

BEEETLES

Due to their huge variety of lifestyles and feeding habits some beetles have become pests to Humans and others have become helpful; we call these different types 'Insect Friend and Foes'. Many beetles like the Furniture Beetle (*Anobium punctatum*), the larvae of which we call 'woodworm' and the Grain Weevil (*Sitophilus granarius*) have become serious pests from a Human point of view. Others however, as predators of other insects, are beneficial to us; the best examples of which are the Ladybird and the Green Tiger Beetle.

Photo courtesy of Tristamba on Flickr



Green Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela campestris*)

A diurnal (daytime) predator, this attractive & brightly coloured beetle can be found active in bright, sunny conditions in dry, open areas. Voracious and efficient hunters, feeding on other insects, Tiger Beetles have relatively large eyes giving them good vision and long legs to allow them to run at quite fast speeds.

Seven-Spotted Ladybird (*Coccinella septempunctata*)

Instantly recognised by almost everyone, of any age, many people do not often realise that this is a beetle. This charming little insect is commonly regarded as a gardeners' best friend since they feed on aphids (greenfly) which damage so many plants in gardens and greenhouses.



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Sacred Scarab Beetle (*Scarabaeus sacer*)

This large beetle will shape a lump of cow dung into a ball which it then rolls away to a safer place away from other beetles. This "dung ball" has an egg laid on (or inside) it and then buried in an underground chamber; the dung is the food source for the young larva when it emerges. The shape of the scarab beetles' head looks quite similar to the rays of the sun. As a result it was worshipped by the Egyptians as a symbol of the sun-god Amon-Ra and the promise of new life (because it combined 3 important things in the Egyptians lives – the sun, the soil and the cattle).

Great Diving Beetle (*Dytiscus marginalis*)

A common inhabitant of our ponds and streams, this beetle lives almost entirely in the water where both the larva and the adult are carnivorous feeding on other aquatic insects, worms and even tadpoles! The adults are able to fly, allowing them to travel between different bodies of water, usually at night.

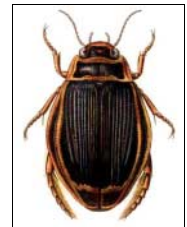


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Rose Chafer (*Cetonia aurata*)

Coloured a brilliant shining metallic green, the Rose Chafer does untold damage to garden plants; the adults feed on the leaves and flowers, while the larvae live underground (for up to 3 or 4 years) eating the roots of the plants.

Text by Stuart Munroe

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