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# The Blue Ground Beetle

The handsome and glittering Blue Ground Beetle (*Carabus intricatus*) is a rare element of Dartmoor's natural spirit. First discovered in 1811 in a Dartmoor wood, it has never been common, after a handful of sightings and records, it seemed it had stalked off into permanent obscurity for nearly 100 years. Then in 1985 an exciting chance finding led to its rediscovery.

It is now known to be confined to a few wooded river valleys around Dartmoor's periphery (as well as Cornwall and Wales). Wherein the mossy dankness the beetle hides its glistening beauty by day, but after sundown, this spindling insect strides out, and up into the night.





Wiry limbs carry it up the mossy, ferny, lichen-encrusted boughs after its lubricious prey. A slug-muncher by trade its favourite foods are the Tree and Ash black slugs - considered by some the largest slug on earth. Plenty then for our largest ground beetle to sink its rapacious mandibles into.

It is estimated that Dartmoor is home to over 80% of the UK Blue Ground Beetle population. The humid, grazed, deciduous pasture woods that it prefers are rare nowadays. The work of Buglife is to further monitor and survey for this beetle and to ensure a place for this dashing jewel of an insect here in the South West.

### **More information can be found here:**

→ [cdn.buglife.org.uk/2019/08/Blue-ground-beetle-sheet.pdf](https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2019/08/Blue-ground-beetle-sheet.pdf)

→ [www.johnwalters.co.uk/publications/guide-to-british-beetles.php](http://www.johnwalters.co.uk/publications/guide-to-british-beetles.php)

Text and images by Nick Baker

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T: **01733 201210**

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