

Beetle id guide



A STAG BEETLE'S head and thorax (middle section) are shiny black in colour and its wing cases are chestnut brown. Adult males can vary in size from 35mm to 75mm long and have large antler-like mandibles. The females are smaller at between 30-50mm long, with normal sized mandibles. They are often seen on the ground looking for somewhere to lay their eggs. Males, on the other hand, tend to be seen flying at dusk looking for a mate. The beetle that is most often mistaken for a female stag beetle is the lesser stag beetle. A large lesser stag beetle can be similar in size and shape to a small female stag beetle. However, the lesser stag is uniformly black all over with matt wing cases, while the female stag beetle has shiny brown or maroon wing cases. Lesser stag beetles tend to have a much squarer overall look. Sending us a digital photo can be of great help to us in telling the two apart. Cockchafers can be of a similar size to lesser stags and are active on warm nights in May and June, but can be distinguished from stags by their ribbed wing cases and covering of hair.

Male stag beetles (below) grow up to 7cm long.

Lesser stag beetles (right) are smaller than female stags and are matt black all over.



Female stag beetles (above left) are smaller, the largest growing to about 5cm.



Cockchafers, or may bugs, can grow up to 30mm, have fan-like antennae and short hairs on their heads.