

What's in your dung?

A guide to dung beetle species in the Riverina.



**DUNG
BEETLE**

Ecosystem Engineers



REGIONAL GUIDE
The Riverina

The Riverina

Dung beetle species that are commonly found in the region.

Introduced



*Aphodius
fimetarius*
Dweller



*Bubas
bison*
Tunneler



*Digitonthophagus
gazella*
Tunneler



*Euoniticellus
africanus*
Tunneler



*Euoniticellus
fulvus*
Tunneler



*Euoniticellus
intermedius*
Tunneler



*Euoniticellus
pallipes*
Tunneler



*Onitis
alexis*
Tunneler



*Onitis
aygulus*
Tunneler



*Onthophagus
binodis*
Tunneler



*Onthophagus
taurus*
Tunneler

Natives



*Onthophagus
australis*



*Onthophagus
pentacanthus*



*Onthophagus
dandalu*

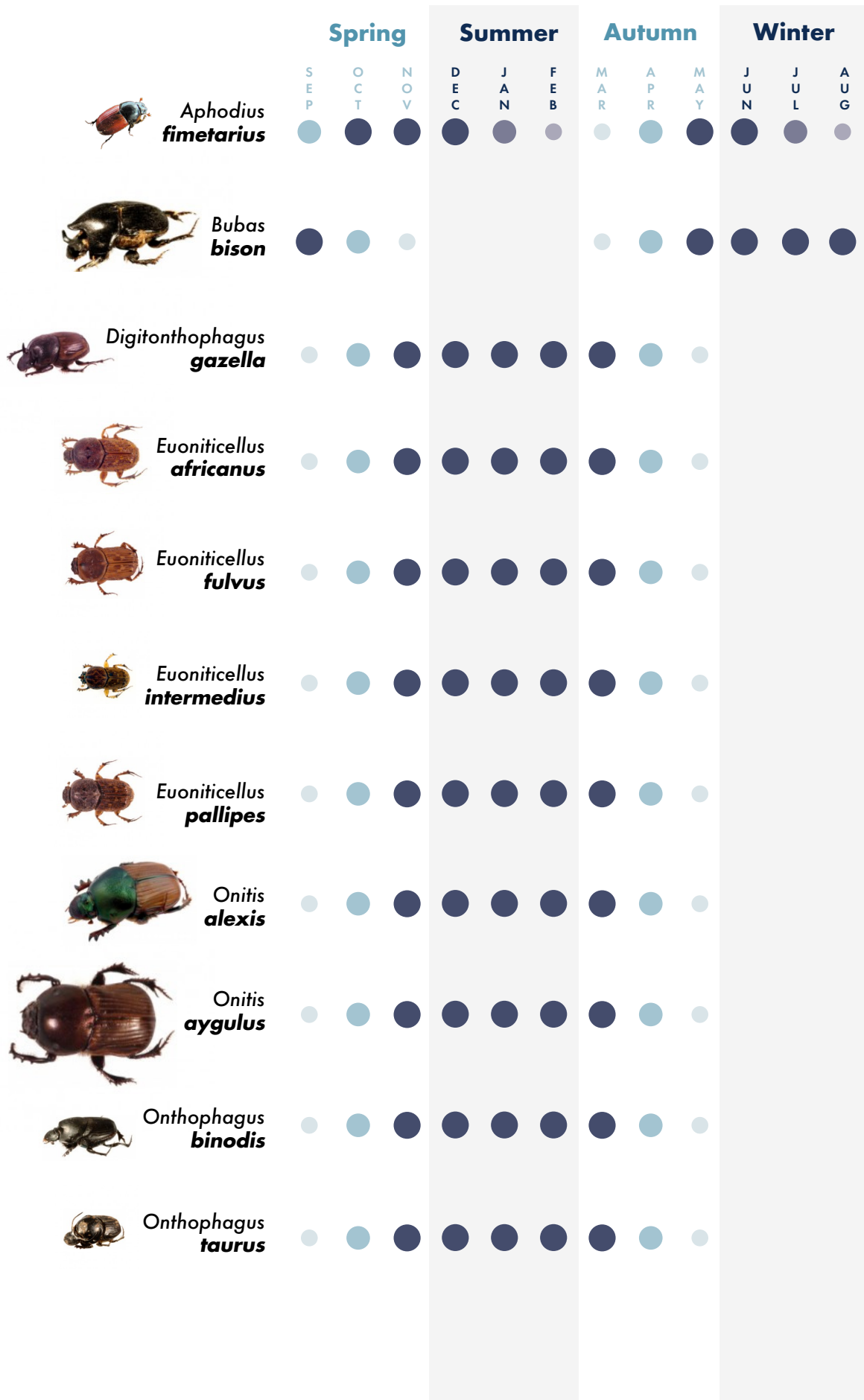


*Onthophagus
granulatus*

Note: Up to 500 native and non-native species of dung beetles exist in Australia.
This guide is limited to species you are most likely to find in this region.

Seasonal activity

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



Aphodius fimetarius



Dweller

Colour orange-red ribbed elytra with a black head and thorax

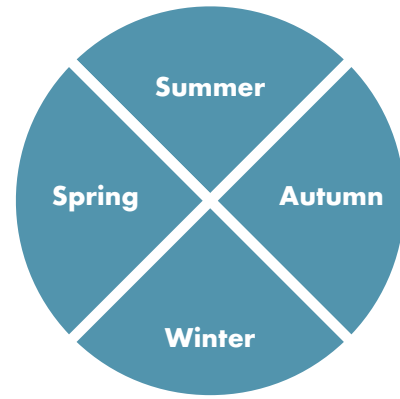
Horns none

Flight time day

Yearly Activity entire year

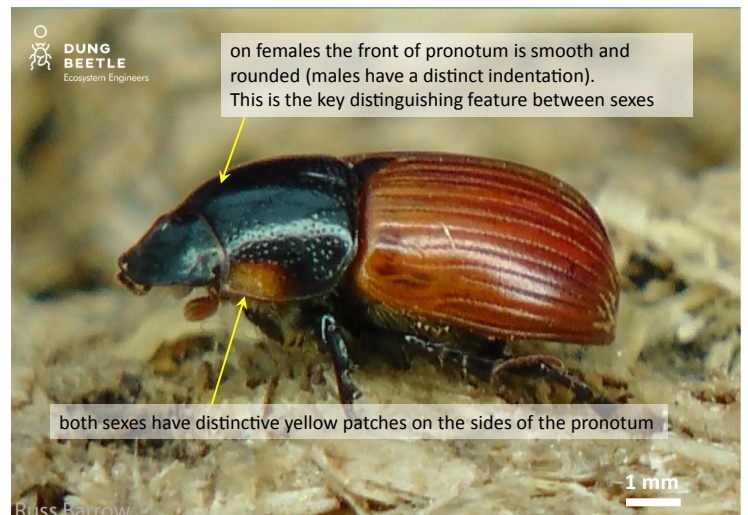
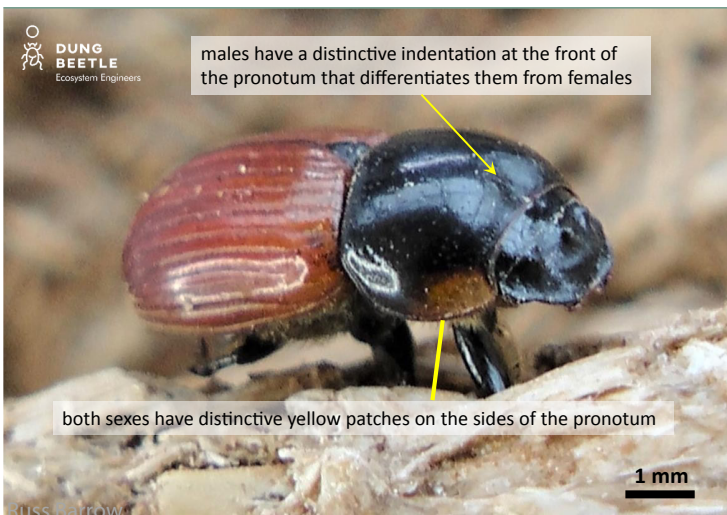
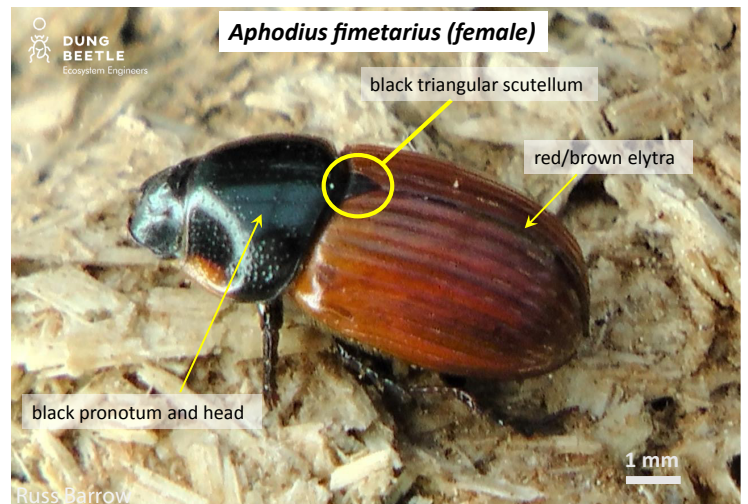
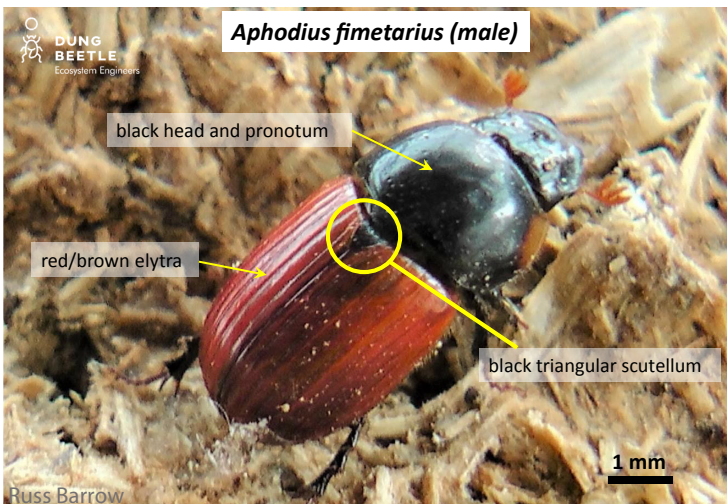
Distribution southern Australia including TAS

