

What's in your dung?

A guide to dung beetle species in South East SA.



**DUNG
BEETLE**

Ecosystem Engineers



REGIONAL GUIDE

South East SA

South East SA

Dung beetle species that are commonly found in the region.

Introduced



Bubas
bison

Tunneler



Euoniticellus
fulvus

Tunneler



Euoniticellus
intermedius

Tunneler



Euoniticellus
pallipes

Tunneler



Onitis
aygulus

Tunneler



Onitis
alexis

Tunneler



Onthophagus
binodis

Tunneler

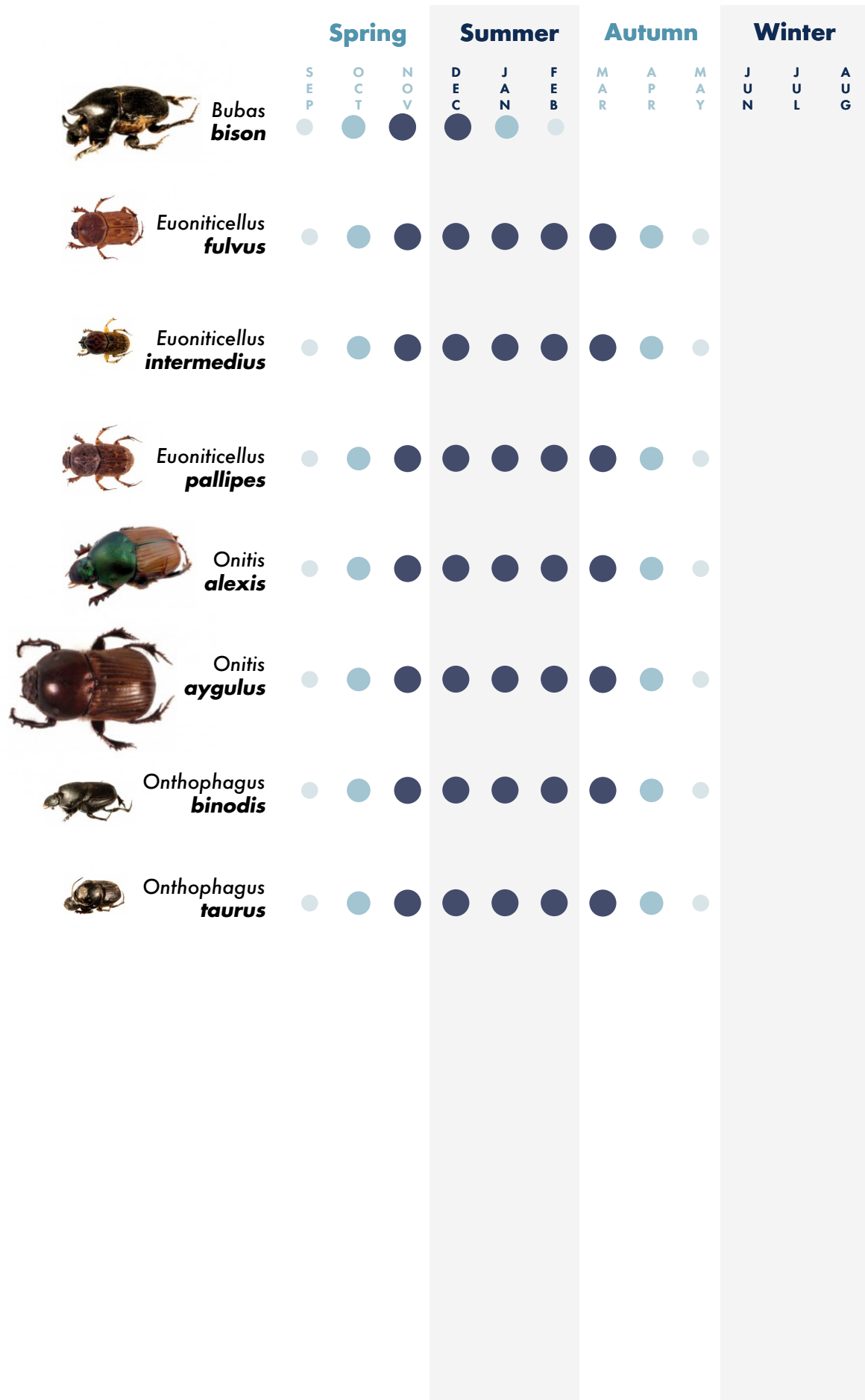


Onthophagus
taurus

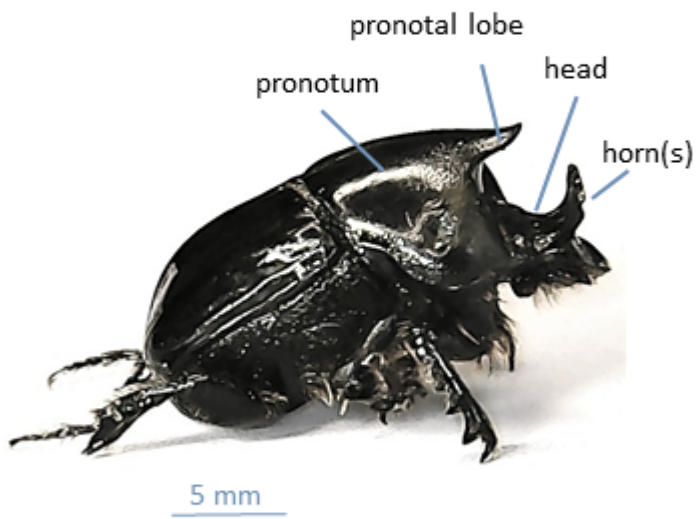
Tunneler

Seasonal activity

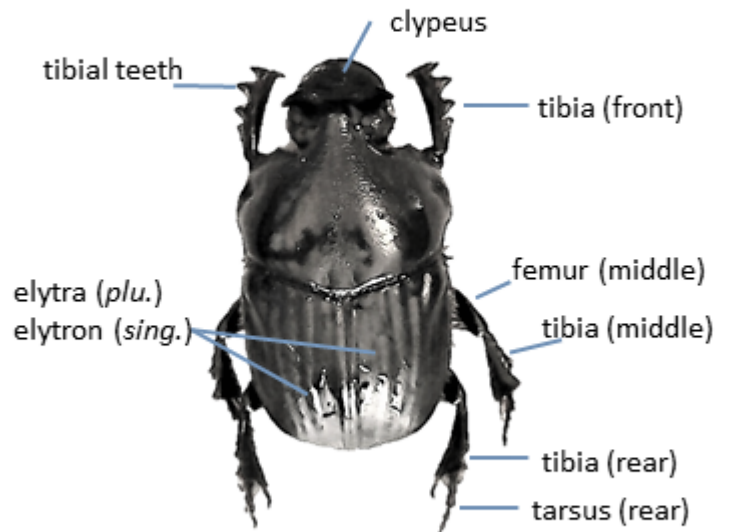
When dung beetles are most likely to be found in dung (in your region)



