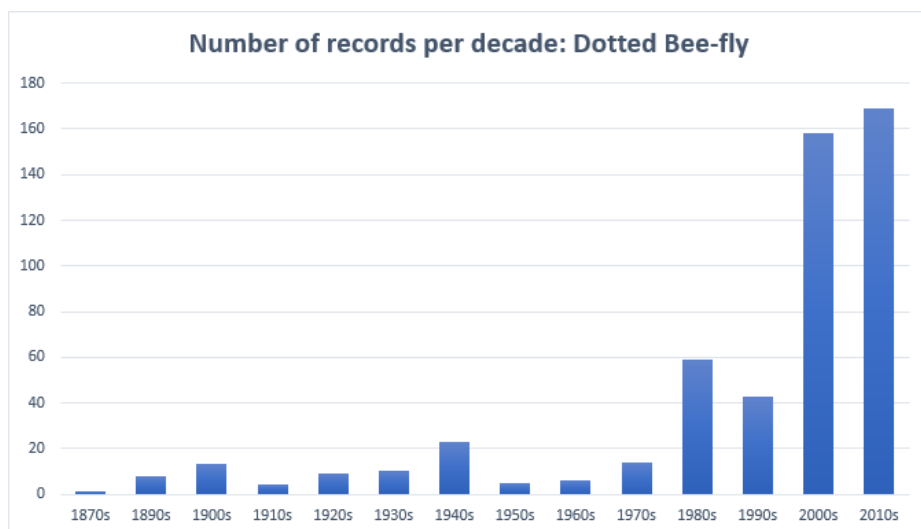
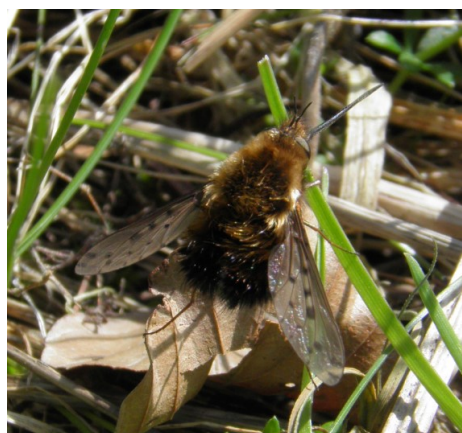
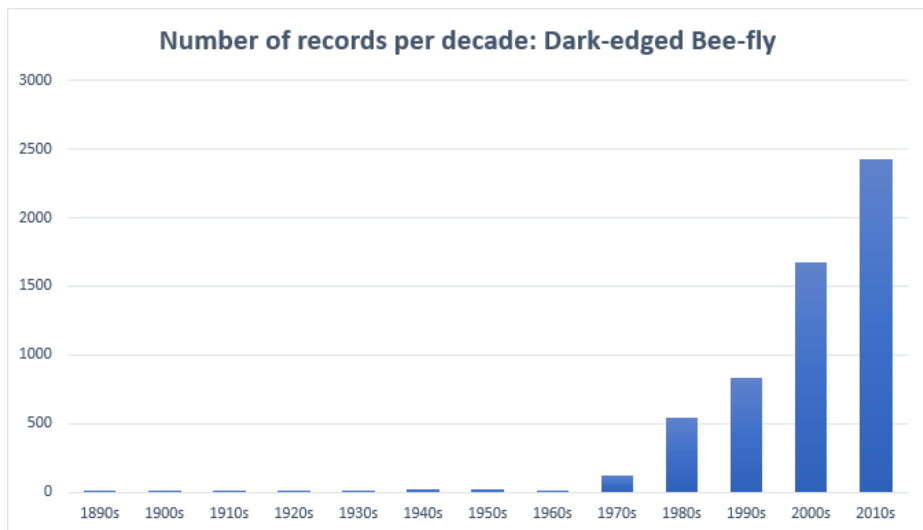


Bee-fly Watch update at 10 April 2017

“Bee-fly Watch” focuses on the two species of bee-fly that fly in early spring: the common and widespread Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*), and the rarer southern species Dotted Bee-fly (*Bombylius discolor*). Records for bee-flies in the recording scheme database go back to 1876, but the Bee-fly Watch project in 2016 and 2017 has added a very high proportion of new records.

