

Identifying soldierflies and allies: soldierflies in genus *Chorisops*

Compiled by Martin C. Harvey for the Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme

Version 1 at 27 May 2021

These guides are only possible thanks to the generosity of the brilliant photographers who have allowed their images to be used. Special mention must be given to Malcolm Storey and Steven Falk, whose photo collections form the backbone for most of the species guides:

Malcolm Storey's [BioImages website](#) – Steven Falk's [photo collections on Flickr](#)

Other photographers included in this guide are Ian Andrews, James Emerson, Janet Graham, Jeremy Richardson, Martin Harvey, Simon Knott, Stephen Boulton and Sue Taylor

Thanks to Martin Speight and the Irish Naturalists Journal for permission to include line drawings from: Speight, M. (1981). [Chorisops nagatomii, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from C. tibialis \(Diptera: Stratiomyidae\)](#). The Irish Naturalists' Journal, 20(8), 327-329.

Males are shown first, then females, then some additional comparison pages. The pages for males include distribution maps taken from the recording scheme's [provisional atlas](#) (Harvey 2017).

As far as possible, these guides show features that can be seen on live insects in the field, or are likely to be visible in photographs. For comprehensive identification keys and species accounts see [British soldierflies and their allies](#), by Alan Stubbs and Martin Drake. See also the recording scheme's [additional notes](#) to accompany the Stubbs and Drake keys.

For lots more information on soldierflies and allies go to the recording scheme [website](#), [Twitter](#) page or [Facebook](#) group.

For lots more information and events, and to support the study and conservation of flies, please consider joining [Dipterists Forum](#).

Records wanted!

Once you have identified your fly, please let the recording scheme have the details! Add to [iRecord](#) or send to the [recording scheme](#) so that we can share the records for conservation and research.

The Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme is part of Dipterists Forum



The Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme is supported by the UKCEH Biological Records Centre



Recognising the genus: *Chorisops*

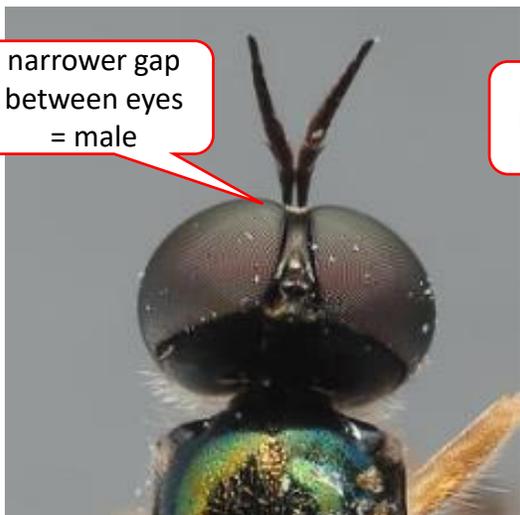
There are just two species in genus *Chorisops*. Like genus *Beris* these flies have prominent spines on the scutellum, but *Beris* usually has six spines (occasionally some will be missing) while *Chorisops* has four.

Chorisops are medium-sized soldierflies (6-7mm long) and are relatively long and narrow in shape. There are colour differences between the two species, but the colours on the head and thorax can vary and it is the abdomen markings that give the best clue to separating the species.

Both males and females have a gap between the eyes at the top of the head, but the gap is narrower in the males. It is important to be certain of which sex you are looking at in order to identify the species, as the abdomen markings differ between males and females. Male *nagatomii* and female *tibialis* can look very similar, see comparison on the final page.

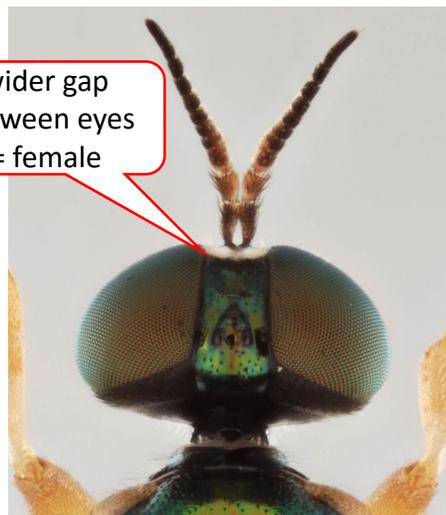
Both species of *Chorisops* are fairly widespread in England and Wales, and rare in Scotland. *C. nagatomii* is the scarcer of the two, with most records from southern England, but it is spreading and was found in Scotland for the first time in 2017.

