

Guides to British Beetles

17. *Chlaenius* Nightrunners Ground Beetles (Coleoptera; Carabidae)



Chlaenius are medium sized ground beetles. The upper surface of the pronotum and elytra are punctate with short hairs. They all have metallic upperparts at least on the head. These beetles are associated with damp habitats often at the edge of water. They are winged and able to fly. Dispersal flights occur to and from hibernation areas in drier sites away from water. These beetles often hide in vegetation and crevices during the day and may be easier to find by searching at night with a torch.

This guide will enable identification of the 4 *Chlaenius* species found in Britain.

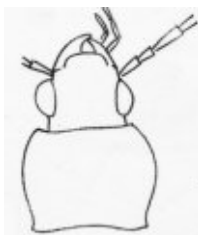
Chlaenius vestitus Yellow-bordered Nightrunner

Easily distinguished from all other species by the **yellow borders to the elytra**. Legs and antennae all pale. **Sharp hind-angles on pronotum**.

Widespread in England (mainly north to The Wash) and south Wales. Locally common on open mud at the edges of ponds, lakes and rivers.



8.5 - 11 mm



Sharp hind-angles on pronotum



Chlaenius vestitus Yellow-bordered Nightrunner

Chlaenius tristis Black Nightrunner

Dark brown upperparts with metallic reflection confined to head. Golden-red hairs on elytra. **Legs and antennae all black**.

Very rare. Known only from the Llyn Peninsula, north Wales, Kerry and Westmeath in Ireland. Formerly occurred in the East Anglian Fens with last records in the 1800s. Occurs in vegetated bogs, amongst dense vegetation, moss and grass tussocks on wet ground.



8.5 - 11 mm



Chlaenius tristis Black Nightrunner

Chlaenius nigricornis Green Nightrunner

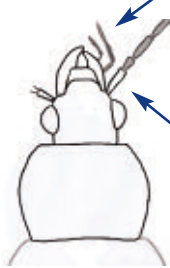
Variable in colour from bicoloured individuals with **copper head and pronotum contrasting with green elytra to all copper or black.**

Only 1st segment of antennae pale. **Maxillary palps dark.** Legs variable in colour, usually dark with with paler reddish tarsi. Completely red-legged individuals are frequently found.

Widespread in England and Wales, appears to be commoner in the west. Occurs in damp grasslands, marshes, mires, moorland and damp coastal habitats eg soft rock cliffs.



10 - 12.5 mm



One pale basal segment on antennae. Palps dark.



Chlaenius nigricornis Green Nightrunner

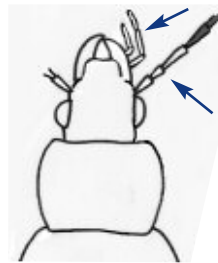
Chlaenius nitidulus Lost Nightrunner

Similar to *nigricornis* but distinguished by the 2-3 pale basal segments of the antennae. **Palps pale.**

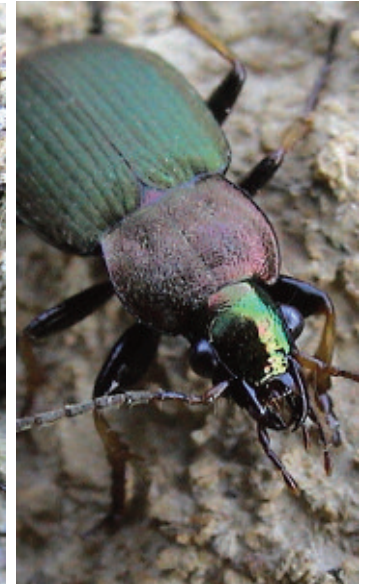
Probably extinct in the UK. Known only from a few sites on coastal soft rock cliffs on the Isle of Wight, East Sussex and Dorset. Last seen at Charmouth, Dorset in 1930. Found around seepages on soft rock cliffs.



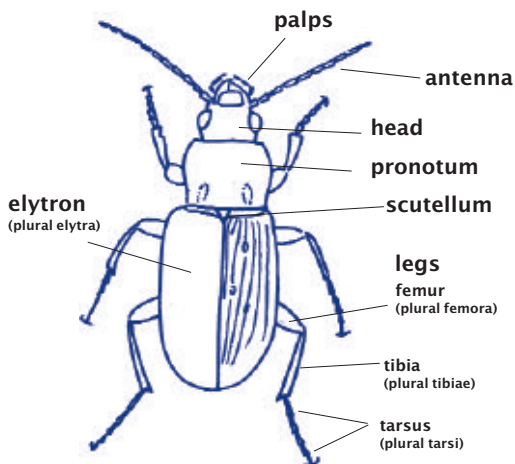
10.5 - 12.5 mm



Two or three pale basal segments on antennae. Palps pale.



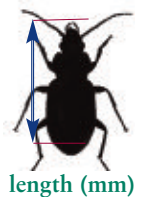
Chlaenius nitidulus Lost Nightrunner



female
all tarsal segments
the same width



male
first 3 segments
of tarsi wider
than 4th and 5th



length (mm)

Thanks to Dave Boyce for his help with this guide.