

Flies in your Drain

One type of fly that is found around drains are called the phorid or humpbacked fly. Phorid flies are usually yellowish-brown or black in color. The thorax is dramatically arched, giving the Phorid fly its common nickname of "humpbacked fly". Other names for Phorid flies include Coffin flies, sewer or drain flies or scuttle flies. Phorid flies have a small head, a short, narrowed abdomen, and large legs with a hind femur laterally flattened (adapted for jumping). A unique identifying feature of adult Phorid flies is the presence of two distinctive veins near the front of the wing, terminating about halfway before the wing tip. Phorid flies are well known for their habit of scuttling in a fast run instead of immediately taking off when disturbed, hence another of their nicknames, "scuttle flies". Phorid fly larvae are dirty white and about 3/32" in length. Phorid fly larvae are elongated, almost cylindrical, slightly flattened and tapered at the anterior (front) end.

These flies breed in putrefying liquors or freshwaters with plenty of high organic content around. They usually come from outdoors when they smell the organic matter they need to breed and get into your home through tiny holes.

Adult Phorid fly are tiny insects, about 1/16" to 1/8" in length or 1-3 mm.



**Fig 1. Humpbacked fly, (family Phoridae)
South Gulf Cove Sampling 2021 CCMC**



Fig 2. Humpbacked fly, (family Phoridae) IFAS

Dirty sinks, clogged drains and lack of cleaning under sinks (especially in commercial kitchens) make perfect feeding and breeding areas for drain flies.

Follow these simple steps to keep drain flies out of your life:

-  Keep sinks scrubbed clean. Remove solid waste particles from drain filter baskets.
-  Remove all food items from counters floors or areas accessible to a 1-2 mm inch fly.
-  Mop thoroughly under sinks and around trash collection areas. Be sure to remove all greasy areas.
-  The use of household fly sprays in common areas may be necessary, or a licensed home pest control applicator may be necessary if the infestation is severe.
-  Pay special attention to grout and cracks on tile flooring. A mild bleach solution in mop water will kill microorganisms that drain flies feed on.

-  Thoroughly clean crevices in showers and bathrooms. Clean the toilet regularly with toilet bowl cleaner and a stiff brush.
-  Repair leaking faucets and pipes.
-  Make sure drain pipes are clean. Use an organic drain cleaner that coats pipe walls and dissolves organic pipe build-up.
-  If you have unused bath or shower drains and/or sinks, we recommend running water through them to ensure that the p-traps have water in them. A dried-out p-trap allows for flies to access the drain through rooftop vent traps.
-  Wash trash, rubbish, and recycle bins with bleach and let dry before use.
-  Place your trash cans away from the house or doorway and keep them tightly closed.