Seasonal activity



■ Active □ Inactive

Size: 6 mm ↔ 9 mm



Bubas bison



Tunneler

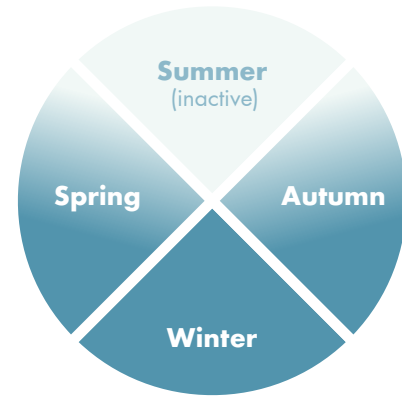
Colour shiny black

Horns horn on each side of head and horn on pronotum (male); distinct ridge on head between eyes and on pronotum (female)

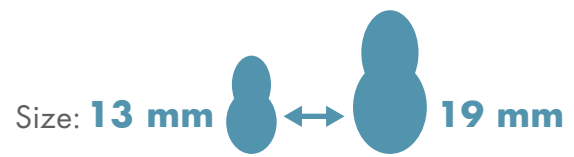
Flight time dusk and dawn

Distribution WA, SA, VIC, southern NSW

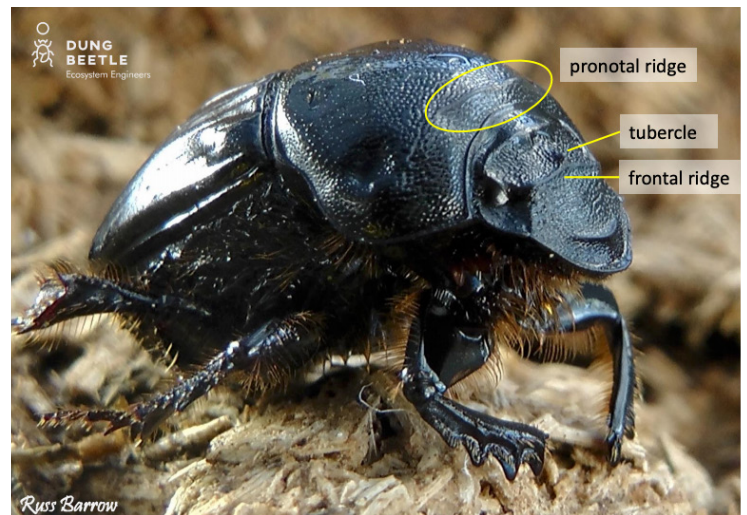
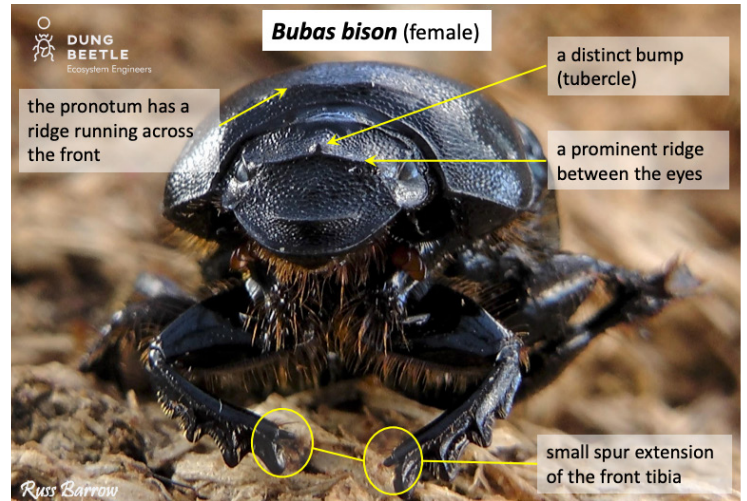
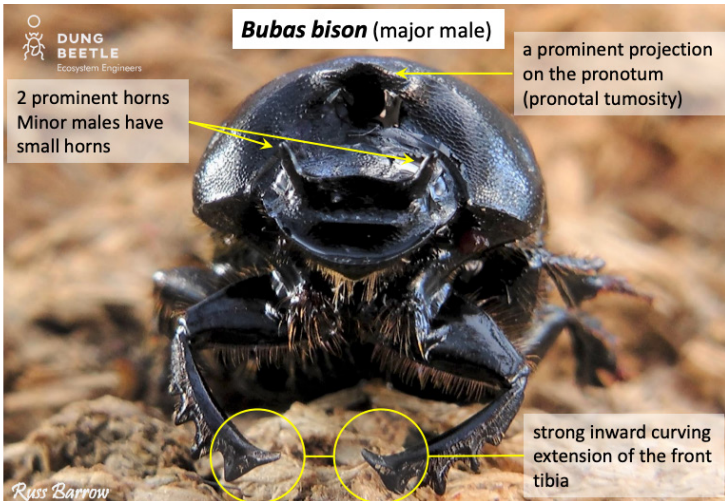
Seasonal activity



Active Inactive



Burrowing depth
20 – 65 cm



Digitonthophagus gazella

Seasonal activity

Tunneler

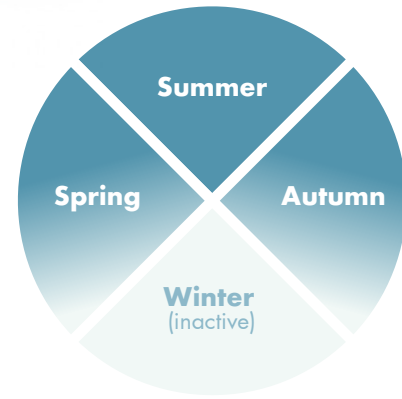
Colour two-toned; dark brown pronotum, lighter brown elytra

