



## Protecting Alderney's Wildlife

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## Oil Beetle spp.



### Latin name: Meloe spp.

The Oil Beetle is big, black and slow crawling and is one of a group of 7 wingless beetles which cannot fly. It is harmless - the name comes from the discharge of evil-smelling oily yellow blood which is used as a defence mechanism. The female lays several hundred eggs. When the eggs hatch they will swarm over grass looking for a special kind of solitary bee on which to attach themselves so as to be taken back to the nest. To survive the offspring will gorge themselves on the eggs and then take over the food store intended for the larval bee. Once common the Oil Beetle has suffered drastic declines in recent years as it is dependent on the health of the solitary bee which it parasitises and its ideal habitat of wildflower rich grassland and heathland has been lost from large parts of the countryside.

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**Protecting Alderney's Wildlife for the Future** Slades, 48 Victoria Street, Alderney GY9 3TA (Guernsey Charity No CH261) Website by [Precedent](#)