Cluster Fly  \textit{(Pollenia rudis)}

**Identification:**
This fly is 8mm long with a wingspan 10 mm. Colour dark grey, non metallic thorax lacking distinct stripes, but with numerous short golden stripes. Large reddish compound eyes and very sluggish behaviour.

**Origins and distribution:**
Throughout common in the UK especially in the south.

**Habitat:**
As days shorten and the weather cools, Cluster flies enter roof spaces and cladded buildings, which are surrounded by fields, although they can travel up to a mile. They usually rest in attics or between walls which are south west facing which receive the most sunlight. They can also be found clustering on the exterior of buildings in huge numbers prior to crawling into the harbourages. The generally emerge in the spring although they can be stimulated to emerge on a warm winters day when the warmth revives them.

The green cluster fly \textit{(Dasyphora cyanella)} is also sometimes encountered with the cluster fly.

**Behaviour:**
A large slow flying insect which much of the time appears listless. They are light attractant and typically year after year.

**Breeding:**
Eggs laid loosely on damp soil and in leaf litter, larvae hatch after a week and are parasitoid seeking out their hosts earthworms. They bore through the wall of the earthworm’s body at any point. After it has grown to full size it bores its way out of the worm and pupates in the soil. Depending on the weather 2 generations are normal but up to 4 are possible, flies hatch from the pupae and live outdoors; they start to enter buildings in large numbers in late September onwards into November when the temperature begins to fall.

**Food:**
The earthworm is the food source of the larvae, the adult fly feeds on nectar from flowers and they only enter buildings in order to hibernate.

**Control:**
By the time the professional pest control technician gets involved the most effective treatment will be a space treatment of ULV treatment to penetrate the harbourage areas provide a knockdown solution. If the resting areas can be accessed such as the roof joist in an attic or metal cladded areas these can be treated with a residual insecticide. Following the treatment arrangements will need to be made to vacuum the dead insects.

UVA fly control units or suspended sticky fly papers can provide some relief.

Proofing can be carried around entrance points with silicone or other products and out although this is seldom 100% effective, a reduction in numbers can be achieved.

It is also worth remembering to ensure that the water tanks are sealed /covered, that there are no bats in residence in the roof space and all possible steps are taken to contain the insecticide from going to other parts of the building.

External treatment of the building around entry points or on metal cladding with a residual insecticide can help to reduce the population. A follow up visit may be necessary in the
spring if the initial treatment was in the Autumn, this is when
survivors start to leave harbourages warmed by the sun, and
re-infestation is reported. Entry is likely from the end of
August to November and activity is likely when they exit
from March to May.