Beetle anatomy



Lateral (side) view

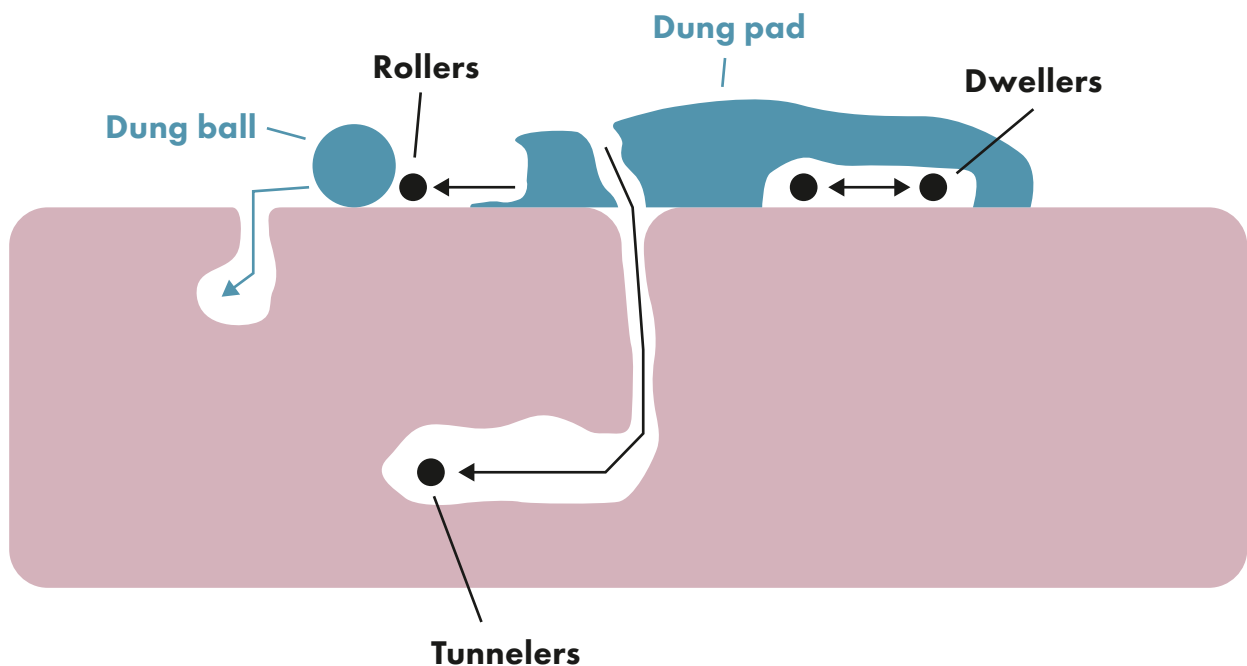


Dorsal (top) view

Nesting strategy

Dung beetles belong to one of three functional groups depending on nesting strategy.

- 1) Tunnelers
- 2) Dwellers
- 3) Rollers



What beetles are on your property?

Trapping beetles for identification

The key benefits of knowing which dung beetle species you have on your property:

- Self-assess which species you already have **present on your property**
- Understand **which beetles you should acquire** by identifying the seasonal gaps you need to fill
- Recognise periods of peak beetle activity. This knowledge can guide your decision on **when to avoid drenching**, and potentially harming your dung beetle population



Above: Pitfall trap



Above: Flotation sampling



VIDEO: How to trap dung beetles

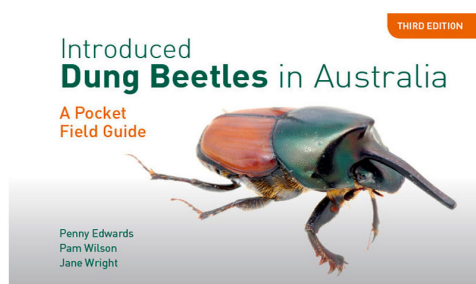
- Basic trap and flotation sampling
- Using a pitfall trap

Which species is this?

Identifying dung beetle species

Identifying a species

Identifying a beetle species from a few specimens can be difficult. To assist, please refer to handbooks and pocket guides available. Be aware that environmental conditions and lifecycle stage can impact appearance of individuals.

