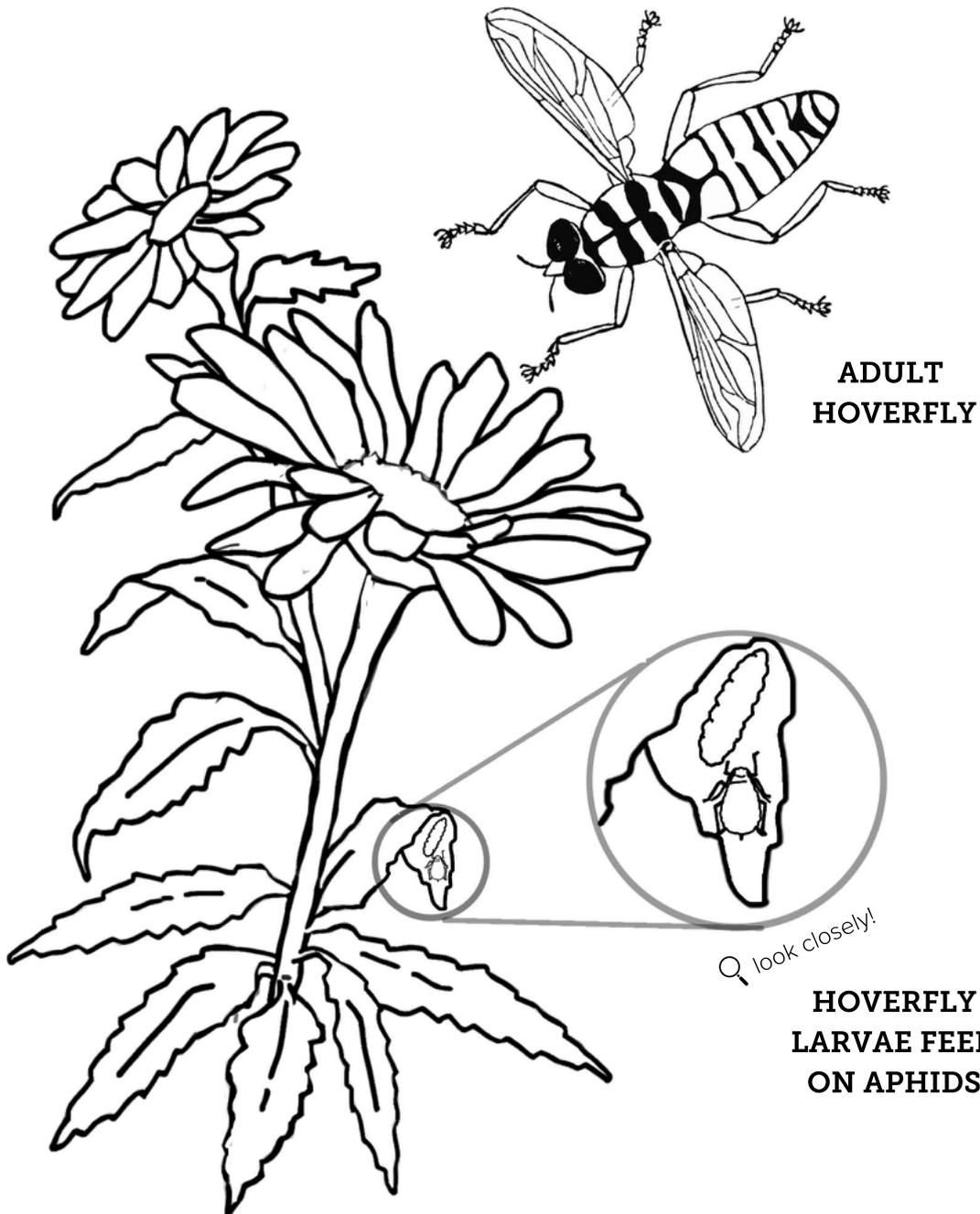


David Crippen/Bugwood.org

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Did you know?

Aphids cause millions of dollars in crop damage every year, making hoverflies and their larvae essential partners in farming and gardening.



**ADULT
HOVERFLY**

**HOVERFLY
LARVAE FEED
ON APHIDS**

POLLINATOR LOOK-ALIKES answer key: 1) b 2) c 3) a

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