

ANIMAL NEWS

STAG beetle season is here and experts need your help to monitor this rare and magnificent insect.

Stag beetles are the UK's largest beetle. They used to be common in the south of England, but are sadly now quite rare. For years they live underground as larvae (see below). But in May and June, the adult beetles emerge in order to find a mate.

The PTES (People's Trust for Endangered Species) is asking for our help to spot stag beetles. It wants to map where the beetles are found and track their numbers.

The best time to spot stag beetles is on a warm, summer's evening, when the insects like to fly around. They are easily recognised by their large 'antlers', which are only found on the males. And don't worry, the antlers are used to battle other males and impress the females – they don't bite!

If you are lucky enough to spot one, record your sighting at www.ptes.org/stagbeetles. The website also has lots of useful information on how you can help this iconic insect.



The curious life of a stag beetle:

- Stag beetles spend up to seven years underground as a larvae.
- They feed on rotting wood.
- Once fully grown, the larvae build a cocoon in the soil and change into beetles.
- In the summer, the adults dig their way out of the soil.
- They fly around to find a mate and lay eggs.
- The beetles only live for a few weeks. By the end of August, most of them will have died.



Task: Complete the comprehension questions.

Questions on: 'Beetle watch'

- 1) Why is this beetle called a **stag** beetle?
- 2) How does the PTES want you to help?
- 3) For how long is the insect a larvae?
For how long is it a beetle?
- 4) Put the four stages of a stag beetle's life in the correct order.
The first one has been done for you.
- 5) Why is this time of year 'stag beetle season'?
- 6) When is the best time to try to spot a stag beetle?
- 7) What does the writer say you shouldn't worry about?
- 8) Do you think the journalist likes these insects, or not? Which words or sentences give you the answer?

	Cocoon
	Larva
	Beetle
1	Egg