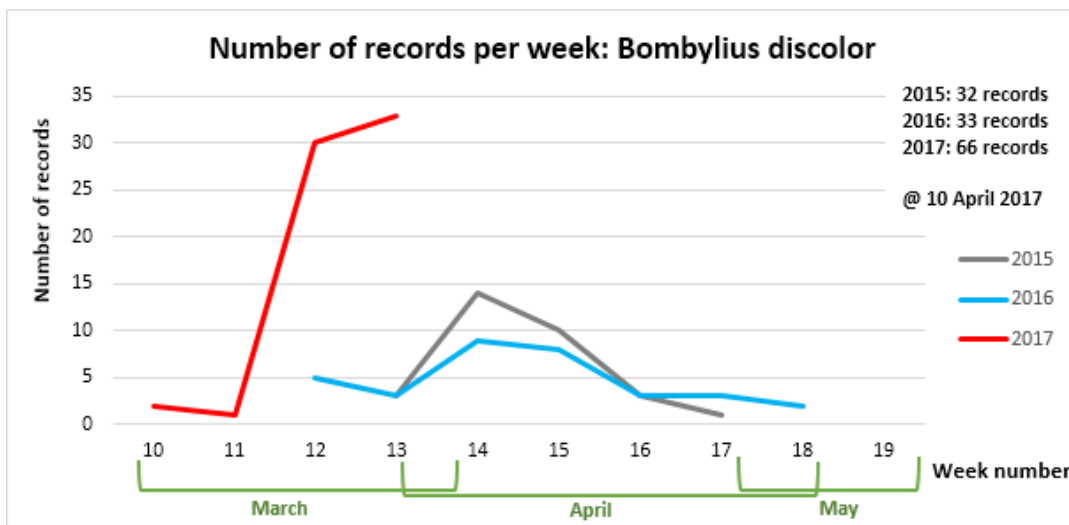
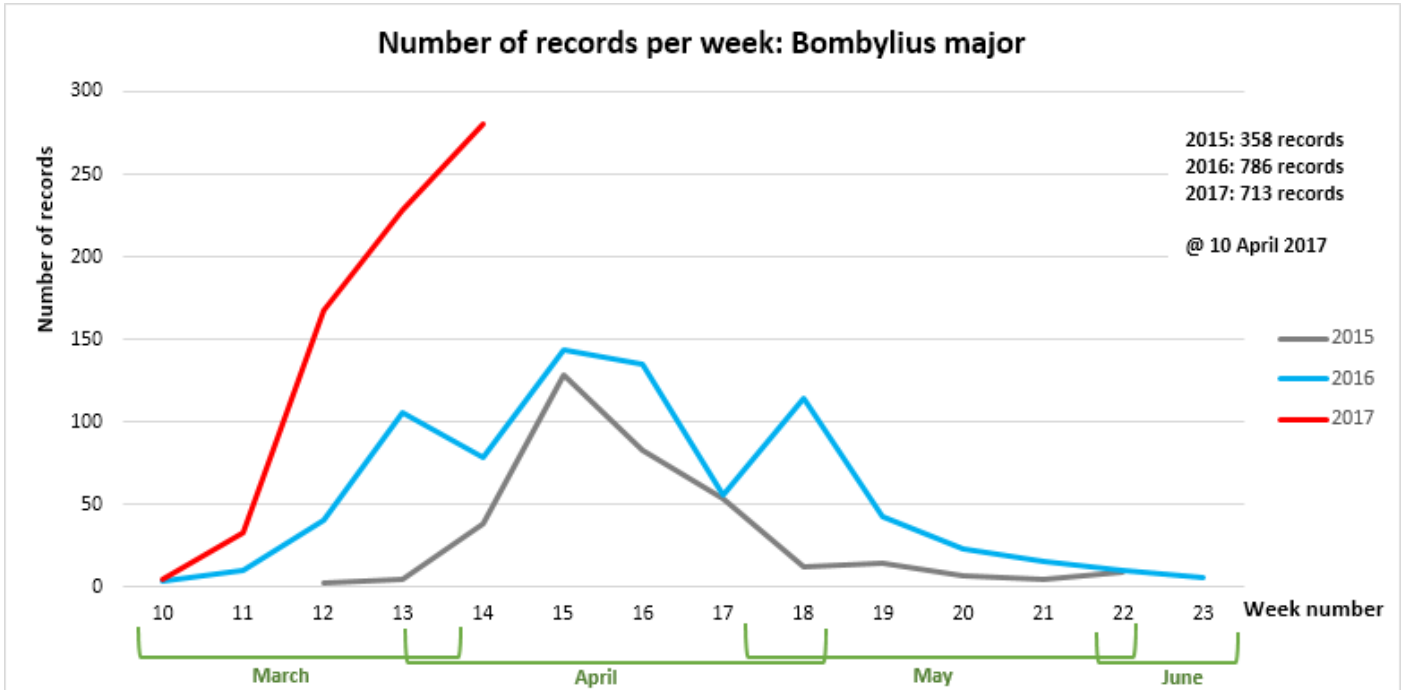
For information on what bee-flies are and what they do, including a downloadable identification guide, go to the [bee-flies page on the recording scheme website](#). You can add your own bee-fly sightings to Bee-fly Watch by using the [iRecord website or app](#) (please try to get a photo of your bee-fly if you are new to recording them).