Larvae are terrestrial and have been found in wet soils and rot-holes in trees. Adults can be seen on vegetation or found by sweeping. Males can sometimes be found swarming under tree foliage under isolated trees or along woodland rides.



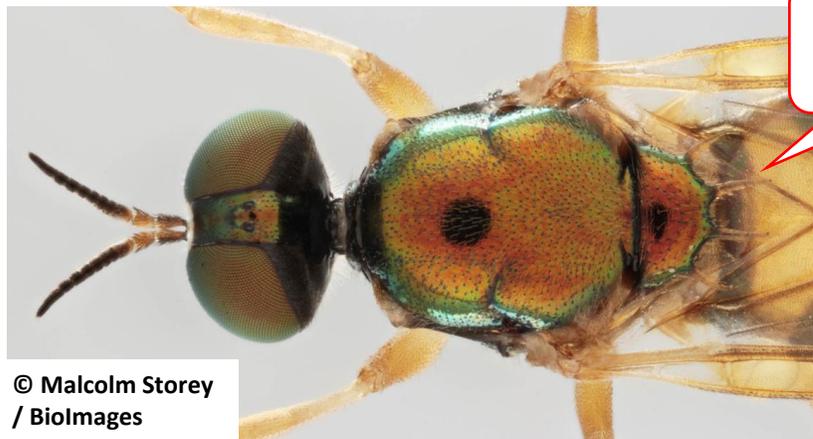
narrower gap between eyes = male

© Jeremy Richardson



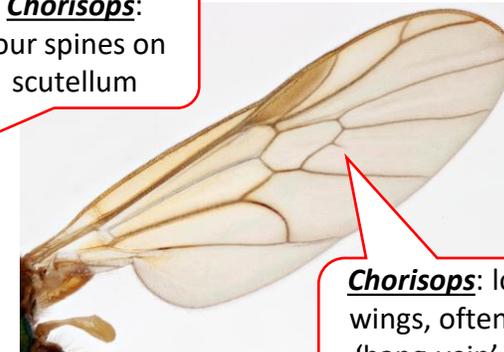
wider gap between eyes = female

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Chorisops: four spines on scutellum

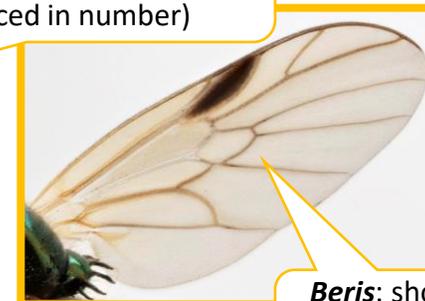


Chorisops: longer wings, often with 'hang-vein' from discal cell



© Malcolm Storey / Biolimages

Beris: six spines on scutellum (very occasionally reduced in number)



Beris: shorter wings, usually no 'hang-vein'

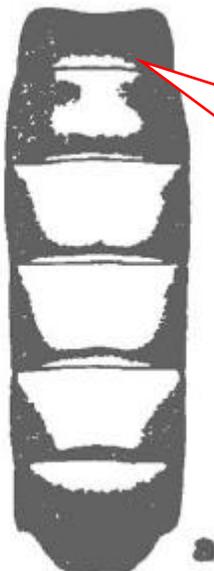
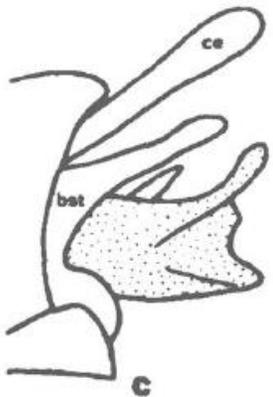


