

# Stag Beetle Count

## Survey Instructions



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trust for  
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species

### All about your transect

A transect is a path along which we count and record sightings of a species. We use them to estimate abundance. Select a place where you're likely to see stag beetles and where you have a route that you can easily follow. The transect should be 500m long. For reference, 500m is approximately the length of 50 double decker buses, the length of Brighton Pier, or five times the length of a football pitch. Choose a starting point that you can easily return to each year (e.g. your road or local park). Go in the same direction every time you do it. Walk roughly eastwards so the sun is going down behind you.

### When to do it

Walk your transect weekly, at least six times, during June and July when weather conditions are suitable: warm (>12°C) evenings with little or no rain and no strong wind. If the temperature doesn't rise above 12°C during one or more weeks, there's no need to walk the transect. If you're on holiday or unable to take part, please find somebody to replace you.

### How's it done?

The transect should be walked from start to end at a gentle pace taking 30 minutes to complete. It might be useful to organise a trial session to calibrate your speed with the aid of reference points (83m per 5 minutes). The survey should start 15 minutes before sunset (the time of sunset for the nearest city can be found at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)).

Before starting the transect, please note on your **Stag Beetle Count Form**:

- Transect name
- Date and starting time of walk
- Name of surveyor
- Sunset time
- Temperature and humidity at the beginning of your count
- Wind speed (please use 0-4 as described below):

0 = no wind (0 Beaufort)

1 = Wind felt on exposed skin, smoke, leaves and flags move (1-2 Beaufort)

2 = dust and loose paper raised, small branches move, flags and clothes flutter (3-4 Beaufort)

3 = trees rustle, small trees and large branches move, empty plastic bins tip over (5-6 Beaufort)

4 = Whole trees in motion, flags taut, effort needed to walk or bike against the wind (7+ Beaufort).



### Observations

Record all greater stag beetles (*Lucanus cervus*) within a virtual box of approx. 10m in front of you and 5m to each side of you. For each observation, note the time, number, sex and activity.

- Use M (male), F (female) or U (unknown) for sex
- Use DR (dead/remains), CO (copulating), NF (non-flying), FL (flying) and U (unknown or changing during observation) for activity.

Please take a photo of any stag beetles if you can.

### Yearly habitat assessment

To understand population trends, we ask you to assess the habitat annually in an area of about 200m surrounding your transect. This assessment has only four questions and each is explained on the form. If you have any queries about the assessment, please contact [laura.bower@ptes.org](mailto:laura.bower@ptes.org)

### Results

Please either post your forms back to FREEPOST PTES (you don't need to write anything else on the envelope, if you do it will cost us more) or scan and email them to [laura.bower@ptes.org](mailto:laura.bower@ptes.org)

**Many thanks for taking part and I hope you see some stag beetles!**