Thanks to the many recorders who are sending in records to the scheme for Bee-fly Watch we now have a much better idea of where and when bee-flies are being seen in the last couple of years. This increase in recording effort is very welcome, but does need to be taken into account when comparing recent records and older ones - numbers of bee-fly records have increased enormously, but to a large degree this reflects an increase in active recorders rather than an increase in bee-flies!



When are they seen – bee-fly phenology

Bee-flies usually start emerging in March each year. Dark-edged Bee-fly can be seen through to June, but Dotted Bee-fly has a shorter flight period that finishes in May. The charts below show when bee-flies were seen in 2015 and 2016, plus the numbers so far (up to 10 April) for 2017:



Where are they seen – bee-fly distribution

The following pages show the distribution of the two spring bee-flies across Britain for different time periods. Once again the effect of increased recording in recent years can be seen, but the overall range for both species has remained remarkably constant.

Dark-edged Bee-fly *Bombylius major*

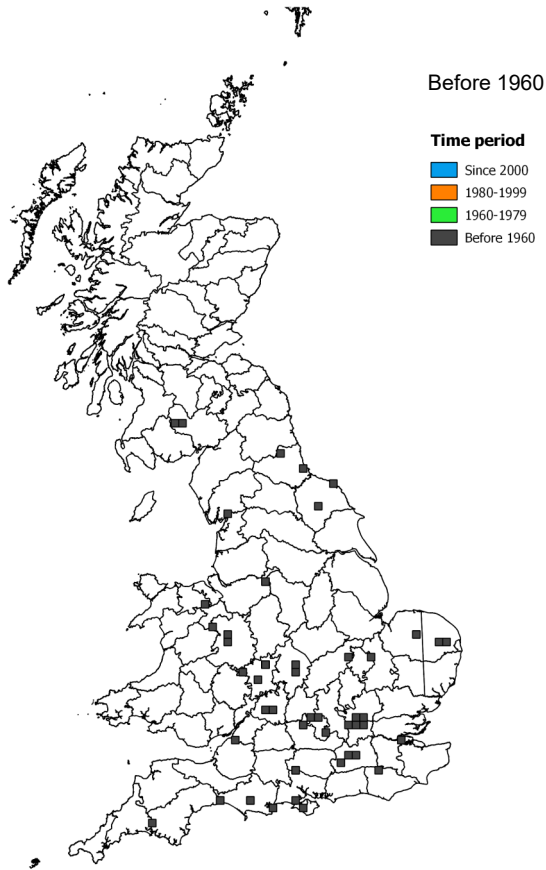
Widespread in Britain, but absent or rare in upland areas and becoming very localised in Scotland. Has perhaps lost a little ground in the west of Scotland and west of Wales, but is a welcome sign of spring across large parts of England. There are still some 'white holes' in the map though, with the chance to be the first person to record it in a number of 10km squares!