Horns males have a pair of horns at the back of the head



Flight time dusk and dawn

Minor minor males have smaller horns

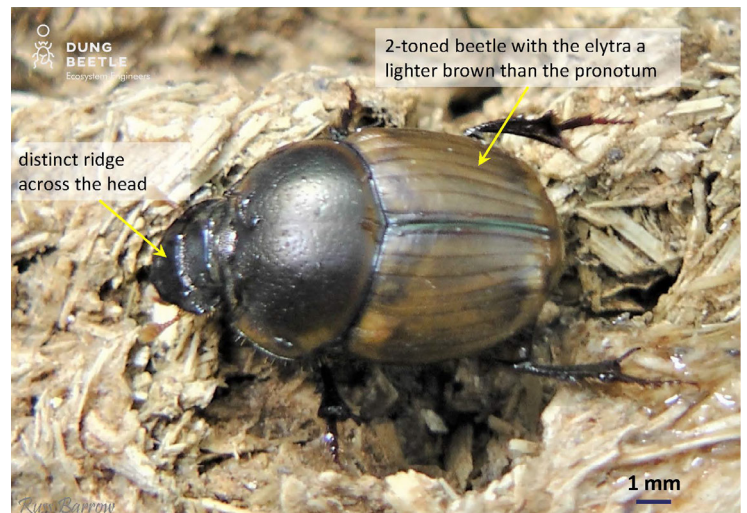
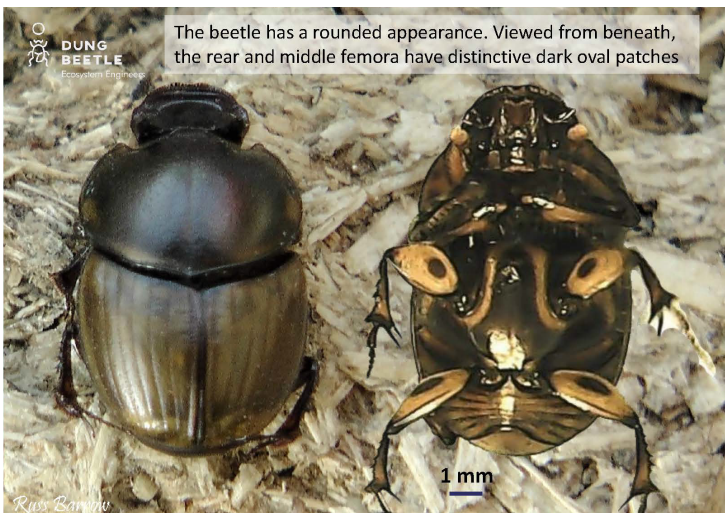
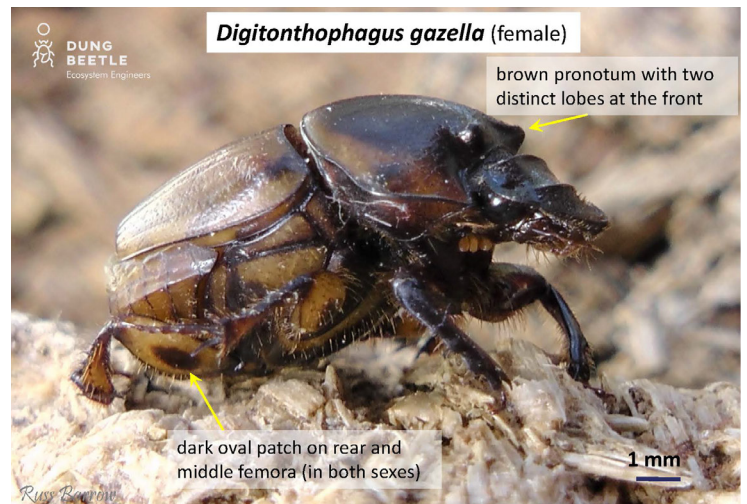
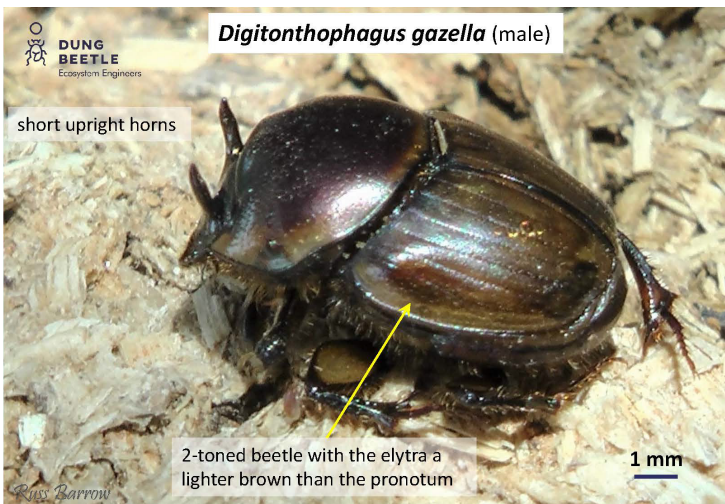
Distribution northern and eastern Australia



■ Active □ Inactive

Size: 10 mm  ↔  13 mm

Burrowing depth
18 – 25 cm



Euoniticellus africanus



Tunneler

Colour light to dark brown with faint diamond shape on pronotum. Two shiny black triangles on pronotum

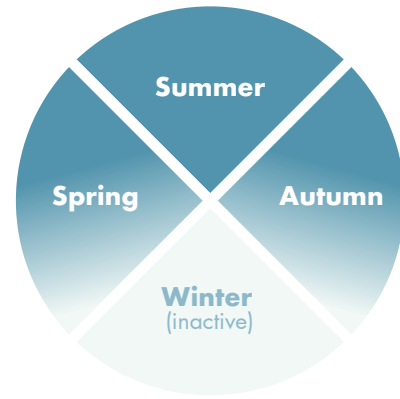
Horns none

Flight time day

Distribution southeast QLD, eastern NSW

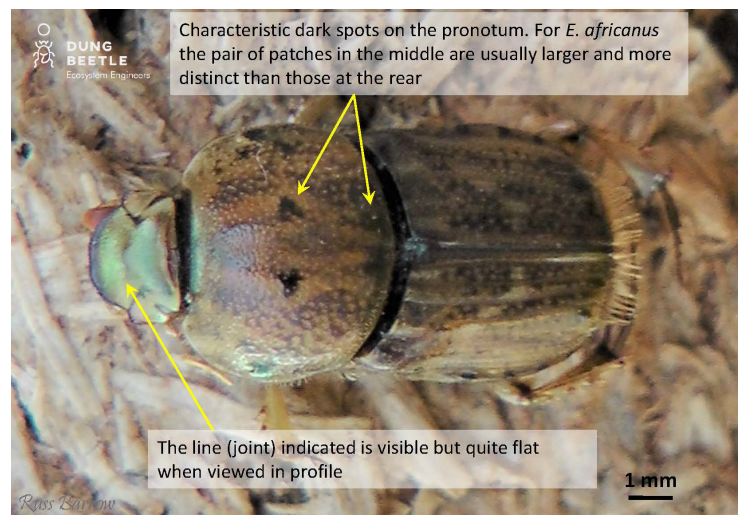
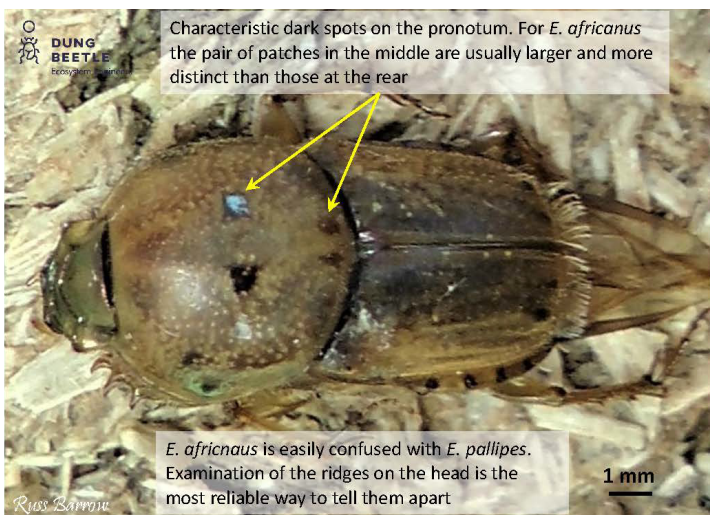
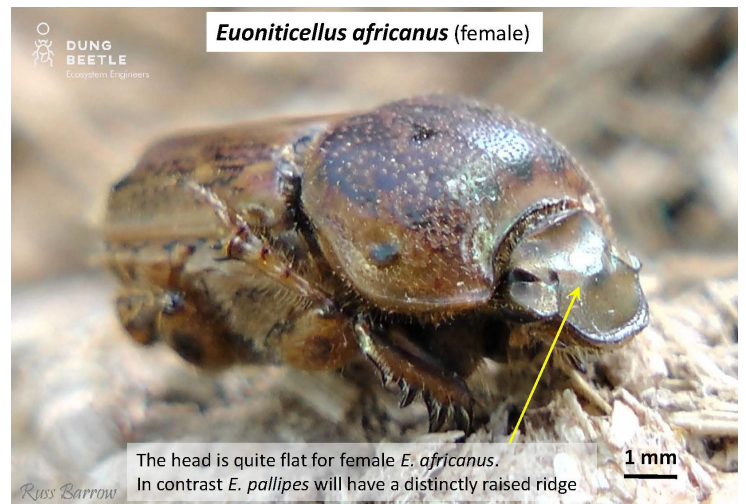
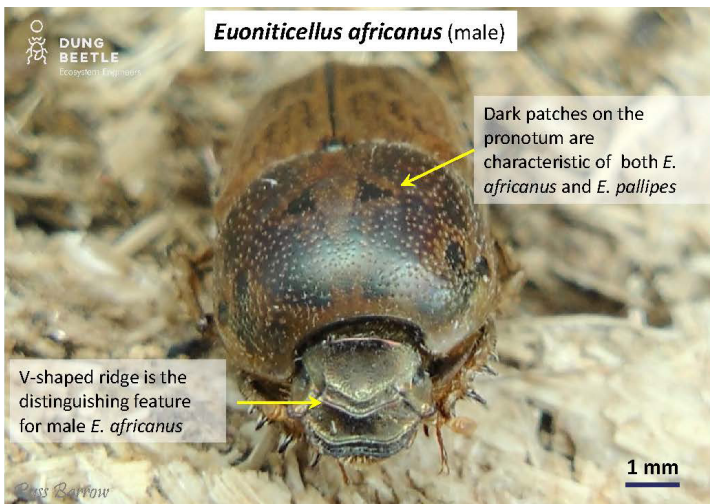
Similar Species *E. pallipes* female has a small ridge between eyes, but *E. africanus* has none. *E. pallipes* male has shallowly arched ridge between eyes, which is strongly curved in *E. africanus*.

Seasonal activity



■ Active □ Inactive

Size: 8 mm ↔ 13 mm



Euoniticellus fulvus



Tunneler

Colour yellow to medium brown, no speckling on pronotum. Wing covers may have dark brown patches but no speckling

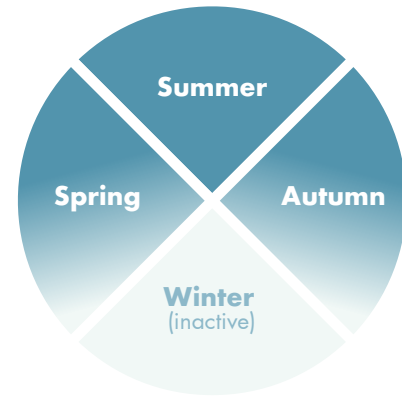
Horns none; males have two ridges at front of head but females have none

Flight time day

Distribution WA, SA, VIC, NSW, TAS

Similar Species Similar to other species of *Euoniticellus*, but its small size and lack of markings set it apart.

