

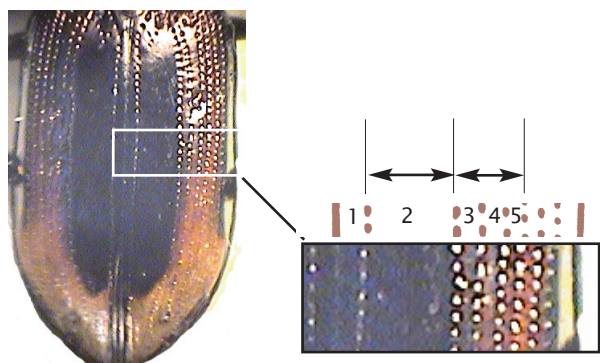
Guides to British Beetles

6. *Notiophilus* Springtail-stalkers Ground Beetles (Coleoptera; Carabidae)



Notiophilus are unlikely to be confused with other ground beetles due to their very distinctive appearance. The outsized eyes, ridged head and wide 2nd elytral interval make them instantly recognisable. They are small beetles (4 - 6.5 mm long) which inhabit leaf litter, moss and bare ground where they hunt springtails by stalking then running them down. This guide will enable identification of the 8 British species.

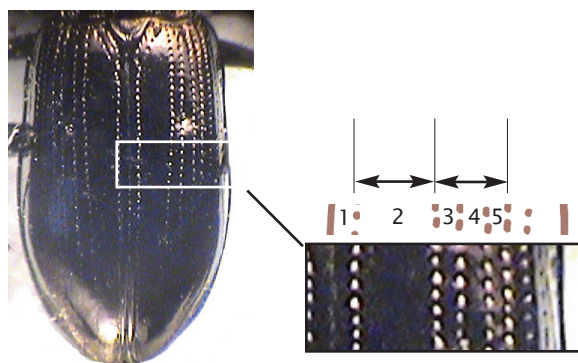
Notiophilus can be split into two groups depending on the width of the 2nd elytral interval (gap between 2nd and 3rd striae) compared to the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th intervals combined.



3 of the 4 species have a distinct pale apex to the elytra.

2nd interval on elytra wider than 3 + 4 + 5

- Notiophilus rufipes*
- Notiophilus substriatus*
- Notiophilus biguttatus*
- Notiophilus quadripunctatus*



All have a dark apex to the elytra.

2nd interval on elytra about equal to 3 + 4 + 5

- Notiophilus aquaticus*
- Notiophilus aesthuans*
- Notiophilus germinyi*
- Notiophilus palustris*

Notiophilus rufipes Red-legged Springtail-stalker



5.5 - 6.5 mm

Second elytral interval wider than the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th combined. The only one of these four with a **dark apex** to the elytra.

The only species with pale **red legs**, the femora and tarsi are slightly darkened. Hind-wings present.

A widespread and common species found in woodlands and gardens in England and Wales. Also one isolated site in Orkney.



Notiophilus rufipes
Red-legged Springtail-stalker

Notiophilus substriatus Frosted Springtail-stalker

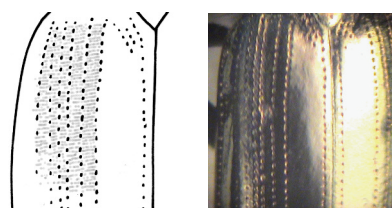
Second elytral interval wider than the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th combined. **Pale apex** to the elytra.

Distinguished from *biguttatus* and *quadripunctatus* by the dull, 'frosted' appearance of the 3rd to 6th elytral intervals in contrast to the shiny 2nd interval. Elytral intervals flat. Striae are much more finely punctured than in *biguttatus* and *quadripunctatus*. Hind-wings present.

A widespread and common species found in open, dry habitats amongst sparse vegetation.



4.5 - 5.5 mm



Elytra showing dull, 'frosted' outer intervals and finely punctured striae.



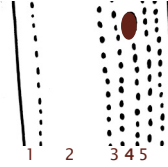
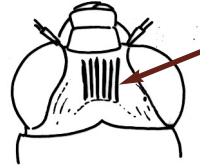
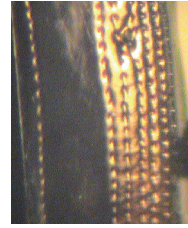
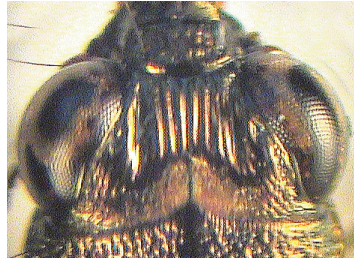
Notiophilus substriatus
Frosted Springtail-stalker

Notiophilus biguttatus Common Springtail-stalker

Second elytral interval wider than the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th combined. **Pale apex** to the elytra.

Separated from *quadripunctatus* by the **single deep puncture on the 4th elytral interval** (rarely two deep punctures are present on one of the elytra). The **4th elytral interval** is about **equal in width to the 3rd and 5th**. **Five or six coarse ridges on the head**. The punctures along the striae are coarser than in *quadripunctatus* (see photo). Hind-wings not always present, fully-winged individuals fly readily.

One of the commonest and most widespread British ground beetles. Found in a variety of habitats including woodlands, grassland and gardens.



Head has 5 or 6 coarse ridges.

Elytron showing striae and one deep puncture on 4th interval. The position of the puncture is visible in the photo (right).



5 - 6 mm



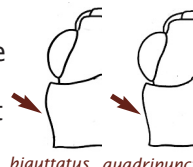
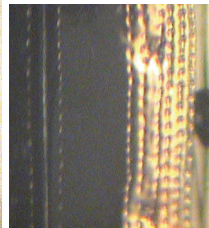
Notiophilus biguttatus
Common Springtail-stalker

Notiophilus quadripunctatus Four-dimpled Springtail-stalker

Second elytral interval wider than the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th combined. **Pale apex** to the elytra.

Separated from *biguttatus* by having **two deep punctures on the 4th elytral interval**. The **4th elytral interval** is noticeably **wider** than the 3rd and 5th. **Seven to ten fine ridges on the head**. The punctures along the striae are finer than in *Notiophilus biguttatus* (see photo). The sides of the pronotum are straighter than in *Notiophilus biguttatus*. Hind-wings not always present.

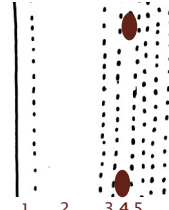
A widespread but local species in England and Wales. Most frequently found in south-east England. Inhabits sparsely vegetated sites such as sandpits on heathlands and the edges of gravel pits.



biguttatus quadripunctatus
Side of pronotum straighter in *quadripunctatus*.



Head has 7 to 10 fine ridges.



Elytron showing striae and two deep punctures on 4th interval. The position of these punctures is visible in the photo (right).



5 - 5.5 mm



Notiophilus quadripunctatus
Four-dimpled Springtail-stalker

Notiophilus aquaticus Black-legged Springtail-stalker

Second elytral interval about equal to the width of the 3rd, 4th and 5th combined.

Legs are completely black (check by holding specimen against light). Separated from *Notiophilus aesthuans* by the **single pre-apical puncture on the elytra**. All other species have 2 pre-apical punctures. Has a wide unpunctured area at the base and parallel furrows on the head similar to *germinyi*. Hind-wings not always present.

A widespread and locally common species found on heaths, moors, dunes and grasslands.



Elytra showing single pre-apical puncture



4.5 - 6 mm



Notiophilus aquaticus
Black-legged Springtail-stalker