

GREEN MUSINGS FROM THE GRANGE



STAG BEETLES ARE IN DECLINE so here are ways to make your garden or allotment stag beetle friendly:

Leave old stumps and dead wood in a vertical position if possible. Stag beetles need to lay their eggs in rotting wood.



Avoid stump grinding and burning dead wood, this could kill larvae and removes potential habitat. Do not use pesticides and cover water butts so they don't fall in and drown.

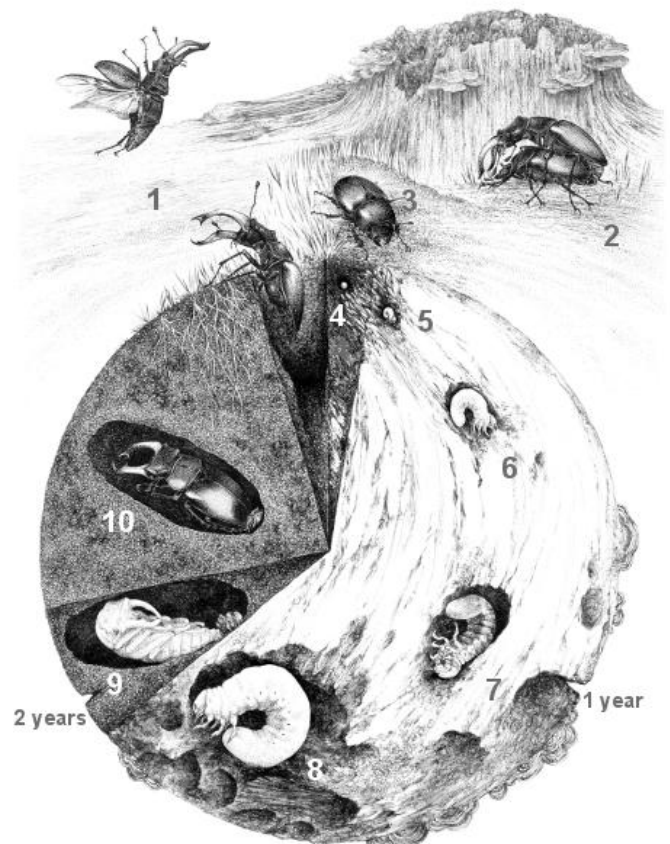
Larvae feed on decaying wood under the ground. Adults can't feed on solid food – they rely on the fat reserves built up whilst developing as a larva. They drink from sap runs and fallen soft fruit.



Stag beetle larvae by Peter Cox

Stag beetles spend most of their very long life cycle underground as a larva. This can be anywhere from three to seven years depending on the weather.

Once fully grown, the larvae leave the rotting wood they've been feeding on to build a large ovoid cocoon in the soil where they pupate and finally metamorphose into an adult. Adults spend the winter underground in the soil and usually emerge from mid-May onwards. By the end of August, most of them will have died. They do not survive the winter. If you see one you can register here: <https://ptes.org/get-involved/surveys/garden/great-stag-hunt/stag-hunt-survey/>



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Plant bee friendly plants

As pesticides are decimating the pollinator population in many areas of the country, our London bees rely upon garden flowers to ensure they have a diverse diet and to provide nectar and pollen. Encourage honeybees to visit your allotment by planting single flowering plants and vegetables. Go for all the allium family, all the mints, all beans except French beans and flowering herbs. Bees like daisy-shaped flowers - asters and sunflowers, also tall plants like hollyhocks, larkspur and foxgloves. Bees need a lot of pollen and trees are a good source of food so we are lucky being next to the woods. Willows and lime trees are exceptionally good. The BBKA has leaflets on bee friendly trees and shrubs <https://www.bbka.org.uk/>



alliums



mint family



asters and sunflowers