***Chorisops nagatomii* (Bright Four-spined Legionnaire) - male**



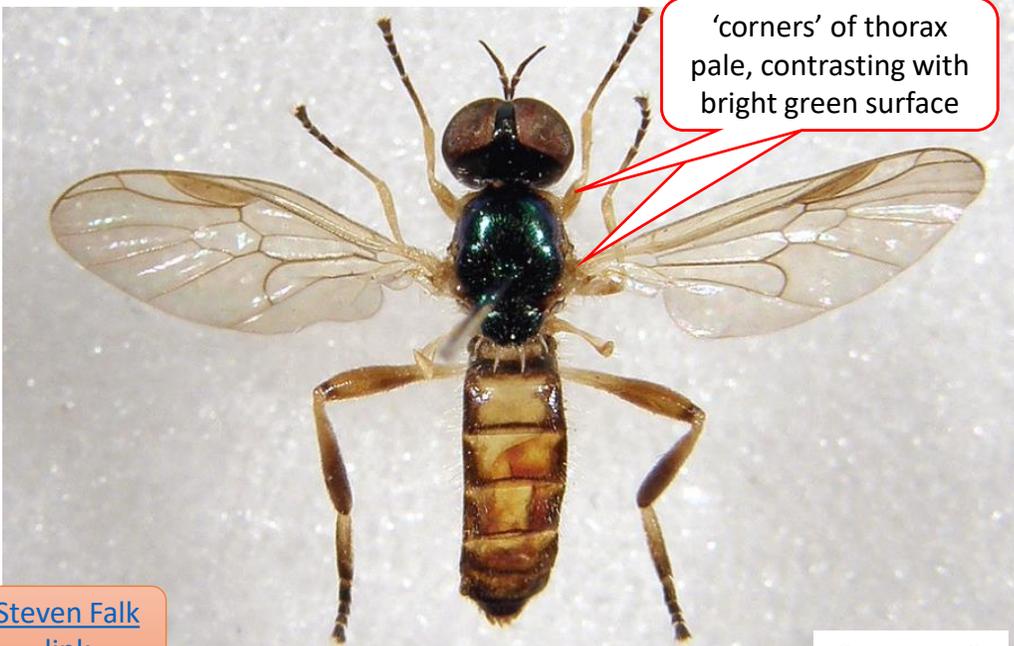
- ID difficulty: 3
- Flight period: May to early Oct, peak in Aug
- GB threat: Least Concern
- widespread in England and Wales, found in Scotland in 2017
- fens, peat soils
- No. of records: 341 • % since 2000: 54%

Tip of abdomen with male genitalia:



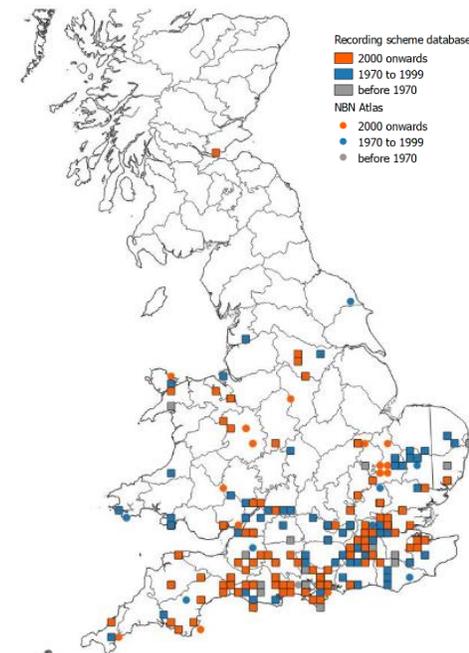
more yellow on abdomen, extending to tergite 1

