

# Introduced Dung Beetles of the Limestone Coast

## What is a dung beetle?

Dung beetles feed on dung and use it as a food source for their offspring. Most dung beetles belong to the beetle subfamily Scarabaeinae. There are many native dung beetle species in Australia, but these mainly feed on marsupial dung. The dung beetles introduced to Australia by CSIRO between 1968 and 1992 specialise in dung from cattle and other livestock species. Twenty-three introduced species have become established in Australia with nine species found in the Limestone Coast landscape region.



## Identifying dung beetles

Dung beetle species are different in their size, colour, daily flight activity, yearly activity and distribution in Australia. Male and females within a species are often visually different, and many species have different types of individuals. To see some of the smaller features used to differentiate some species and male from female, a magnifying glass is often needed.

### Legend

- Spring
- Summer
- Autumn
- Winter
- Day
- Night
- Dawn
- Dusk

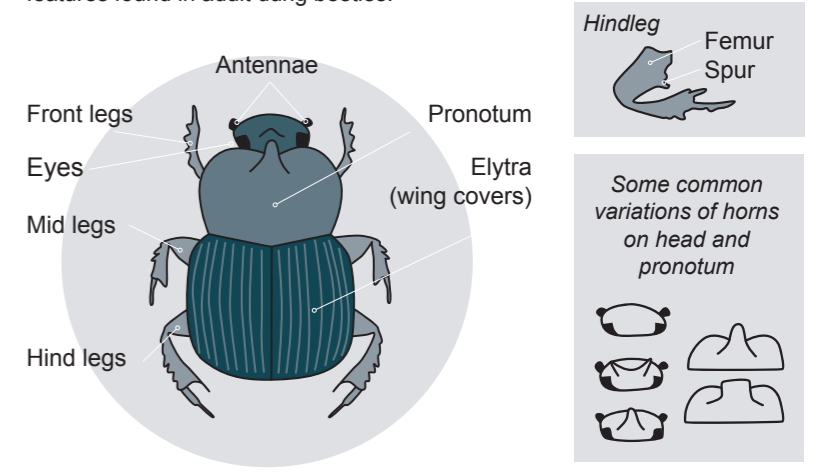
### Key to graphics

**Beetle size**  
The black ellipse indicates the minimum and the blue one the maximum size observed for adults of the species.

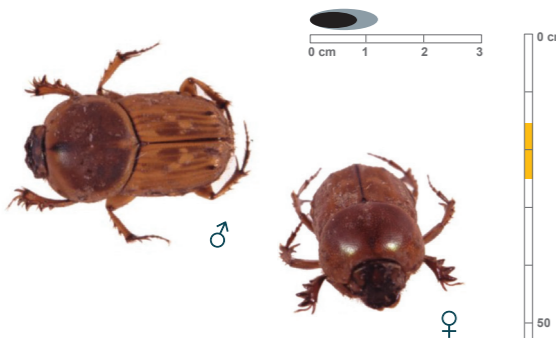
**Burrowing depth**  
The yellow shaded zone in the vertical ruler indicates the approximate depth in centimetres that adults burrow underground. A question mark within a yellow dot is used when burrowing depth is not known.

## Basic dung beetle anatomy

This diagram shows a number of anatomical features found in adult dung beetles.



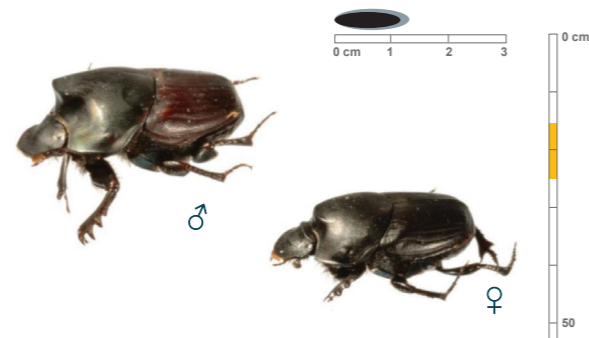
## *Euoniticellus fulvus*



**Length:** 8-12 mm  
**Colour:** yellow to medium brown, no speckling on pronotum, wing covers may have dark brown patches but no speckling  
**Horns:** none; males have two ridges at front of head but females have none  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, NSW, TAS

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

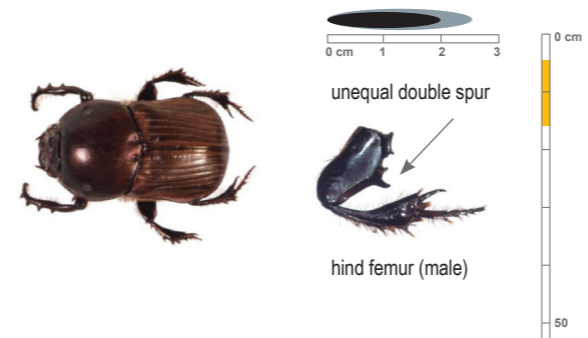
## *Onthophagus binodis*



**Length:** 11-13 mm  
**Colour:** matt black  
**Horns:** large lobe at front of pronotum (males), smaller in females  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, NSW, TAS, Southern QLD