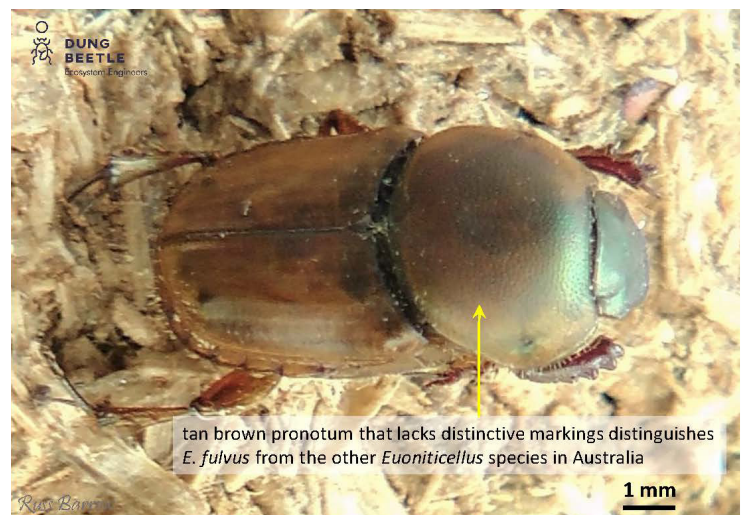
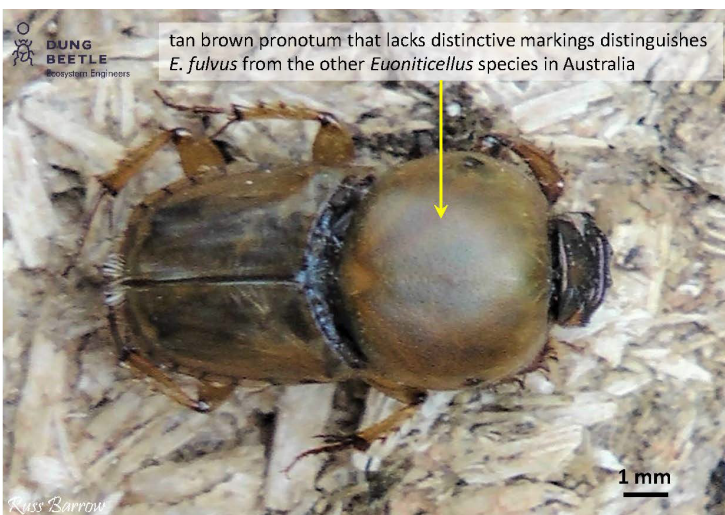
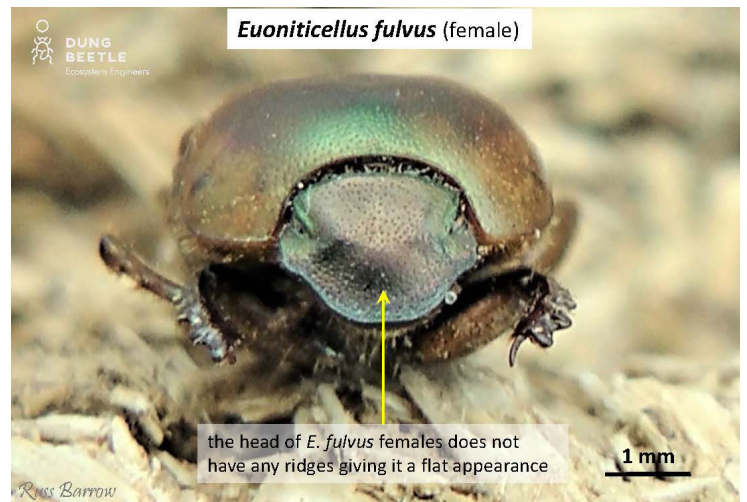
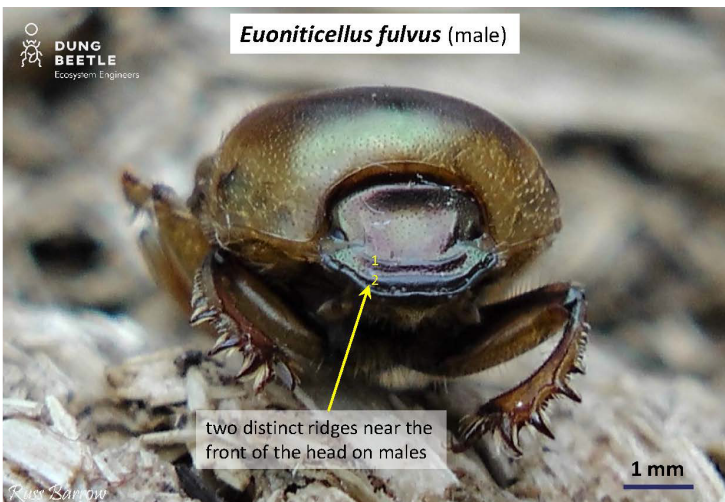
Seasonal activity



■ Active □ Inactive

Size: 8 mm ↔ 12 mm

Burrowing depth
17 – 23 cm



Euoniticellus intermedius



Tunneler

Colour yellow–brown, with diamond pattern on pronotum

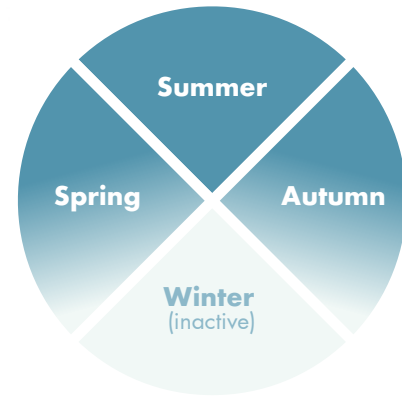
Horns males have a blunt horn in middle of head; females have a ridge between the eyes

Flight time day

Distribution throughout Australia except very dry and southernmost regions

Similar Species similar to other species of *Euoniticellus*, but the distinctive markings on pronotum differentiate it from other species.

Seasonal activity

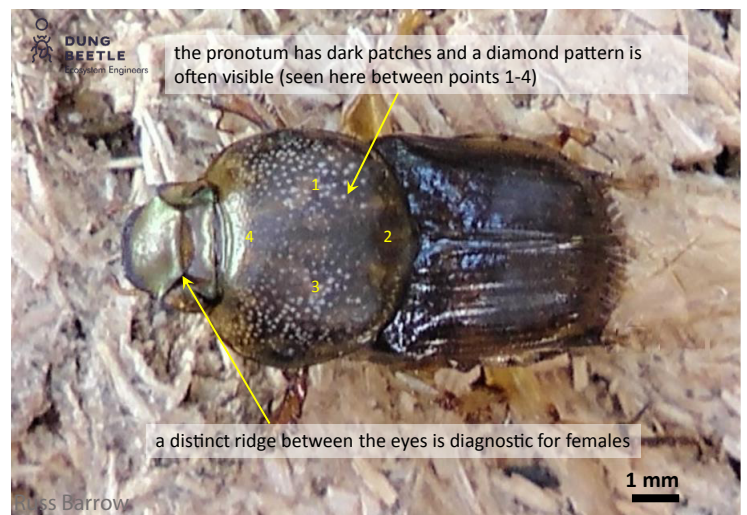
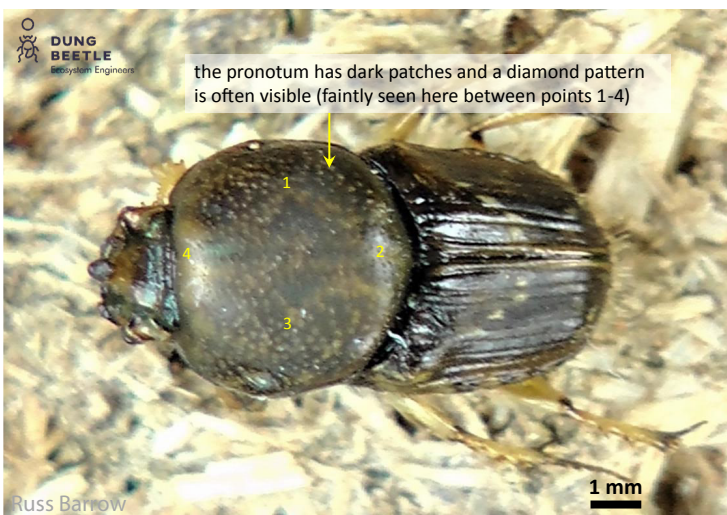
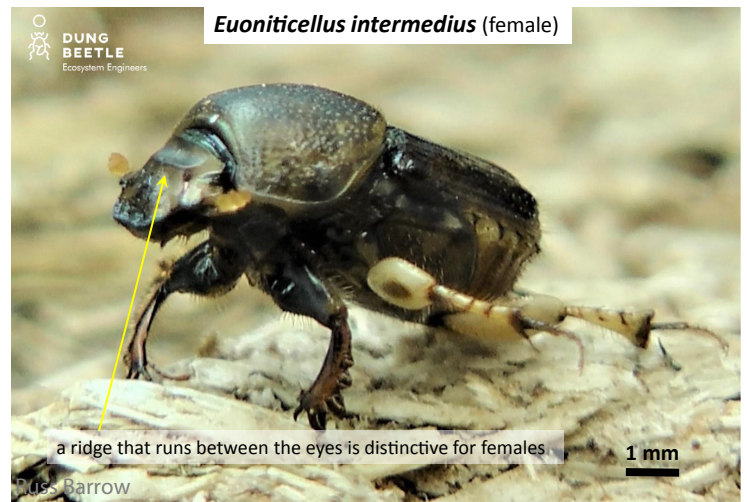
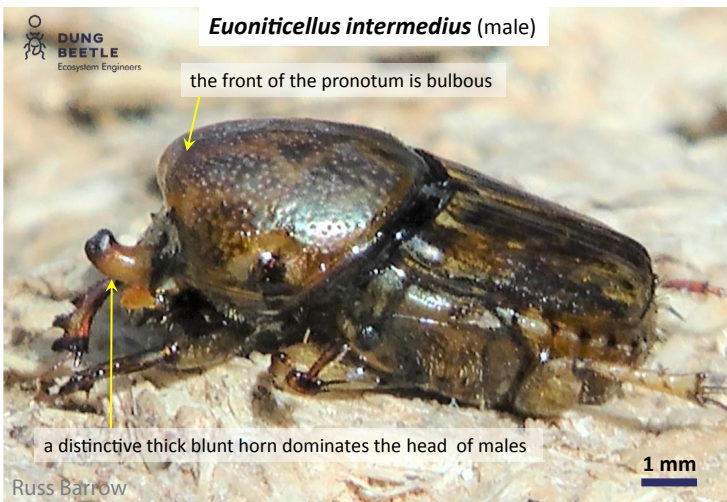