'corners' of thorax pale, contrasting with bright green surface

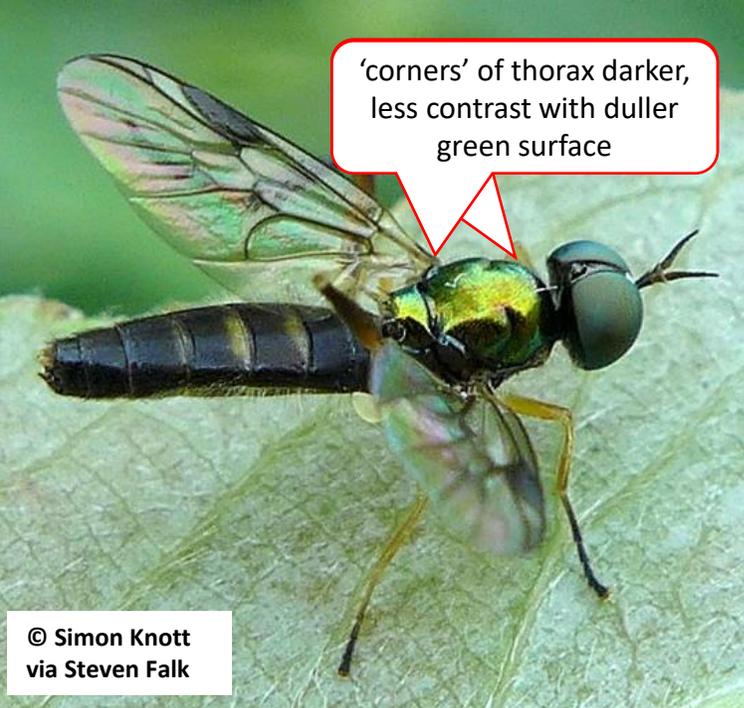


[Steven Falk link](#)

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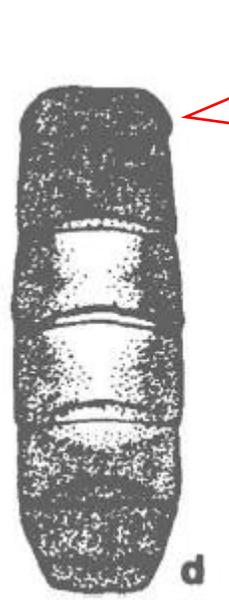


Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyiidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.



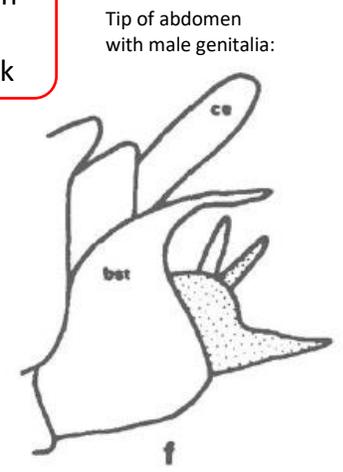
'corners' of thorax darker, less contrast with duller green surface

© Simon Knott via Steven Falk



less yellow on abdomen, tergite 1 dark

d



Tip of abdomen with male genitalia:

f

Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyiidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.



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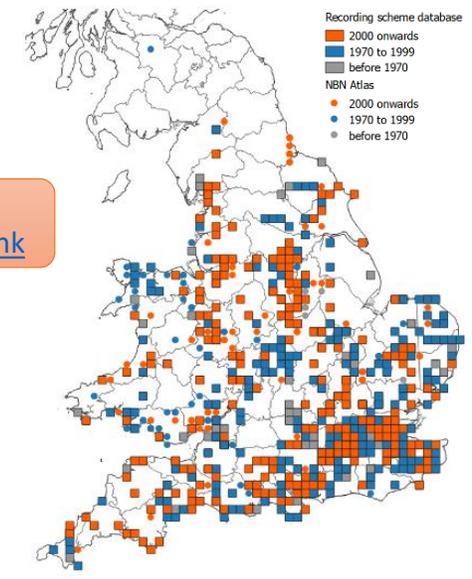
Chorisops tibialis (Dull Four-spined Legionnaire) - male



© Jeremy Richardson

Jeremy Richardson link

- ID difficulty: 3
- Flight period: mid May to late Sep, peak in Jun
- GB threat: Least Concern
- widespread in England and Wales
- shaded conditions, woodland rides
- No. of records: 1321 • % since 2000: 50%