Dotted Bee-fly *Bombylius discolor*

A much more southern distribution, with two main 'clusters' of records in the west (from Isle of Wight and Dorset north to Worcestershire) and in the far south-east (mostly East Sussex and Kent). There is a rather curious gap in records for West Sussex and none at all for Surrey.

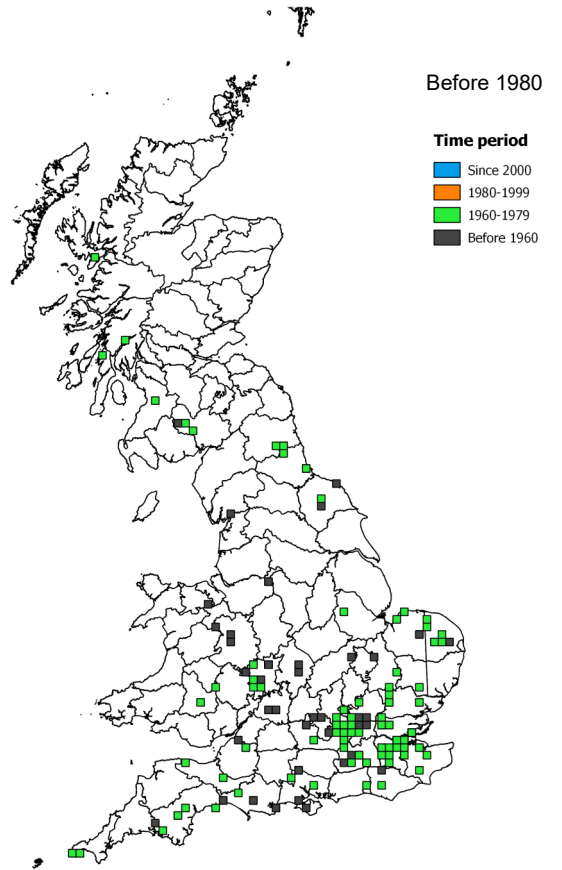
Although Dotted Bee-fly has been seen in good numbers in 2017, and has been reported from sites where it hasn't been seen before, its overall range is not showing any sign of major change or spread, and it has not been found recently in the north-east and south-west edges of its former range.

Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*)



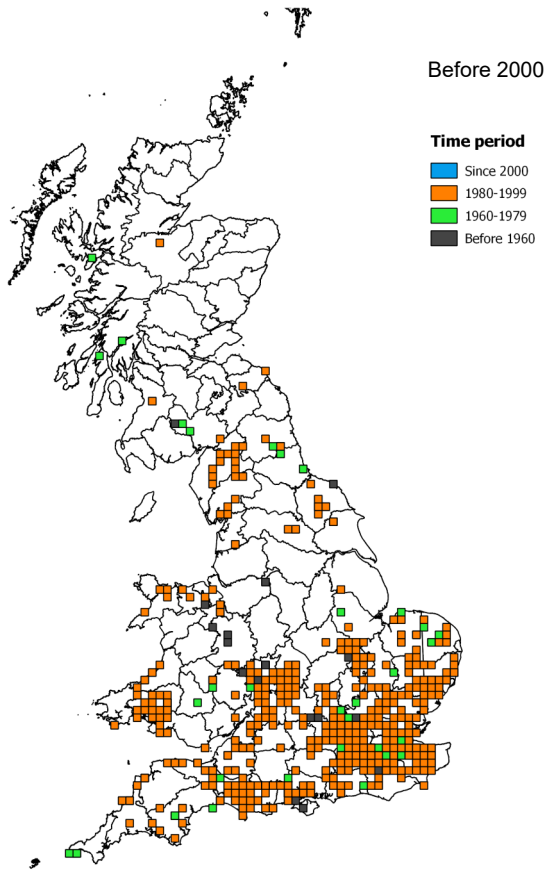
Records from the Soldieflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*)



