

Beneficial Species Profile



Photo credit: Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Flesh fly

Scientific Name: *Sarcophaga spp.*

Order and Family: Diptera, Sarcophagidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		
Larva/Nymph	10-15 mm	White-yellow maggot, elongate and tapered towards head region.
Adult	2-14 mm	Gray and black with longitudinal stripes on thorax. Black and gray checkerboard pattern on abdomen.
Pupa (if applicable)	4-11 mm	Tan in color, darkening with age

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Larvae with mouth hooks and adults with sponging mouthparts at end of proboscis.

Host/s: Flesh flies are ovoviviparous with females hatching eggs inside and depositing young when suitable host is found. Hosts range from carrion to feces with some species parasitoids of other insects. Adults feed on liquids including nectar from some plants. In forensic cases, Sarcophagids usually appear after the Calliphorid flies.

Description of Benefits (predator, parasitoid, pollinator, etc.): Larval stages can be used in forensic cases to determine post mortem interval.

Note that although this species is beneficial in forensic cases, in the larval stage, myiasis (infestation of wounds) is possible in both humans and animals. This is typically cutaneous (skin) but cases of gastrointestinal myiasis have been reported. Adults have been implicated in mechanical disease transmission.

References:

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