



## Dung Beetles Local to NE Victoria (INTRODUCED)

There is a diverse species range in native dung beetles. Most of these are not adapted to coping with the large volumes of dung produced by European livestock in Australia. Dung beetles utilize fresh dung as a food source for the eggs they lay. They actively relocate dung into the soil by burying it using it as a food source for their eggs.

In the late 1960's to the mid 1980's the CSIRO imported numerous species of dung beetles from places such as southern and northern Africa, Europe, Morocco and Pakistan. If you wish to know more about CSIRO then visit <http://www.publish.csiro.au>

Collecting Dung Beetles may not be every ones idea of fun, but for Entomologists & collectors, it can lead to extraordinary discoveries.

I have been collecting dung beetle specimens for education purposes for a number of years, & it is fantastic. There are about 17 introduced and 350 native species found in Australia. In North East Victoria there are about 7 different introduced and three native species that we are aware of.

Here is a short guide to the **Introduced species** I have found.

## Onitis alexis



**Length:** 15-20mm

**Color:** Pronotum (the head) dark brown, coppery green sheen, wing covers-light brown

**Active period of Adults:** Spring to Autumn

**Special distinguishing features:** Males have a single sharp spur on their hind legs, females have no spurs

**Adult Lifespan:** During summer approximately 3 months

**Comments:** We have found this only in light soils such as granite hills & along the Owens River

**Flight time:** usually flies at dusk, & again at night, found under bright lights on warm summer nights

## Geotrupes spiniger



**Length:** 20-25mm

**Color:** Dorsal surface black, underneath violet-purple

**Active period of Adults:** Autumn, early Winter & Spring

**Special distinguishing features:** when revealed underneath, it shines like a jewel

**Status/distribution:** mainly occurring at Murrumbidgee south of Beechworth.

Introduced to the area by the Burgoonie Creek Landcare Group

**Adult Lifespan:** about 6 months

**Fly time:** Adults are day and night flyers. Dusk & again when its darker they will be attracted to bright lights especially on warm evenings

## Bubous bison



**Length:** about 9-12mm

**Color:** Black

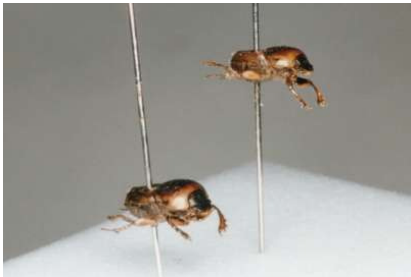
**Active period of Adults:** Winter

**Special distinguishing features:** Males have a horn structure consisting of 3, two stick out & the other points forward. Some females have 2 short horns that are located on the pronotum (**head**) while others have small bumps

**Adult Lifespan:** Not sure

**Status/distribution:** Gippsland Victoria

## Euoniticellus fulvus



**Length:** 8-12mm

**Color:** Light to mid-brown

**Active period of Adults:** Spring to Autumn

**Special distinguishing features:** The pronotum (**head**) has no speckling, elytra (**wing covers**) may be darker & contain brown markings, but no speckling

**Adult Lifespan:** during summer 2-3 months

**Status/distribution:** very common across the region

## Onthophagus taurus



(Horn structure **Not** visible)

**Length:** 8-10mm

**Color:** Black

**Active period for adults:** Spring to Autumn

**Special distinguishing features:** Some (**major**) males have a pair of curved frontal horns extending backwards halfway over the pronotum (**head**). Other minor males have tiny horns projecting up from the head. The females have no horns

**Adult Lifespan:** 2-3 months

**Status/distribution:** very common across the region in Victoria

## Onthophagus binodis



**Length:** 11-13mm

**Color:** Black

**Active period of Adults:** Late Spring to Autumn

**Special distinguishing features:** The beetles have a lobe (**bump**) on the pronotum (**head**) which is generally larger in the males than it is in the females

**Adult Lifespan:** during summer about 9 weeks

**Status/distribution:** very common across the region in Victoria

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