***Chorisops tibialis* (Dull Four-spined Legionnaire) - female**



Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.



less yellow on abdomen, tergite 1 dark

segments at tip darker



'corners' of thorax darker, less contrast with duller green surface

© Martin Harvey



more yellow on abdomen, extending to tergite 1

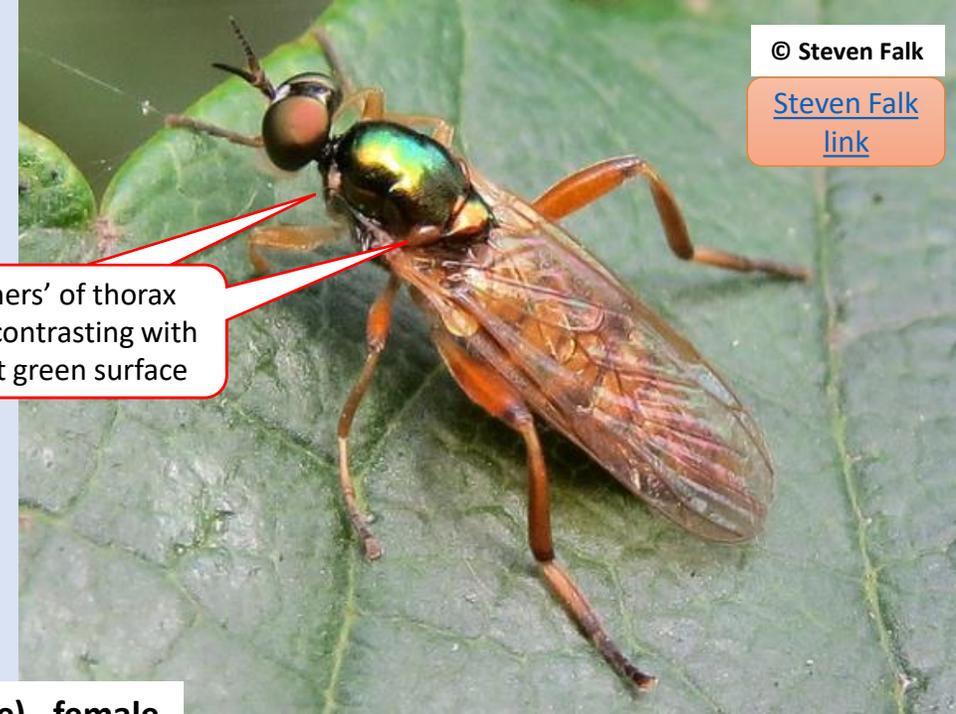
Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.



segments at tip paler

© Steven Falk

[Steven Falk link](#)



