Insects of Dumfries

A checklist of the insects recorded in and around Dumfries · 76 species

☐		**Angle Shades** *Phlogophora meticulosa*	Rests with its wings rolled and creased so it looks exactly like a withered leaf.
☐		**Azure Damselfly** *Coenagrion puella*	Tell it from the common blue by a small black U on the shoulder segment.
☐		**Beautiful Demoiselle** *Calopteryx virgo*	Metallic blue-green with dark wings, fluttering over a fast burn like a butterfly.
☐		**Black Darter** *Sympetrum danae*	Britain's smallest dragonfly, and a specialist of acid peat bogs and moorland pools.
☐		**Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*	Almost entirely black, with a single bright blue segment near the tail — like a lit match head.
☐		**Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris*	Our biggest bumblebee, and increasingly seen on flowers in the middle of winter.
☐		**Caddisfly larva** *Limnephilus lunatus*	Builds itself a portable case out of sand, twigs and snail shells, and carries it everywhere.
☐		**Cinnabar Moth** *Tyria jacobaeae*	Slate-grey with crimson stripes and spots — the adult of the black-and-orange ragwort caterpillar.
☐		**Cockchafer** *Melolontha melolontha*	The 'maybug' that blunders into a lit window on a warm May evening with a considerable thud.
☐		**Comma** *Polygonia c-album*	Ragged-edged and named for a single white mark under the wing, shaped exactly like a comma.
☐		**Common Blue** *Polyommatus icarus*	The male is violet-blue; the female is mostly brown, which catches almost everybody out.
☐		**Common Blue Damselfly** *Enallagma cyathigerum*	One of several near-identical blue damselflies — this one wears a mushroom on its shoulder.
☐		**Common Carder Bee** *Bombus pascuorum*	The gingery bumblebee — the only common one here with a wholly brown thorax.
☐		**Common Darter** *Sympetrum striolatum*	The dragonfly still flying in late October, returning again and again to the same warm fence post.
☐		**Common Froghopper** *Philaenus spumarius*	The insect inside the cuckoo spit — and, for its size, the best jumper on earth.
☐		**Common Green Grasshopper** *Omocestus viridulus*	The long, accelerating sewing-machine whirr from a damp meadow on a July afternoon.

☐		**Common Hawker** *Aeshna juncea*	A big hawker of moorland pools that patrols tirelessly and hardly ever settles.
☐		**Common Pond Skater** *Gerris lacustris*	Stands on the water without breaking it, and feels for struggling insects through the ripples.
☐		**Common Red Soldier Beetle** *Rhagonycha fulva*	Orange-red with black wing tips, and almost always found in pairs on a hogweed head.
☐		**Common Stonefly** *Perla bipunctata*	Needs cold, fast, clean, well-oxygenated water — which is why its presence is such good news.
☐		**Common Wasp** *Vespula vulgaris*	Spends the summer as a useful predator of garden pests, then turns up at your picnic in September.
☐		**Dark Green Fritillary** *Speyeria aglaja*	A big, fast, powerful orange butterfly — and the green wash is on the underside, not the top.
☐		**Devil's Coach Horse** *Ocypus olens*	Curls its tail up like a scorpion when cornered — all bluff, but convincing bluff.
☐		**Drone Fly** *Eristalis tenax*	A honey bee lookalike whose larva breathes through a snorkel in liquid filth.
☐		**Early Bumblebee** *Bombus pratorum*	Small, neat and out early — and finished for the year while other bumblebees are still building up.
☐		**Elephant Hawk-moth** *Deilephila elpenor*	Pink and olive-green like nothing else here — and the caterpillar is named for its trunk.
☐		**Emperor Dragonfly** *Anax imperator*	Britain's bulkiest dragonfly, and it eats its catch without ever landing.
☐		**Emperor Moth** *Saturnia pavonia*	The male flies by day in a fast zig-zag, tracking a female's scent from a mile away.
☐		**Four-spotted Chaser** *Libellula quadrimaculata*	Count the dark spots — two on each wing, halfway along the leading edge.
☐		**Freshwater Shrimp** *Gammarus pulex*	Not an insect and not really a shrimp — but it is what half the burn's food chain runs on.
☐		**Garden Bumblebee** *Bombus hortorum*	Has the longest tongue of any British bumblebee — long enough to reach the base of a foxglove.
☐		**Garden Spider** *Araneus diadematus*	The white cross on its back gives it away — and it rebuilds its whole web most mornings.
☐		**Garden Tiger** *Arctia caja*	Cream and chocolate above, scarlet beneath — and the caterpillar is the original woolly bear.
☐		**Golden-ringed Dragonfly** *Cordulegaster boltonii*	Britain's longest dragonfly — black with gold rings, and a hunter of acid hill burns.

