

New Forest Biodiversity Forum

The Green Forest Hoverfly Surveys - results and future plans

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A presentation and link to project website with interactive map.

<https://caliprobola.maploom.com/info>

The Green Forest Hoverfly Hunt is a project by (mostly amateur) volunteer naturalists who have been trying to find *Caliprobola speciosa* (Rossi, 1790), a rare hoverfly species associated with ancient woodland habitats. In the UK, *Caliprobola speciosa* is only really known from the New Forest and Windsor Forest.

The work is significant because prior to this study, there were only a small number of records (c. 150) for this species nationally on the Hoverfly Recording Scheme Database and the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (NBN) and there has been some anecdotal evidence to suggest that the species might be in decline. Without sufficient data, it was not possible to know for sure whether the concerns were well founded. The species is also on the edge of its European range and is potentially vulnerable to climate change (through the loss of its beech woodland habitats) and could also potentially be in a genetic bottleneck.

The team of 21 had a very successful 2023 season generating over 100 records, finding 93 individuals and giving c. 1,100 hours of time to the project. They also considerably extended the known range of the species in the New Forest, to include 30 new 1km squares. Further details are provided in the project's website and interactive map. More granular sightings and location information is available to registered users.

Surveys will continue in 2024 with detailed habitat characterisation, experiments in Holly management, a mark-release-recapture pilot to look at distributions and genetic sequencing by the Natural History Museum, London.