■ Active □ Inactive

Size: **7 mm** ↔ **9 mm**

Burrowing depth

11 – 19 cm



Euoniticellus pallipes



Seasonal activity



■ Active □ Inactive

Tunneler

Colour light to medium brown with speckling over pronotum and wing covers. 2–3 pairs of dark patches in centre of pronotum

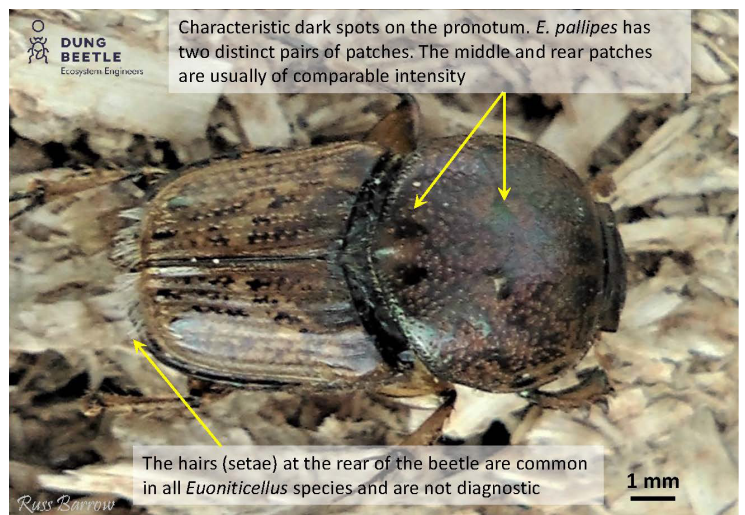
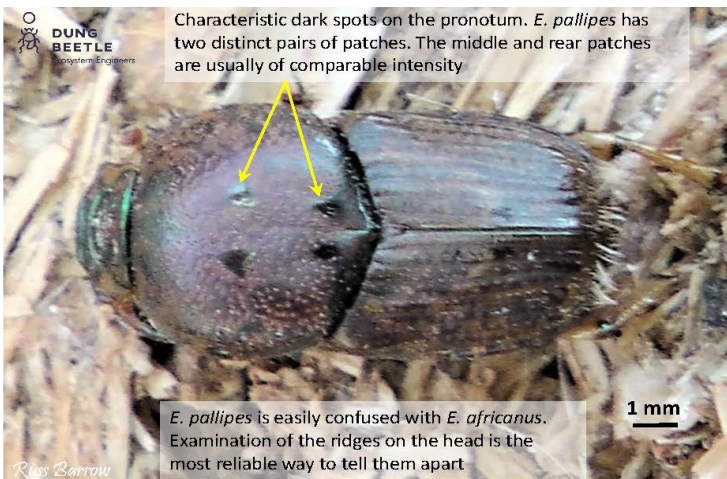
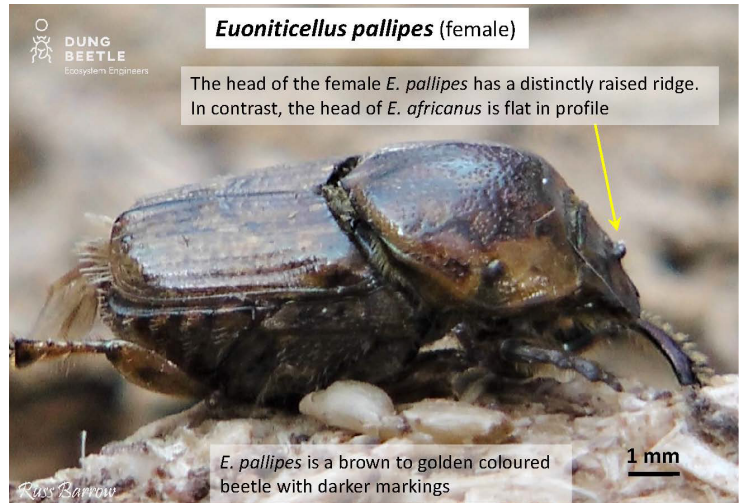
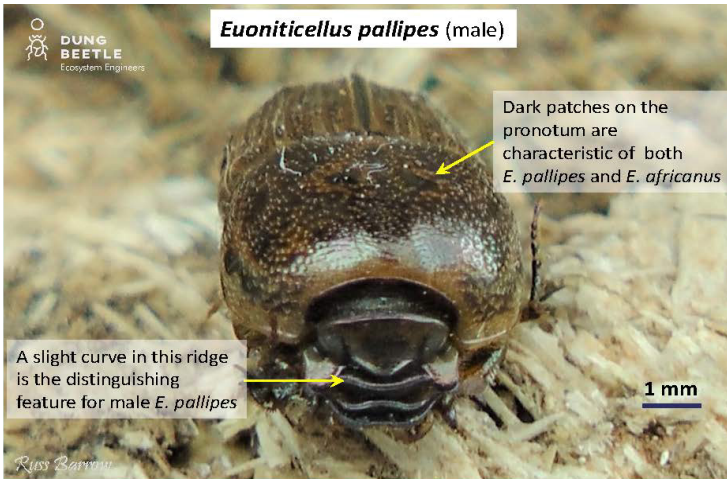
Horns none; arched ridge between eyes in males, small ridge in females

Flight time day

Distribution WA, SA, VIC, NSW

Similar Species *E. pallipes* female has a small ridge between eyes, but *E. africanus* female has none. *E. pallipes* male has shallowly arched ridge between eyes, which is strongly curved in male *E. africanus*.

Size: 9 mm 12 mm



Geotrupes spiniger

Tunneler

Colour shiny black with metallic blue/ purplish underside

Horns none

Flight time dusk and dawn

Distribution TAS, VIC, southeast and northeast NSW

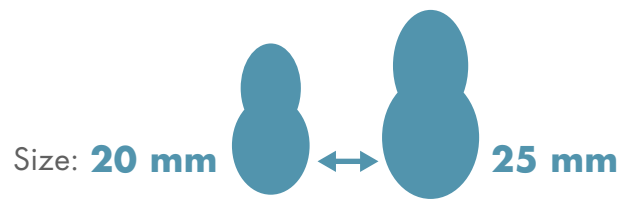
Similar Species unlikely to be confused with any other species of dung beetle found in Australia.