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

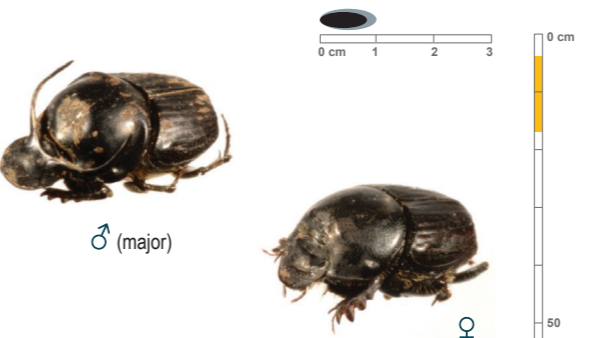
## *Onitis aygulus*



**Length:** 20-25 mm  
**Colour:** dark brown pronotum with coppery or green sheen, light brown wing covers  
**Horns:** female has distinct bump at back of head and a ridge close to front of head  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, NSW, Southern QLD

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

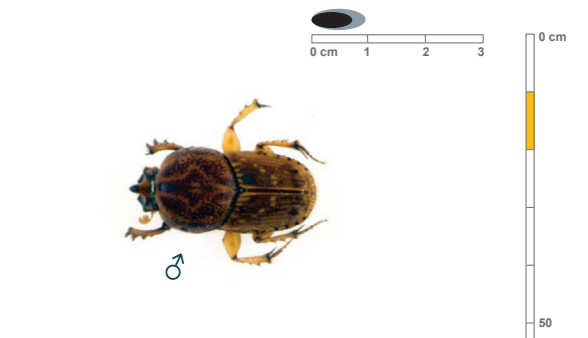
## *Onthophagus taurus*



**Length:** 8-10 mm  
**Colour:** shiny black  
**Horns:** males have long, curved horns; females have none  
**Minor male /female:** minor males have very short horns extending upward from back of head  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, NSW, TAS

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

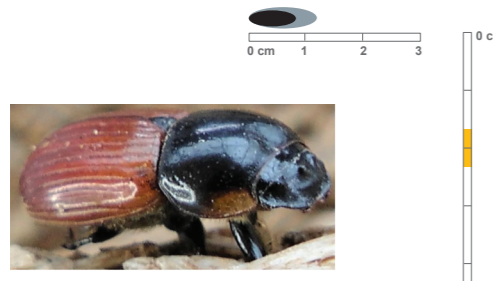
## *Euoniticellus intermedius*



**Length:** 7-9 mm  
**Colour:** yellow-brown, with diamond pattern on pronotum  
**Horns:** males have blunt horn in middle of head; females have a ridge between eyes  
**Distribution:** throughout Australia except very dry and southernmost regions

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

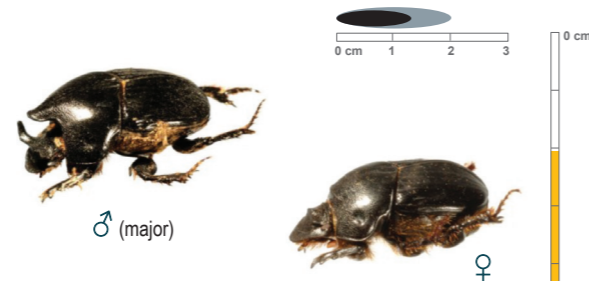
## *Aphodius fimetarius*



**Length:** 7-9 mm  
**Colour:** two-toned beetle with a black head and pronotum and red-brown wing coverings  
**Horns:** none  
**Distribution:** VIC, WA, SA, NSW, TAS, QLD

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

## *Bubas bison*



**Length:** 13-19 mm  
**Colour:** shiny black  
**Horns:** horn on each side of head and horn on pronotum (male); distinct ridge on head between eyes and on pronotum (female)  
**Minor male /female:** horn on each side of head, but not on pronotum  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, southern NSW

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

## *Euoniticellus pallipes*



**Length:** 9-12 mm  
**Colour:** light to medium black with speckling over pronotum and wing covers, 2-3 pairs of dark patches in centre of pronotum  
**Horns:** none; arched ridge between eyes in males, small ridge in females  
**Distribution:** WA, SA, VIC, NSW

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

## *Onitis alexis*



**Length:** 13-20 mm  
**Colour:** green/coppery pronotum, light brown wing covers  
**Horns:** both sexes have a ridge midway between eyes and front of head; female has distinct bump at back of head  
**Distribution:** all of Australia except TAS

**Yearly activity** **Flight time**

## Reference

Dung Beetle Ecosystem Engineer project - [www.dungbeetles.com.au](http://www.dungbeetles.com.au)

## Acknowledgements

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For more information, visit the Limestone Coast Landscape Board at [www.landscapesa.gov.au/lc](http://www.landscapesa.gov.au/lc)



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