

Beneficial Species Profile



Photo credit: Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Black blow fly

Scientific Name: *Phormia regina*

Order and Family: Diptera, Calliphoridae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	1.5 mm	White, elongate and elliptical in shape
Larva/Nymph	1 st instar-2-3 mm 2 nd instar-3.5-6 mm 3 rd instar-9-17 mm	Typical, tapered maggot appearance. Creamy white color, yellowing with age.
Adult	6-11 mm	Thorax and abdomen are dark, metallic, and blue-green in color. Head primarily black
Pupa (if applicable)	9-9.5 mm	Light brown to black in color

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Larvae feed with mouth hooks; adults have a sponging type mouth part at the end of a proboscis.

Host/s: Larvae feed primarily on dead and decaying animal tissue, corpses and feces.

Description of Benefits (predator, parasitoid, pollinator, etc.): These flies are important in forensic cases where the larval stages can be used to estimate the post mortem interval. They have also been used in maggot therapy to clean infected wounds.

Note that this species can be a pest when it causes secondary myiasis (infestation of wounds), mostly in animals but it can also infect humans that have fresh wounds. Myiasis in animals is common in dehorned or castrated cattle and sheep with soiled wool. As adult flies, there is a possibility of mechanical disease transmission.

References:

Hall, D. G. (1948). *Blowflies of North America*. Thomas Say Foundation; London.

James, M. T. (1947). *The flies that cause myiasis in man* (No.631) US Department of Agriculture.