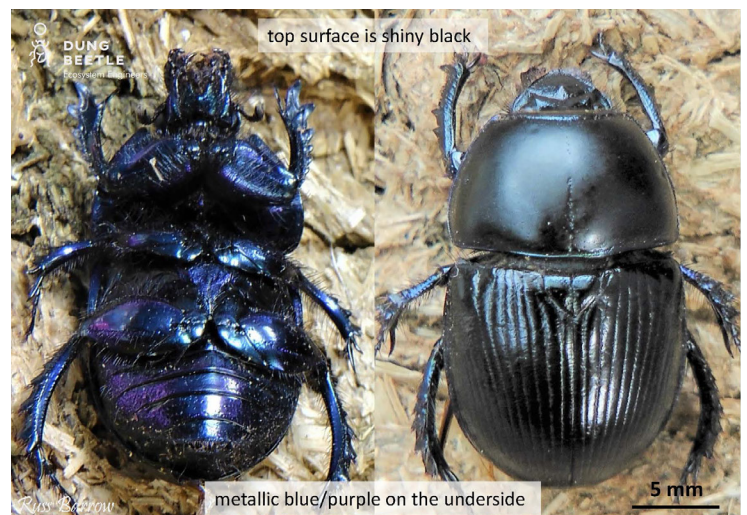
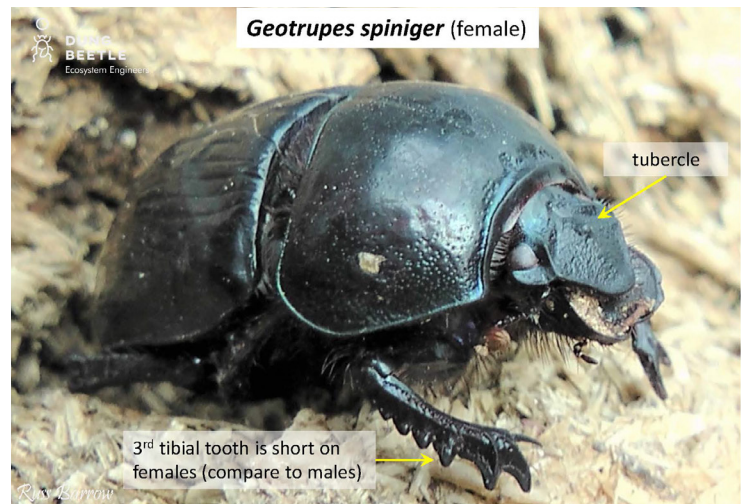
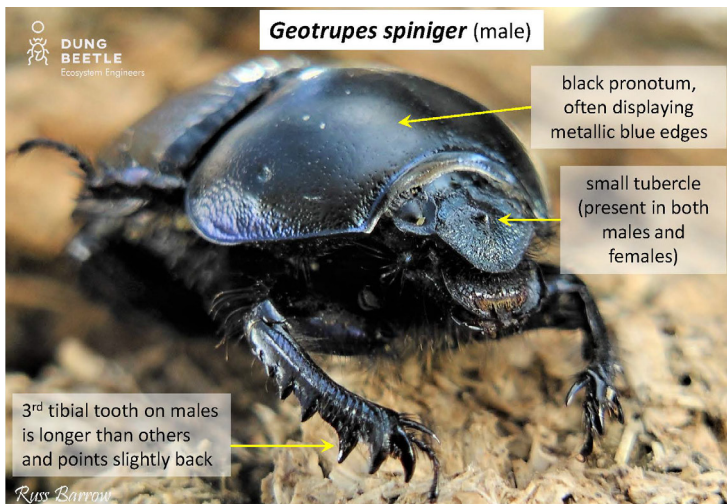
Seasonal activity



Active Inactive



Burrowing depth
20 – 28 cm



Onitis alexis



Tunneler

Colour green/coppery pronotum, light brown wing covers

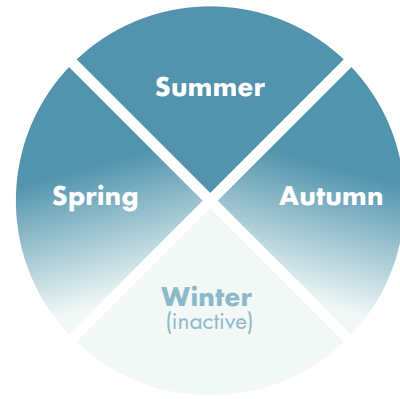
Horns both sexes have a ridge midway between eyes and front of head; female has distinct bump at back of head

Flight time dusk and dawn

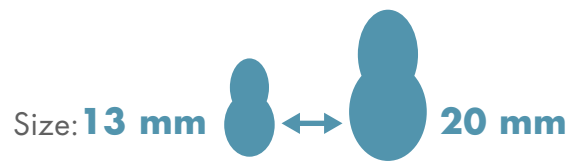
Distribution all of Australia except TAS

Similar Species *Onitis aygulus* is larger and has an unequal double spur on hind femur of male (single spur in *O. alexis*).

Seasonal activity

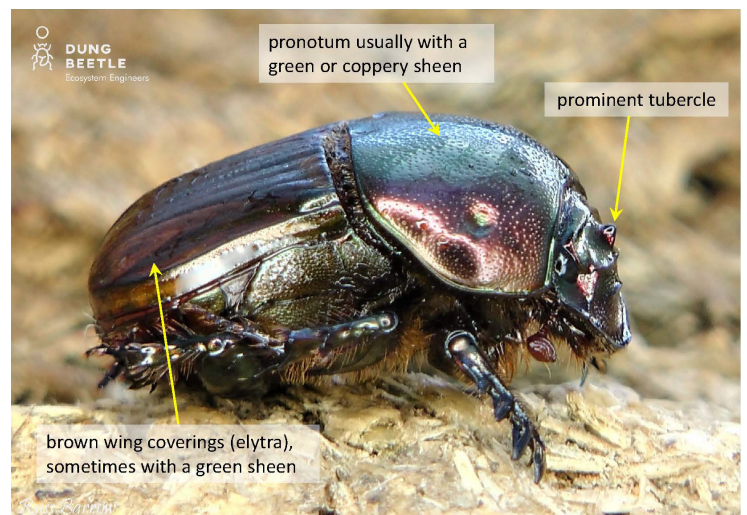
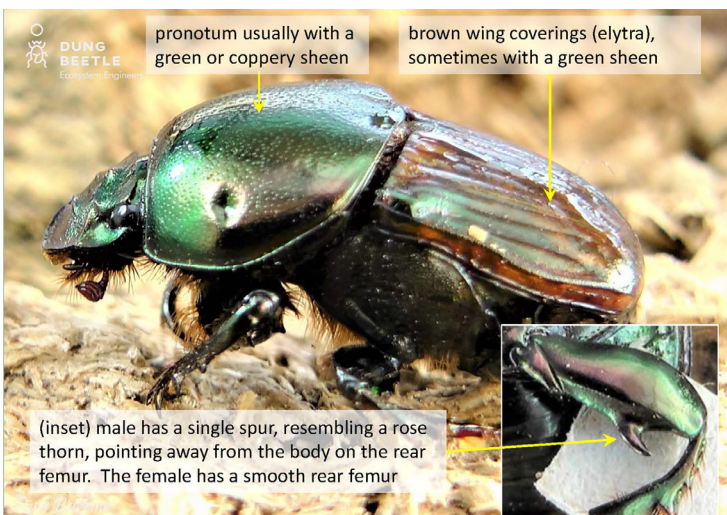
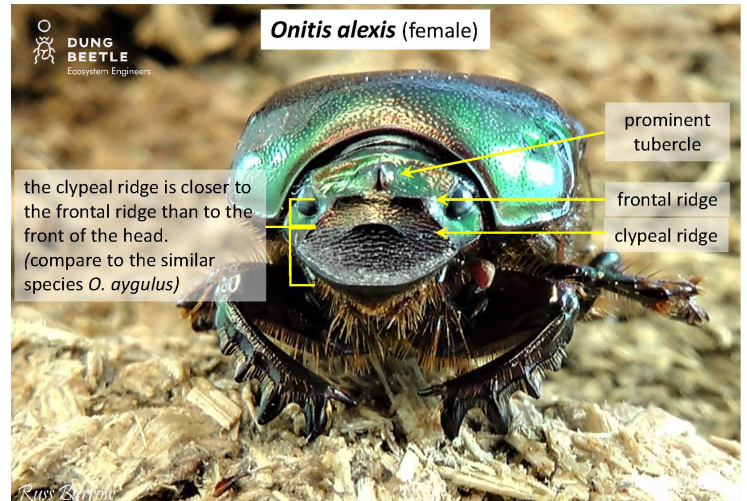
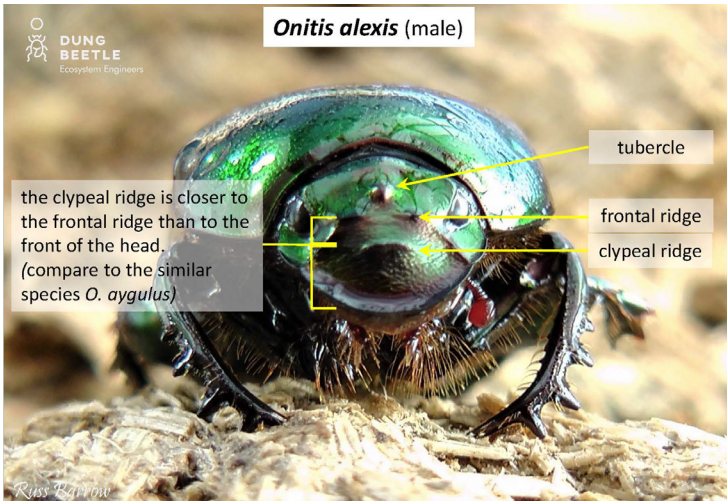


Active Inactive



Burrowing depth

20 – 65 cm



Onitis aygulus



Tunneler

Colour dark brown pronotum with coppery or green sheen, light brown wing covers

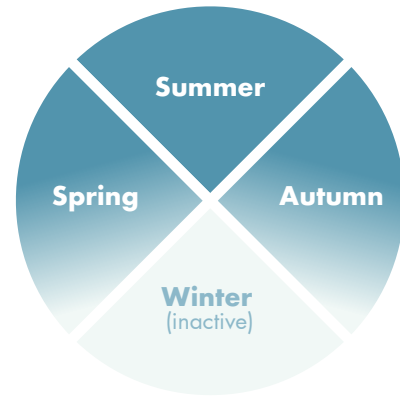
Horns female has distinct bump at back of head and a ridge close to front of head

Flight time dusk and dawn

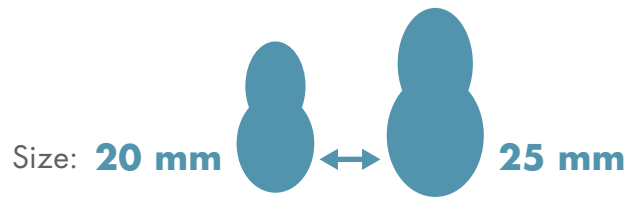
Distribution WA, SA, VIC, NSW

Similar Species *Onitis alexis* is similar but smaller and has a single curved spur on hind femur of male (unequal double spur in *O. aygulus*).