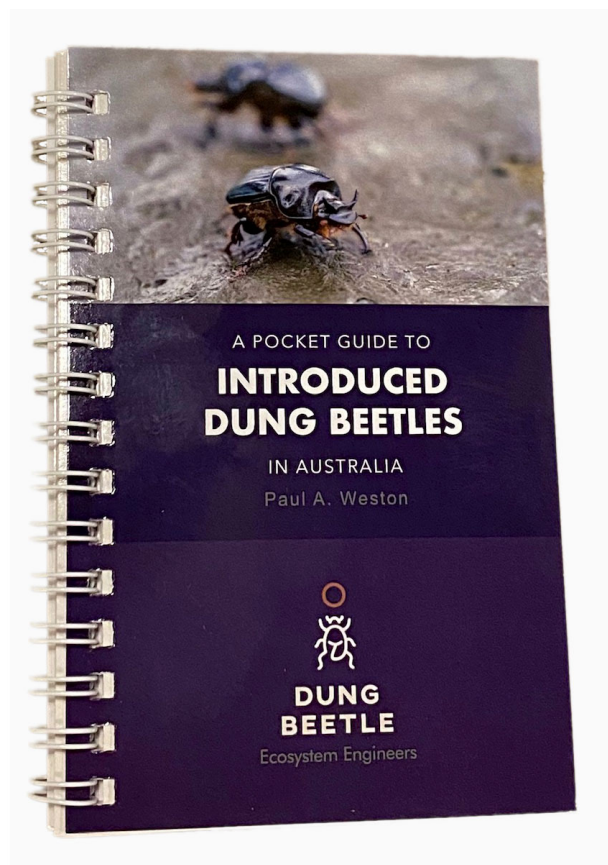


Introduced Dung Beetles in Australia – a pocket field guide

Authors: Penny Edwards, Pam Wilson and Jane Wright

Buy online

www.publish.csiro.au/book/7207



Contact the DBEE team to request a pocket guide

EMAIL: dungbeetle@csu.edu.au



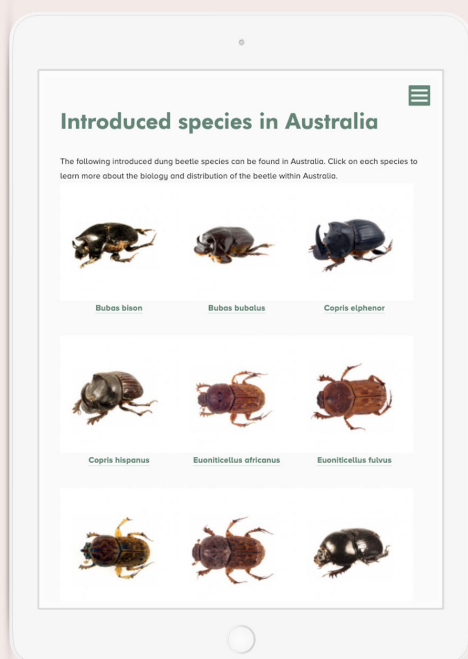
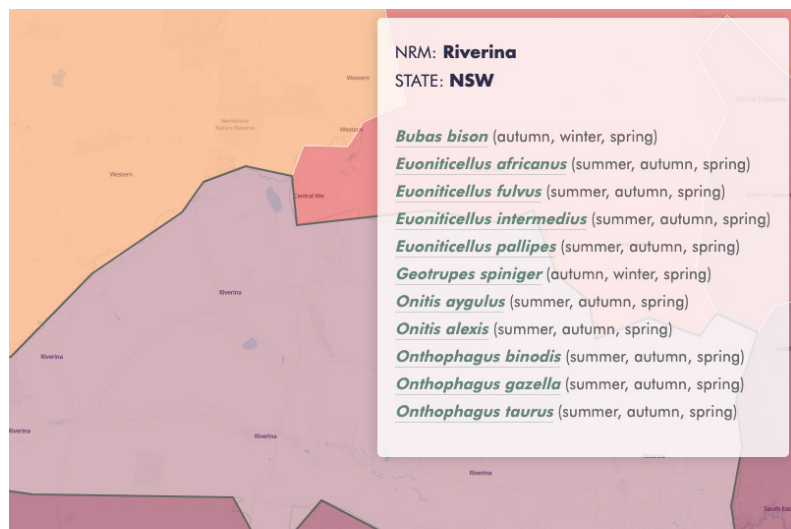
Dung Down Under – dung beetles for Australia

Authors: Bernard Doube and Tim Marshall

Buy online

www.dungbeetlesolutions.com.au

Interactive maps and tools



Online visual identification guide.

Don't have our handy pocket ID guide? You can access identification information for the introduced dung beetle species directly from our website, including tips on key anatomical features to look out for when determining what species you have on your property.



WEBSITE: Species near you

- Interactive map listing species by NRM region
- Photos and identification information for introduced species

Getting more beetles

Introducing new beetles to your property

Successful beetle introduction can take time and requires appropriate management strategies.



VIDEO: Do you need more dung beetles on your property?



Selecting the right beetle species for your property

Selecting the right beetle species for your property
It is important to select beetles which are well adapted to your regional conditions. Visit www.dungbeetles.com.au for a list of commercial suppliers that may be able to assist you with dung beetles that are ideal to your needs.



