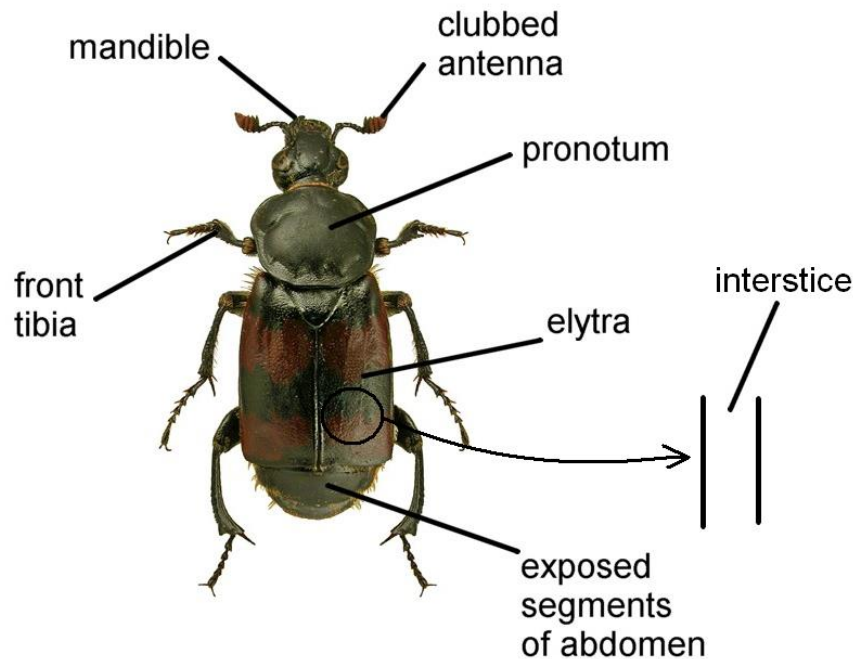


Family Silphidae

Key to species adapted and updated from Joy (1932) A Practical Handbook of British Beetles.



Checklist from the Checklist of Beetles of the British Isles, 2012 edition, edited by A. G. Duff. (available from www.coleopterist.org.uk/checklist.htm).

Subfamily SILPHINAE Latreille, 1807

Necrodes Leach, 1815

Thanatophilus Leach, 1815

Oiceptoma Leach, 1815

Aclypea Reitter, 1884

Dendroxena Motschulsky, 1858

Silpha Linnaeus, 1758

Subfamily NICROPHORINAE Kirby, 1837

Nicrophorus Fabricius, 1775

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Key to genus

- 1 Large beetles, length 12-30 mm. with the elytra looking as if they have been cut off at the apex. In most species the last three or four segments of the abdomen are exposed.2



Elytra rounded at the apex not looking as if they have been cut off. In most species the abdomen is completely covered by the elytra.3



- 2 Antennae distinctly clubbed; front tibia with a strong tooth towards the apex.
..... Genus ***Nicrophorus***



- Antennae slightly clubbed; front tibia without a strong tooth.
..... ***Necrodes littoralis***



- 3 Orange-brown beetle with the head, middle of pronotum and five marks on the elytra black; length 10-14 mm..
..... ***Dendoxena quadripunctata***
Local but widespread, feeding on caterpillars on trees at night. Joy has this as
genus *Xylodrepa*.



Black or reddish species.4



- 4 Pronotum rounded in front; mandibles projecting forwards.
..... Genus **Silpha** (part)
Joy has this as two genera *Phosphuga* and *Ablattaria*



Pronotum not completely rounded in front; mandibles not projecting.[5](#)



- 5 Pronotum orange-brown contrasting with the black elytra; front of pronotum notched twice behind the eyes.
..... ***Oiceoptoma thoracicum***
Length 12-15 mm. Local but widespread species, on carrion.



Pronotum and elytra more or less uniform in colour.6

- 6 Upper surface covered with short golden hair.
..... ***Aclypea opaca***
Length 9-12 mm. Local species often found amongst moss.



Upper surface hairless.7

- 7 Front or rear margin of pronotum distinctly concave or notched.
..... Genus *Thanatophilus*



Front margin and rear margins of pronotum straight or more or less so.[8](#)

- 8 Elytra with the interstices very distinctly punctured and with irregular transverse granules; second segment of antennae twice as long as third.

..... ***Aclypea undata***

Length 11-15 mm. Rare species in southern England northwards to Nottinghamshire; often found amongst moss.



Elytra not so strongly punctured and without transverse granules; second segment of antennae not longer than the third, or only slightly so.

..... Genus ***Silpha*** (part)