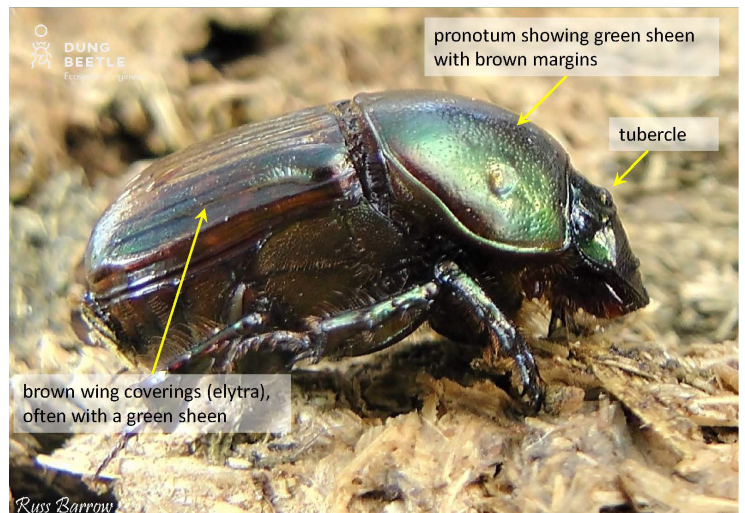
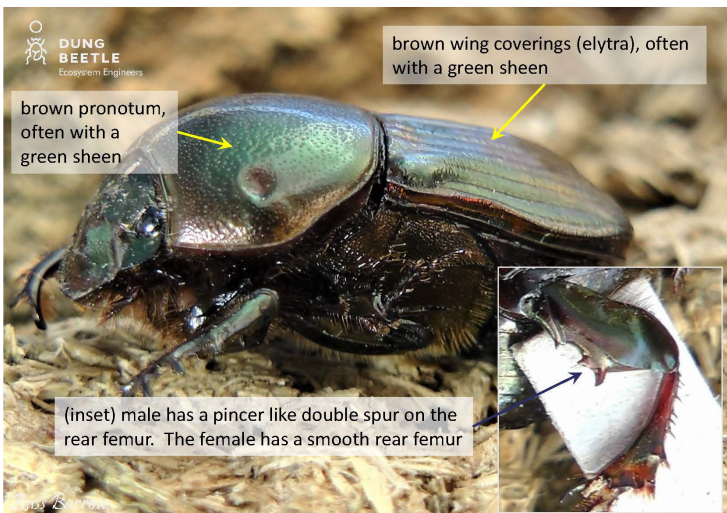
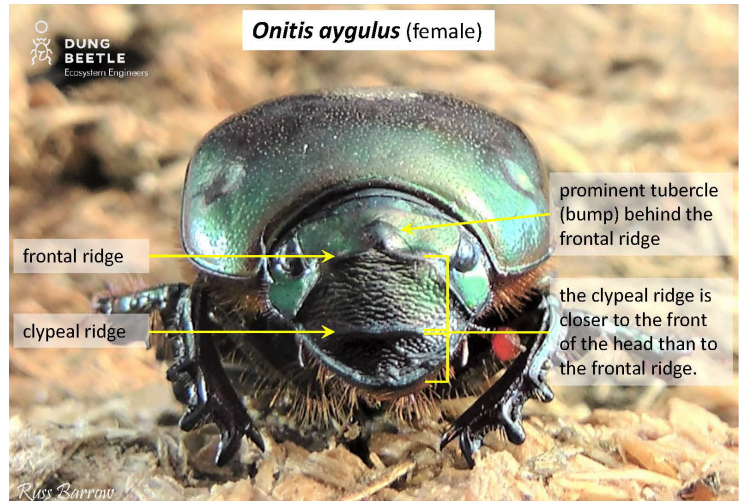
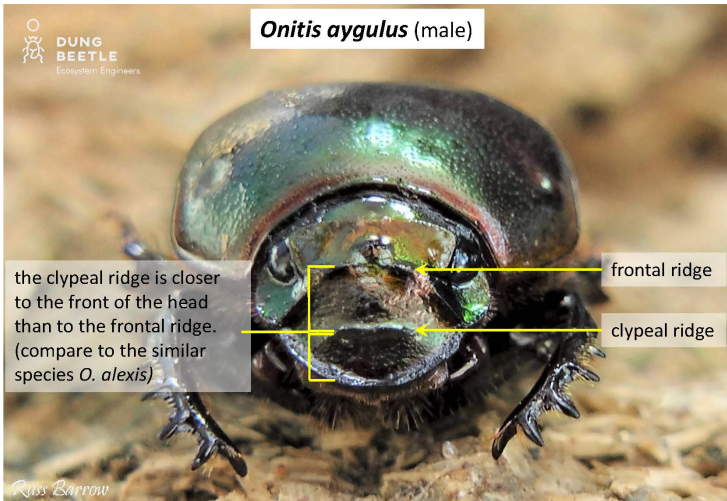
Seasonal activity



Active Inactive



Burrowing depth
5 – 16 cm



Onthophagus binodis



Tunneler

Colour matt black

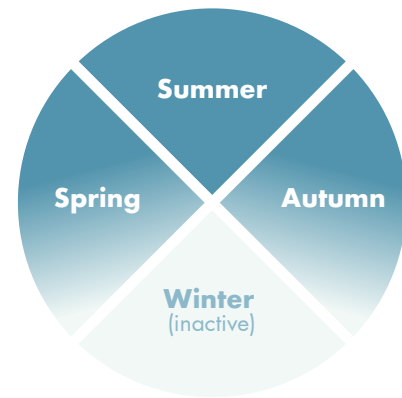
Horns large lobe at front of pronotum (males), smaller in females

Flight time day

Distribution WA, SA, VIC, NSW, TAS, south-east QLD

Similar Species female *O. taurus* are similar to female *O. binodis*, but *O. taurus* females are shinier and the front of the pronotum is rounded.