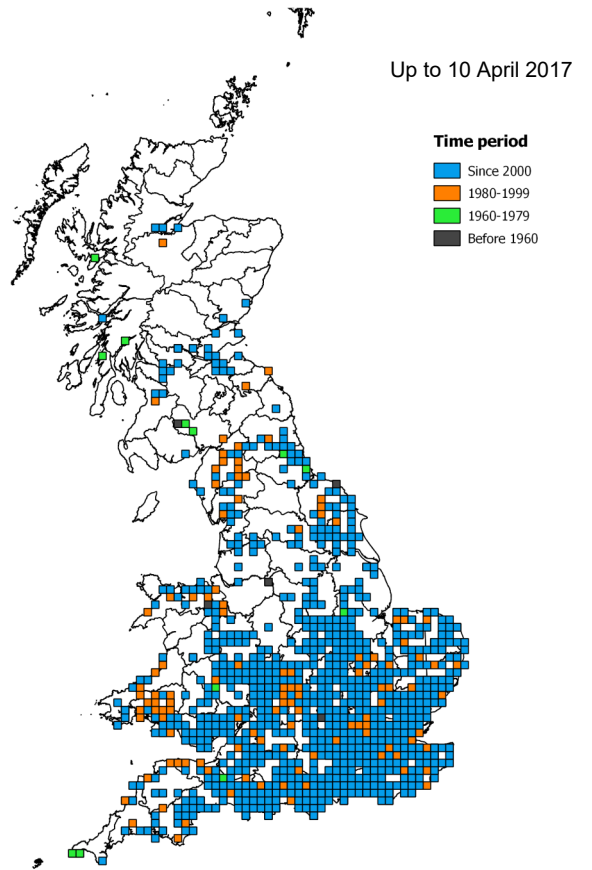
Records from the Soldieflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*)



Records from the Soldieflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*)



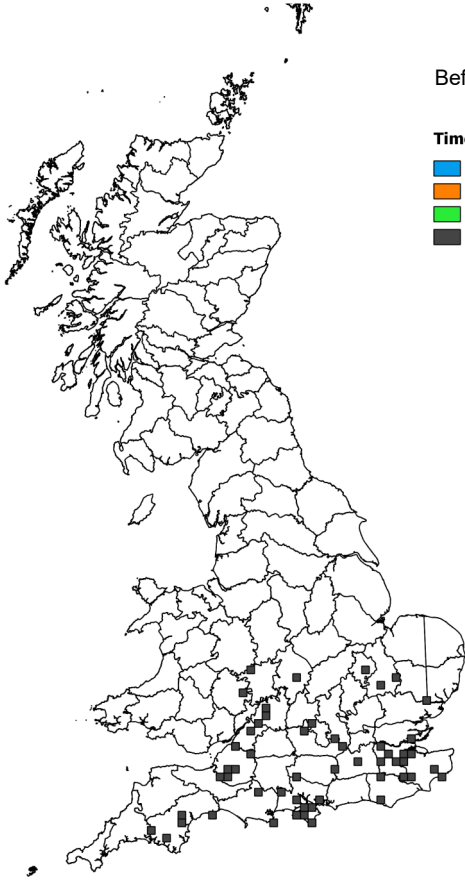
Records from the Soldieflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dotted Bee-fly (*Bombylius discolor*)

Before 1960

Time period

- Since 2000
- 1980-1999
- 1960-1979
- Before 1960



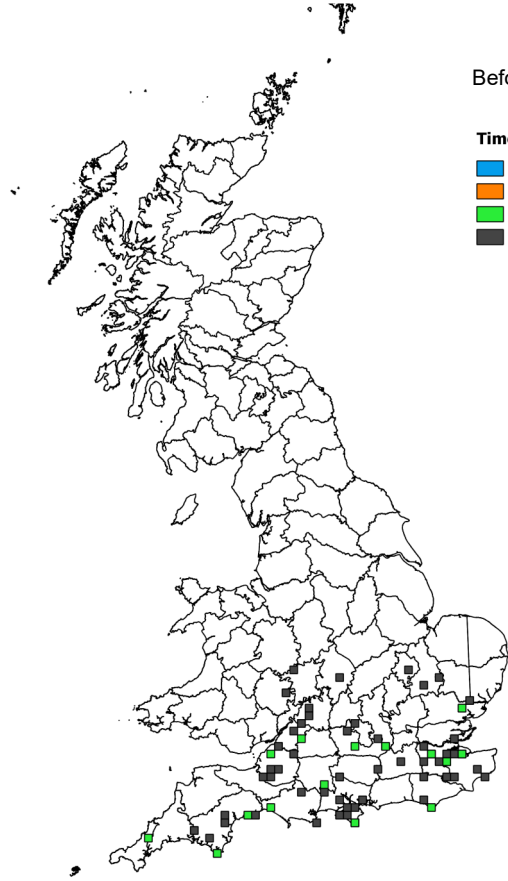
Records from the Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dotted Bee-fly (*Bombylius discolor*)