WEBSITE: Find a supplier

– List of commercial dung beetle suppliers in Australia

www.dungbeetles.com.au

Nurseries and release

Give your dung beetles a great start in life with an on-farm nursery.

- Maintain beetle health with regular feeds of fresh dung
- Keep predators away from the dung beetles using the enclosure
- Maximise the reproductive population

Creating a nursery is simple.

- Create a timber box (we suggest a size of around W 900mm x D 900mm x H 200mm)
- Use a hinged lid for easy access for monitoring and use shade-cloth (ventilated material) for the lid surface area.
- Dig the box in approximately 10cm into the ground to reduce the likelihood of beetles tunneling in and out of the nursery.



VIDEO: How to make a nursery and release dung beetles on your property

Trapping beetles in nursery

There are two reasons why you would want to trap beetles in your nursery.

To determine how well:

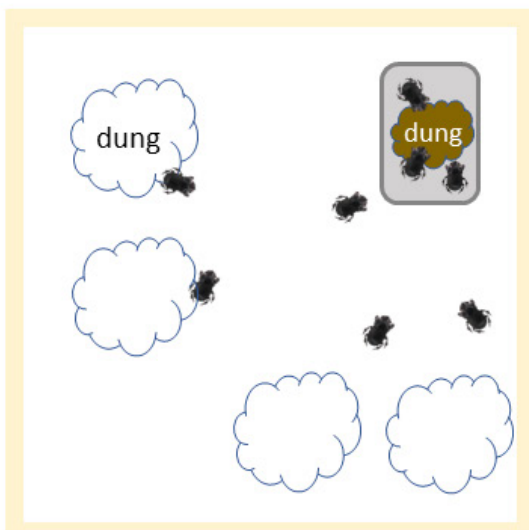
- the beetles survived winter
- they have bred through spring.

1. Check how well beetles emerge from winter:

1.1 In early spring set a small container into the ground inside the nursery and place some dung in the bottom. It is best to do this in the evening or early morning when the beetles are less active.

1.2 After 24 hours* check the container to see if it contains any beetles (record data and number caught). Any beetles captured can be returned to the main nursery.

1.3 Repeat this process once a week over the next few weeks and each time record the date and the number of beetles captured.



2. Check how well the beetles bred in spring:

2.1 The beetles that emerged in spring will have bred and we can expect new beetles to emerge after around 8-12 weeks (the time will vary).

2.2 In mid December set a small container into the ground inside the nursery and place some dung in the bottom (as you did in spring). Check the container after 24 hours* and return any trapped beetles to the nursery (record the date and how many beetles were caught).

2.3 Repeat this process once a week over the next few weeks and each time record the date and the number of beetles captured. Send the information to us.

** 24 hours is not a magical time. You may choose 36 hours or 48 hours. However, it is important the time is the same for each assessment so you can compare the number of beetles trapped and determine peak emergence.*

3. Releasing beetles from your nursery:

Ideally your beetles will have bred prolifically and can be released from December – January. For example a nursery that started with 100 beetles would ideally produce between 500-1000 beetles.

3.1 Trap and collect 100 beetles (assume roughly equal numbers of each sex) and set them aside.

3.2 Carefully lift the nursery and establish it in a new location (adjacent on fresh ground is fine). Place the 100 beetles you set aside in the new nursery and start the process again. Beetles still emerging from the old nursery location are free.

Farm management considerations

Introducing beetles

- When introducing dung beetles to your property, it is critical that beetles have an appropriate food source, fresh dung.
- When introducing dung beetles to your property for the first time using an on-farm nursery, fresh dung must be available while beetles are active. The nursery should protect against predators.
- When introducing dung beetles for the first time in a field site, consider a minimum of 50-500 per introduction site. Greater numbers are likely to increase success rates.
- Consider multiple introduction sites if you wish to populate a property with existing livestock.

Drenching livestock

- Consider drenching after you perform fecal egg counts to determine if you need to drench.
- Consider drenching when beetles are not actively working your dung pads.

Soil tillage

- Beetle establishment can be impacted by soil tillage. Performing deep harrowing or seeding resulting in deep soil disruption may adversely impact dung beetles below ground.



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www.dungbeetles.com.au