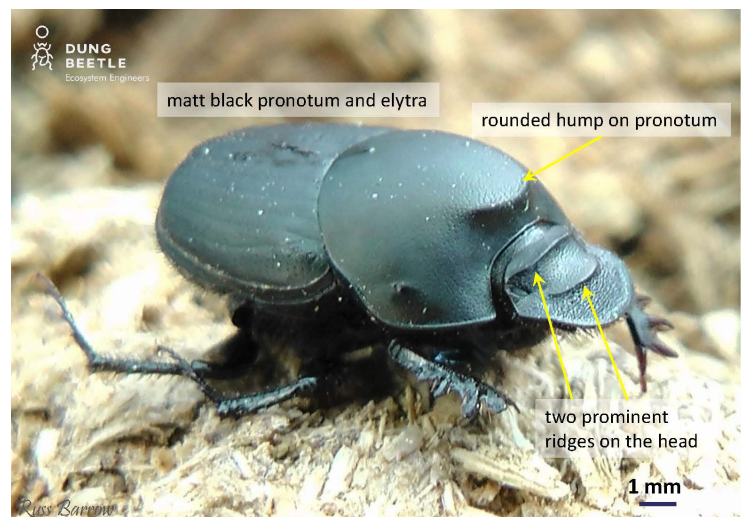
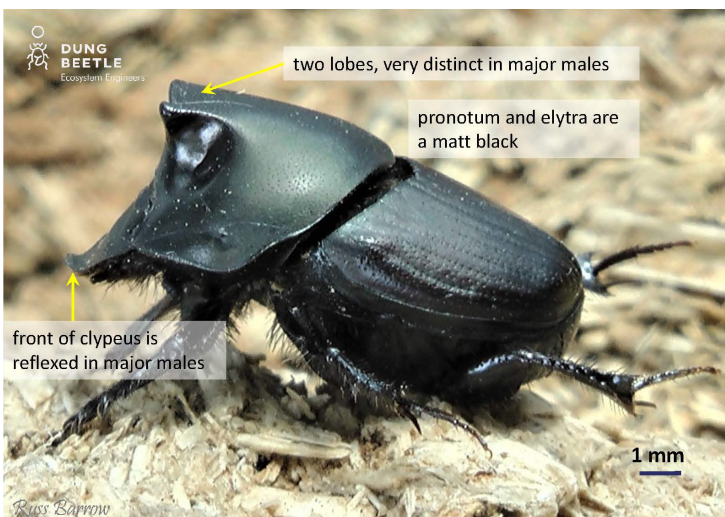
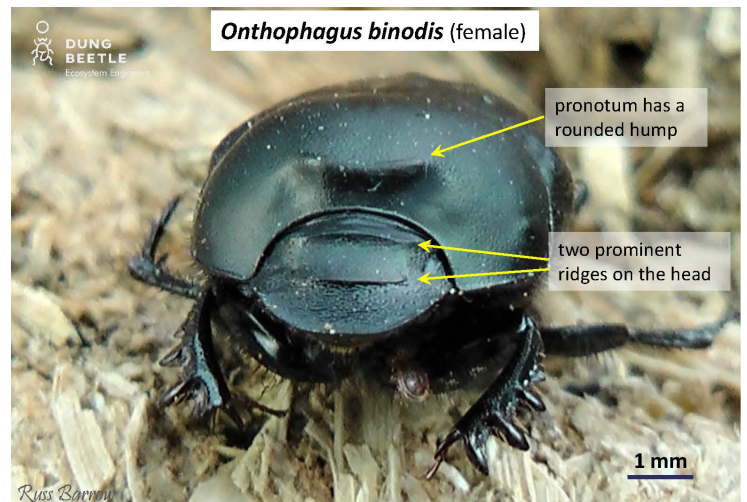
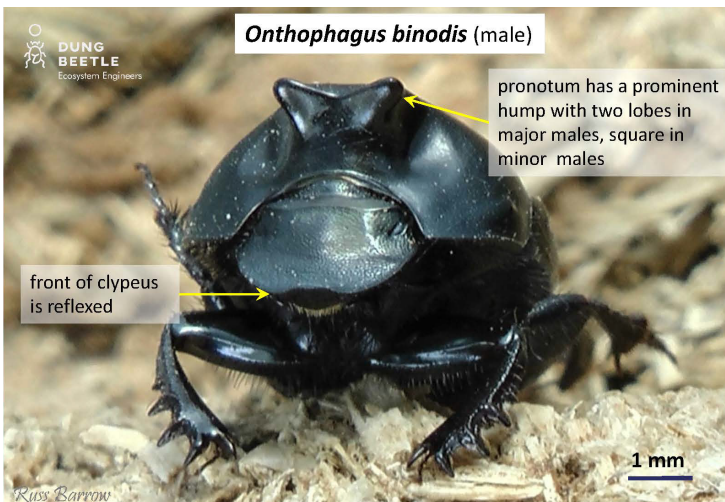
Seasonal activity



■ Active □ Inactive

Size: 11 mm ↔ 13 mm

Burrowing depth
17 – 23 cm



Onthophagus taurus



Tunneler

Colour shiny black

Horns males have long, curved horns; females have none

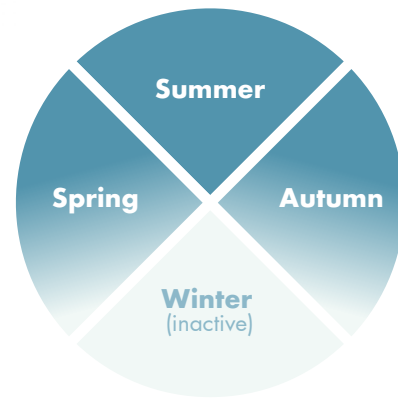
Flight time day

Minor minor males have very short horns extending upward from back of head

Distribution WA, SA, VIC, TAS, NSW

Similar Species female *O. binodis* are similar to female *O. taurus*, but *O. taurus* females are shinier and the front of the pronotum is rounded, not lobed.

Seasonal activity

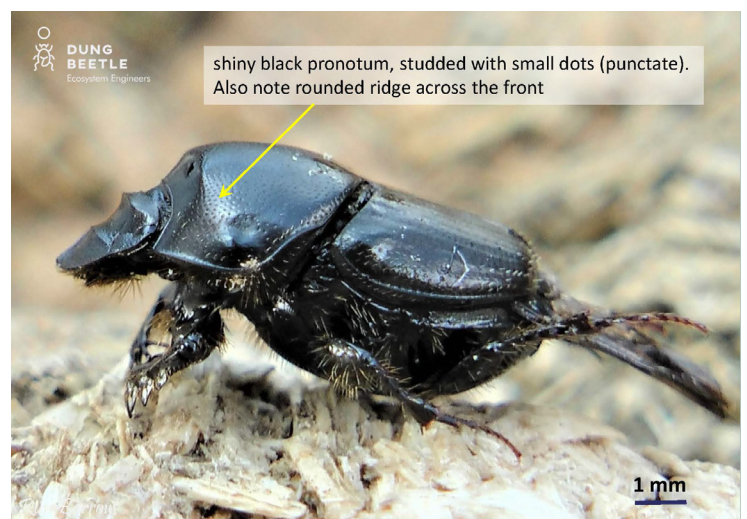
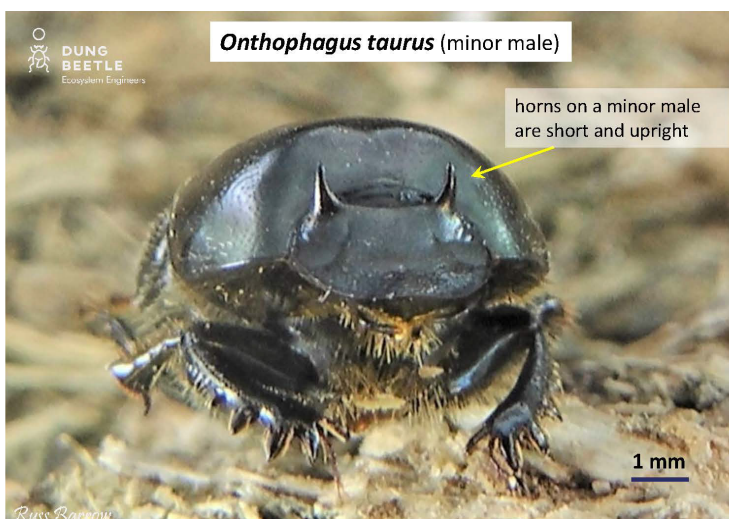
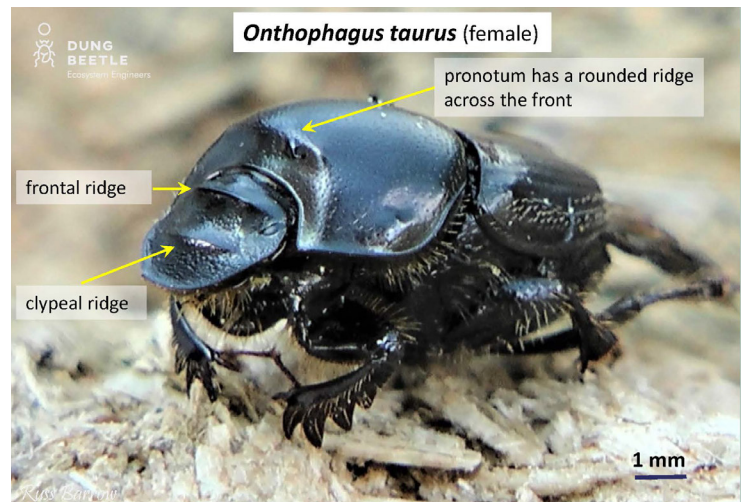
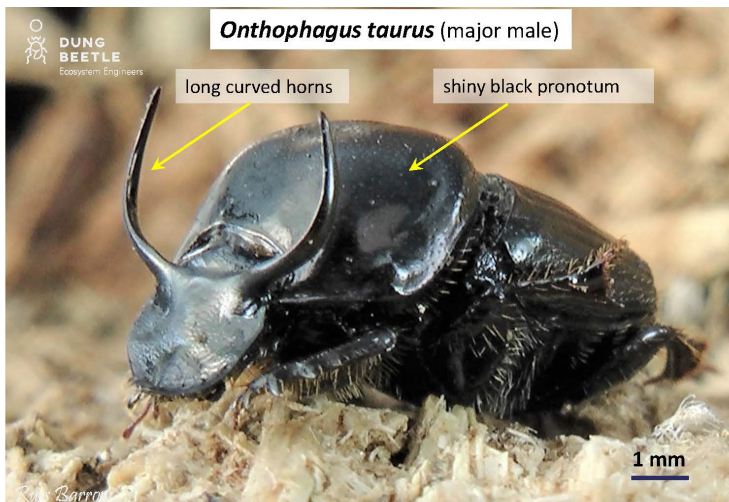


■ Active □ Inactive

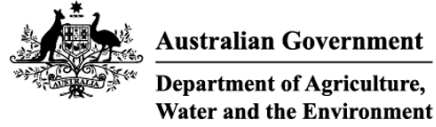
Size: 8 mm 10 mm

Burrowing depth

8 – 13 cm



This project is supported by Meat & Livestock Australia, through funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural R&D for Profit programme.



DUNG BEETLE
Ecosystem Engineers

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