Before 1980

Time period

- Since 2000
- 1980-1999
- 1960-1979
- Before 1960



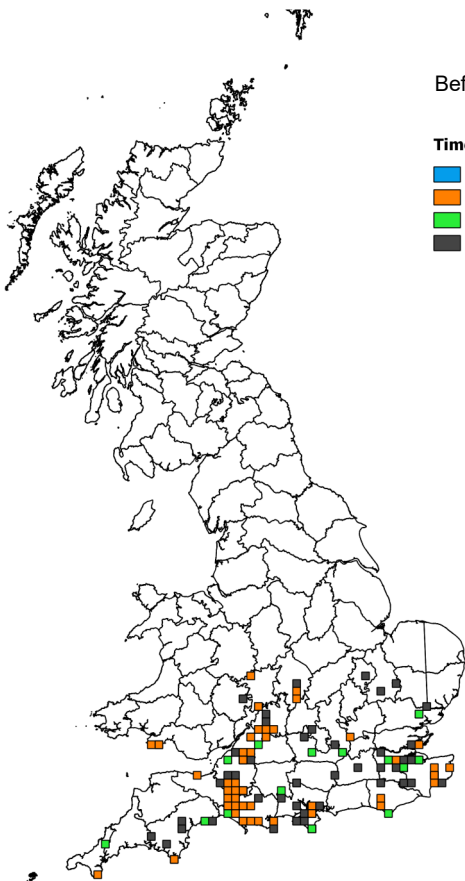
Records from the Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dotted Bee-fly (*Bombylius discolor*)

Before 2000

Time period

- Since 2000
- 1980-1999
- 1960-1979
- Before 1960



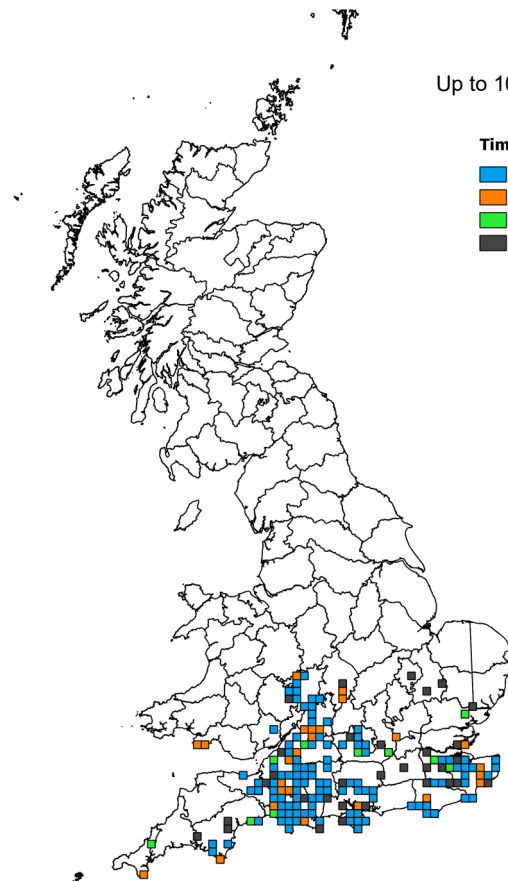
Records from the Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017

Dotted Bee-fly (*Bombylius discolor*)

Up to 10 April 2017

Time period

- Since 2000
- 1980-1999
- 1960-1979
- Before 1960



Records from the Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme at 10 April 2017