

Violet Ground Beetle

Carabus violaceus

Insects · Active Mar-Oct



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A large, glossy black ground beetle with a striking iridescent violet or purple sheen along the smooth margins of the thorax and wing cases. It is flightless — the wing cases are fused — and runs fast on long legs. Violet ground beetles are common in gardens, hedge bottoms, allotments and woodland around Dumfries, sheltering by day under logs, stones and leaf litter.

BEHAVIOUR

This is a night-hunting predator and one of the most useful beetles a garden can have, taking slugs, snails, leatherjackets and caterpillars. It cannot fly, so populations depend on connected ground-level habitat — log piles, hedge bases, undisturbed borders — and are badly affected by heavy tillage and slug pellets. Larvae are also predatory and live in the soil.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Ground beetles (Carabidae)
SIZE	20–30 mm
STATUS	Native; common, and a valuable slug predator

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