☐		**Great Diving Beetle** *Dytiscus marginalis*	Carries its own air supply under its wing cases, and will take on a newt or a small fish.
☐		**Green Drake Mayfly** *Ephemera danica*	Two years in the riverbed, then a single day in the air — the mayfly proper.
☐		**Green Hairstreak** *Callophrys rubi*	Britain's only green butterfly — and it always sits with its wings shut, so green is all you see.
☐		**Green-veined White** *Pieris napi*	The white butterfly that is not eating your cabbages — look for the smoky green veining underneath.
☐		**Harlequin Ladybird** *Harmonia axyridis*	Arrived in Britain in 2004 and is now the fastest-spreading invasive insect on record here.
☐		**Holly Blue** *Celastrina argiolus*	The blue butterfly flying around the tops of hedges rather than down in the grass.
☐		**Honey Bee** *Apis mellifera*	The only bee here whose whole colony overwinters — by shivering to keep the hive warm.
☐		**Hummingbird Hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum*	People report it as a hummingbird every year — and it does hover, hum and feed exactly like one.
☐		**Large Red Damselfly** *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*	The first damselfly of the year — often on the wing before the end of April.
☐		**Large White** *Pieris brassicae*	The 'cabbage white' proper — and its caterpillars really will strip a brassica bed.
☐		**Marmalade Hoverfly** *Episyrphus balteatus*	Double black bands on orange, no sting whatsoever, and its larvae eat aphids by the hundred.
☐		**Meadow Brown** *Maniola jurtina*	The most abundant butterfly of British grassland, and it will fly on a dull day when nothing else will.
☐		**Meadow Grasshopper** *Chorthippus parallelus*	Our only native grasshopper that cannot fly — the wings never finish growing.
☐		**Orange-tip** *Anthocharis cardamines*	The male's blazing orange wingtips are one of the first real signals that spring has arrived.
☐		**Peacock** *Aglais io*	Four enormous eyespots, and a hiss if you disturb it — this butterfly is built to bluff.
☐		**Pellucid Hoverfly** *Volucella pellucens*	One of our largest hoverflies — black, with a broad ivory-white sash across the middle.
☐		**Peppered Moth** *Biston betularia*	The textbook example of evolution watched happening — and the story ran through Britain's industrial towns.
☐		**Poplar Hawk-moth** *Laothoe populi*	Rests with its hindwings pushed out in front of the forewings — no other moth here sits like that.

