

**Latin name : *Lucanus cervus***  
**Size : 25 to 40 mm for females**  
**Size : 40 to 75 mm for males**  
**Lifespan : up to 7 years**

# Stag beetle

The stag beetle owes its nickname to its large, powerful antler-shaped mandibles, which are the preserve of the males. This is a species with very spectacular sexual dimorphism, meaning that the female is very different from the male in appearance.



The eggs are laid at the base of a stump and the larvae develop in the stump. The larva is translucent white with an orange head, curled up and measuring up to 10 cm and weighing between 2 and 30 g. It develops for 3 to 5 years, feeding on dead wood. It is said to be saproxylophagous.

When the time comes, the larvae burrow into the ground and make themselves a lodge from earth and wood. There they transform into nymphs, then metamorphose into flying insects in autumn. These adults spend the winter underground and generally emerge from mid-May onwards. Once it has metamorphosed into an imago (this is the scientific name for the last stage of transformation, the final form of the animal), the stag beetle lives on its reserves until mating and death. It can, however, feed on sap from tree wounds to prolong its life and restore itself. It prefers oaks and chestnuts, but can be found in other deciduous trees. Adults die after reproduction, so their lifespan is very short at this stage of their development.