'corners' of thorax pale, contrasting with bright green surface

***Chorisops nagatomii* (Bright Four-spined Legionnaire) - female**

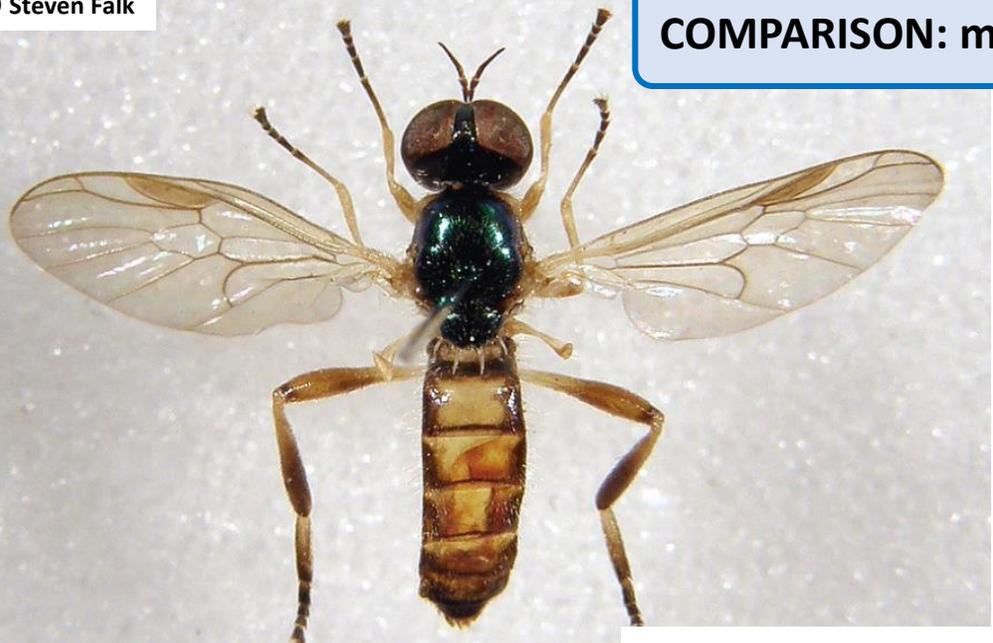
© Malcolm Storey / Biolmages



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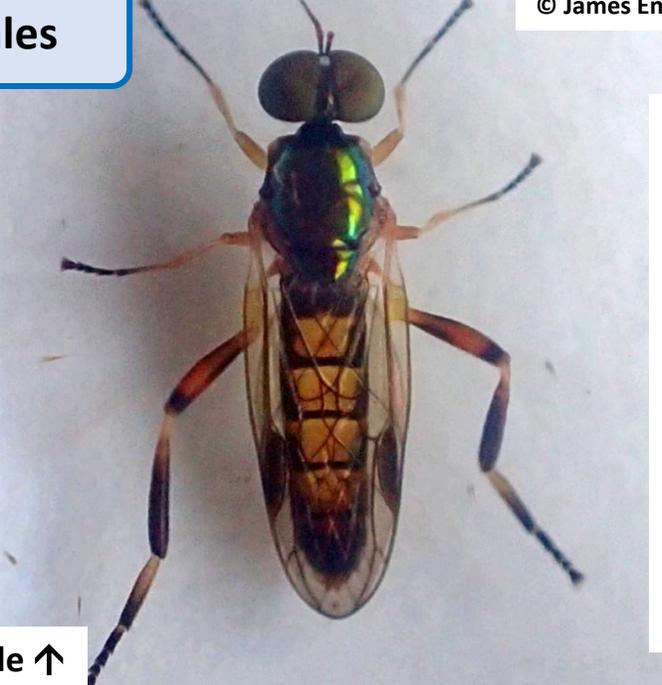


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COMPARISON: males

Chorisops nagatomii male ↑



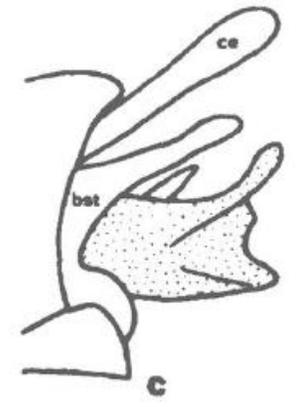
Chorisops tibialis male ↓



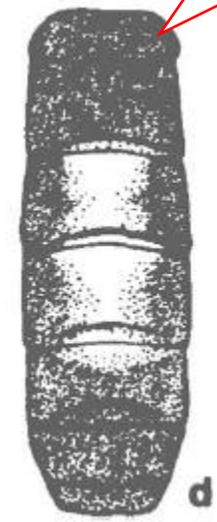
more yellow on abdomen, extending to tergite 1



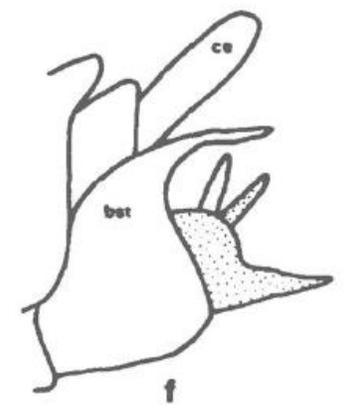
Tip of abdomen with male genitalia:



less yellow on abdomen, tergite 1 dark



Tip of abdomen with male genitalia:

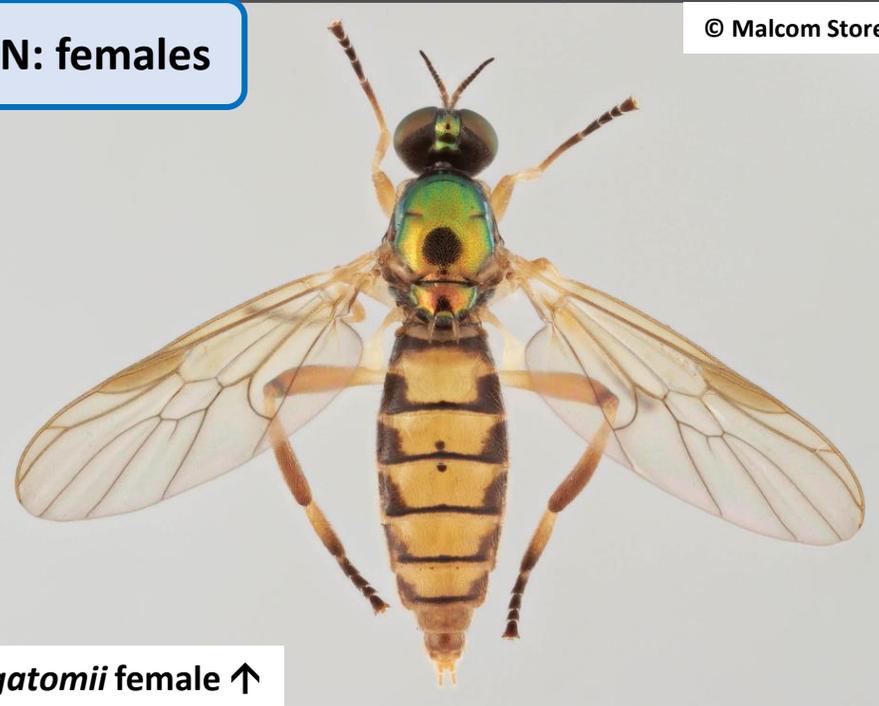


Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyiidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.

COMPARISON: females



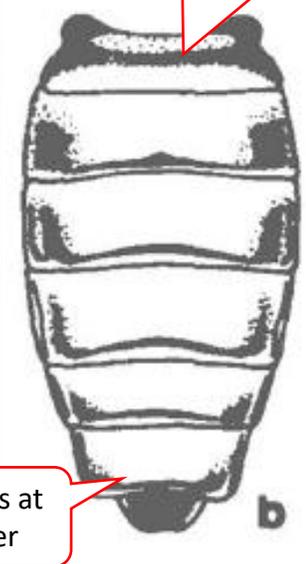
Chorisops nagatomii female ↑



Chorisops tibialis female ↓

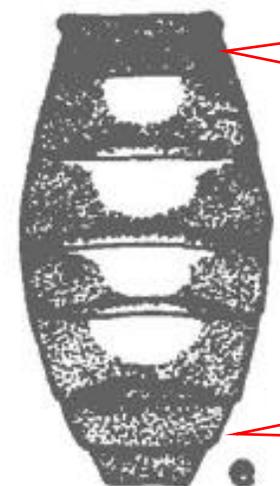


more yellow on abdomen, extending to tergite 1



segments at tip paler

Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.



less yellow on abdomen, tergite 1 dark

segments at tip darker

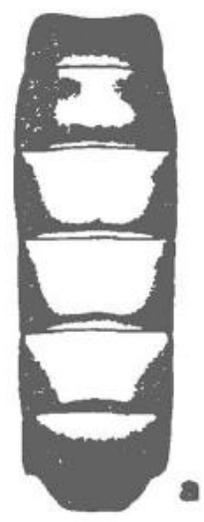


Chorisops nagatomii male ↑

COMPARISON:
male *nagatomii*
female *tibialis*
These two can look very similar – check the eye gap carefully so you know whether you have a male or female!



Chorisops tibialis female ↓



Speight, M. (1981). *Chorisops nagatomii*, an Insect New to Ireland and Its Segregation from *C. tibialis* (Diptera: Stratiomyidae). *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 20(8), 327-329.

