



Cluster Fly

Help sheet

Cluster flies (*Pollenia rudis*), also known as attic flies, are a common nuisance pest in rural and semi-rural areas across the UK.

They are most prevalent during the autumn and winter months, when large numbers enter buildings seeking shelter and warmth for hibernation. While they do not pose a direct health risk, their tendency to gather in significant numbers can cause discomfort and inconvenience for homes and businesses.



Did you know...

Cluster fly larvae develop inside earthworms?

During the summer months, adult females lay their eggs in soil close to earthworm burrows.

Once hatched, the larvae penetrate the earthworms, feeding on them for up to two weeks before pupating in the soil. A few days later, fully formed adult flies emerge to continue the cycle, making earthworms an essential part of their unusual lifecycle.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ **Size and Colour:** 6–10mm in length, larger than houseflies. Distinct stripes just behind the head, with short golden hairs on the thorax and a mottled dark grey/light abdomen.
- ▶ **Movement:** Sluggish compared to houseflies.
- ▶ **Life Cycle:** Eggs laid in soil or leaf litter in summer. Larvae parasitise earthworms before pupating and emerging as adults late summer.
- ▶ **Seasonal Behaviour:** Seek out lofts, roof voids, wall cavities, and window frames to hibernate between late August and November. Release pheromones that attract further flies, leading to repeat infestations.
- ▶ **Habitat:** Outdoors in summer, indoors in colder months.

INFESTATION CHALLENGES

- ▶ Often form dense clusters in lofts, wall voids, and around sash windows.
- ▶ Activity becomes noticeable on sunny autumn and winter days, when flies gather around windows or light sources.
- ▶ Do not damage buildings but can leave unsightly stains from excrement deposits.
- ▶ Pheromone trails mean the same locations may be repeatedly infested year after year.

TIPS TO PREVENT AN INFESTATION

- ▶ **Seal Entry Points:** Block gaps around roof tiles, eaves, and window frames to prevent entry.
- ▶ **Maintain Loft Spaces:** Keep lofts tidy and free from unnecessary clutter where flies may cluster.
- ▶ **Use Fine Mesh Screens:** Fit over vents and windows in susceptible areas.
- ▶ **Vacuum Regularly:** Remove flies before they settle into clusters.
- ▶ **Monitor Reinfestations:** Professional treatment may be needed, as pheromones encourage repeat activity.

At Vergo, we will tailor our solution to meet your needs



If you have an issue with cluster flies,
call **0344 335 0330** or email **info@vergo.uk**

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