☐		**Purple Hairstreak** *Favonius quercus*	Lives in the tops of oak trees and feeds on honeydew — which is why almost nobody sees one.
☐		**Red Admiral** *Vanessa atalanta*	A migrant from the Mediterranean that has started, in mild winters, to simply stay.
☐		**Red Mason Bee** *Osmia bicornis*	The bee that fills your bee hotel, one mud-walled cell at a time.
☐		**Red-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lapidarius*	Jet black with a blazing orange-red tail — and the males look like a different species entirely.
☐		**Ringlet** *Aphantopus hyperantus*	Almost black when freshly emerged, with a row of small gold-ringed eyes underneath.
☐		**Ruby Tiger** *Phragmatobia fuliginosa*	Dull pinkish-brown until it opens up and shows a crimson body and hindwings.
☐		**Scotch Argus** *Erebia aethiops*	A butterfly of damp Scottish hillsides that will only fly when the sun is actually out.
☐		**Seven-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella septempunctata*	The archetypal ladybird — three spots on each side and one shared across the middle.
☐		**Signal Crayfish** *Pacifastacus leniusculus*	Introduced from North America, and it brought a plague that wiped out our own crayfish.
☐		**Silver Y** *Autographa gamma*	Named for a silver letter Y on each wing, and it flies here from southern Europe every year.
☐		**Six-spot Burnet** *Zygaena filipendulae*	A moth that flies in bright sunshine, and can make its own cyanide.
☐		**Small Copper** *Lycaena phlaeas*	A small scrap of burnished copper, and startlingly aggressive for its size.
☐		**Small Heath** *Coenonympha pamphilus*	Never once seen with its wings open — it always settles closed, and always tilted towards the sun.
☐		**Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary** *Boloria selene*	Named for the row of silver 'pearls' along the edge of the underwing.
☐		**Small Tortoiseshell** *Aglais urticae*	The butterfly that wakes up in your bedroom in February, having quietly overwintered in the curtains.
☐		**Small White** *Pieris rapae*	The other cabbage white — smaller, with greyer wingtips and solitary green caterpillars.
☐		**Southern Hawker** *Aeshna cyanea*	Inquisitive to the point of rudeness — it will hover a foot from your face to look at you.
☐		**Speckled Wood** *Pararge aegeria*	Owns a sunny gap in the trees, and will spiral upwards with any male that tries to take it.

☐		**Tawny Mining Bee** *Andrena fulva*	The little volcano of fine soil on a spring lawn is a female's front door.
☐		**Tree Bumblebee** *Bombus hypnorum*	Arrived in Britain in 2001 and has spread the length of the country since.
☐		**Violet Ground Beetle** *Carabus violaceus*	Black until the light catches the rim of its wing cases, which glow violet and gold.
☐		**Whirligig Beetle** *Gyrinus substriatus*	Spins in frantic circles on the surface — with each eye split in two, half above water and half below.
☐		**White-lipped Snail** *Cepaea hortensis*	Yellow, pink or brown, striped or plain — and the white rim of the shell mouth is the giveaway.
☐		**White-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lucorum*	Brighter yellow bands and a clean white tail — but honestly, even experts need a microscope.

Photograph credits

Photo by Olei, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Jörg Hempel, CC BY-SA 3.0 de, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Charles J. Sharp, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by S. Rae from Scotland, UK, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Charles J. Sharp, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
CC0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Sanja565658, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Frank Vassen from Brussels, Belgium, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Quartl, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Zampel, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by André Karwath aka Aka, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Loz (L. B. Tettenborn), CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Didier Descouens, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Jörg Hempel, CC BY-SA 2.0 de, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Prosperosity, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by IES MANUEL GARCÍA BARROS A ESTRADA- PONTEVEDRA, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Wlodzimierz, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Magne Flåten, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Hectonichus, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Alvesgaspar, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Ivar Leidus, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by jean pierre Hamon (14), CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Quartl, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by jean-pierre Hamon, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Nicola Simoncini, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Didier Descouens, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Donald Hobern from Copenhagen, Denmark, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Andreas Trepte, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by gailhampshire from Cradley, Malvern, U.K, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by G.-U. Tolkiehn, CC BY 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Sandy Rae, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Cyndy Sims Parr, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Christian Fischer, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Hectonichus, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Photographer: Dominik Stodulski Graphic Processing: User:MathKnight, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Astacoides, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Sarefo, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Ebertakis, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Twotonetoo, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Siga, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by Christian Fischer, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Photo by AnemoneProjectors, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons