



TAILS FROM THE WILD SIDE

Insect photos from Bempton Cliffs and Springhead football pitch



JUNE 19, 2026

AWAKE

U3A



Rosemary beetle found in lavender plants

West Hull Hub carpark 22.6.26 lots

Rosemary beetle

This beautiful beetle only arrived in the UK in 1960s but is now a common sight on garden herbs.

Scientific name *Chrysolina americana*

When to see All year, but most obvious from spring to early autumn

Species information

Category

Beetles

Statistics

Length: 6-8 mm

Conservation status

Introduced and common

Habitats Towns and gardens

About

These brightly coloured beetles are a common sight in many parks and gardens across the UK. As the name suggests, they feed on the leaves of herbs including rosemary, thyme, and lavender. They can often be found in large numbers on their host plants. They feed busily in spring, but become less active in the warmest months of mid summer. They start feeding again in late summer, when females lay tiny, sausage-shaped eggs on the underside of the leaves. After hatching, the grey, slug-like larvae also feed on the leaves of herbs. When they're fully grown, the larvae travel down the plant and into the soil to pupate. They emerge as adults in spring, ready to start the cycle all over again. Adults can be present all year.

Rosemary beetles have not always been found in the UK. They are native to the Mediterranean region of southern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. The shipping of herbs around Europe has helped them spread to new countries. The first rosemary beetle in the UK was found in Cheshire in 1963, then three more were discovered in Surrey in 1994. After that they quickly spread and became common around London. Now they are found widely across all countries of the UK.



Photos above by mark at Springhead Triangle football pitch 23.6.26 slight signs of infestation on the Harlequin ladybird



Photo by Andre Dekassel



photo by Giles San Martin

What are Laboulbeniales?

Laboulbeniales are a group of fungi that live on the outside of a variety of arthropods. Unlike other fungi, they do not form hyphae nor a mycelium but instead produce multiple 3-dimensional structures called thalli, which “hang” onto their host. This is where the common name for the group comes from: **beetle hangers**. While some species of Laboulbeniales are only superficially attached to their host, others are more invasive; they penetrate the outside of their host with a piercing structure called a haustorium, which makes contact with the body cavity to draw nutrients. Laboulbeniales are found primarily on beetles, but also on flies, mites, harvestmen, cockroaches, and millipedes, among others. Though researchers have known about Laboulbeniales since the 19th century, they are still a poorly studied group of organisms. An average of 16 new species of Laboulbeniales are formally described every year. Thus far, 2,325 species and 146 genera of Laboulbeniales are known. **Impact on Ladybirds:** Unlike most fungi, it doesn't form thread-like mycelium. It feeds on the beetle's body fluids and, in heavy infections, causes increased energy expenditure, impairs flight, and can lead to over 50% mortality under laboratory conditions



Photo by mark at football pitch 23.6.26. second photo by Gelding conservation Trust, notts

The **hook-banded meadow fly** (*Chrysotoxum festivum*) is a striking European hoverfly that perfectly mimics a wasp to deter predators. It is part of the flower fly family (*Syrphidae*) and is frequently found in grasslands, hedgerows, and scrubby margins throughout the UK and mainland Europe



Photos by mark at Bempton

Curculio venosus is a species of **acorn weevil** (family Curculionidae) widely found across England and Wales. Best known for their exceptionally long snouts (proboscises) used to drill into nuts, these roughly 7 mm beetles live on and around oak trees from spring to autumn.

Key Identification Features

If you are trying to distinguish *Curculio venosus* from similar oak-dwelling weevils (like *Curculio glandium* or *Curculio nucum*), look for these specific traits:

- **The "Mohawk" Ridge:** It features a distinct raised ridge of scales along the rear of its wing casing (elytra) and the center of its pronotum, giving the back a slightly raised, "roof-like" appearance.
- **Scutellum Shape:** Its scutellum (the small triangular plate between the wings) is noticeably longer than it is broad.
- **Pronotum:** The sides of its pronotum are straighter near the base compared to other species.

Lifecycle & Habitat

Adult females use their extended snouts to bore holes in immature acorns to lay their eggs. Once hatched, the legless grubs eat the inside of the nut. In autumn, they bore exit holes through the shell and drop into the soil, where they spend a year or two maturing before emerging as adults.



Left and middle by mark 17.6.26 caught in plastic cup project

Right Maryland biodiversity

Opheltes Glaucopterus Ichneumon Wasp

Description

Body length 15 - 22mm. A large species that is mainly orange with a black tip to the abdomen, the sides and rear half of the thorax and large black eyes.

Habitat

Woodland edge and hedgerows. It is a nocturnal species that feeds from umbelliferous flowers. The larvae are parasites on the larvae of Cimbex sawflies.

Status and distribution

Not very well known due to being poorly recorded. .

Best time to see

May to September.



Both photos c/o Gedling conservation trust as mine were rubbish seen 22.6.26

Ferruginous Bee-Grabber *Sicus ferrugineus*

The **Ferruginous Bee-Grabber** (*Sicus ferrugineus*) is a common, widely distributed British thick-headed fly. True to its name, the female ambushes bumblebees on or near flowers, grapples them mid-air, and injects an egg into the bee's abdomen. The resulting larva acts as an endoparasite, slowly consuming the bee from the inside.

Identification & Traits **Size & Color:** 8 to 13 mm in length with a hunched, rust/chestnut-brown body and transparent wings. **Head:** Distinctive bright yellow head paired with large, reddish eyes. **Posture:** Often rests with its long, cylindrical abdomen curled underneath its body.

Habitat & Behavior **When to See:** Adults are active and on the wing between **May and September**. **Where to Look:** Grasslands, woodland edges, hedgerows, and local gardens. You'll often find them resting on foliage or visiting flowers (such as thistles, ragwort, and scabious) to nectar or wait for a host. **Life Cycle:** The hatched larva feeds inside the living bumblebee for about 11 days before killing it. It then pupates inside the dead host and overwinters in the empty husk to emerge the following summer