

Family Lampyridae (glow-worms)

Key to British species

Adapted from my translation of Lompe (2013) reproduced here with permission. The original is found at <http://www.coleo-net.de/coleo/texte/lampyridae.htm>. His work was based on earlier publications by Geisthardt and Reitter.

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Checklist

Genus *Lampyris* Geoffroy, 1762

noctiluca (Linnaeus, 1758) – the only widespread species

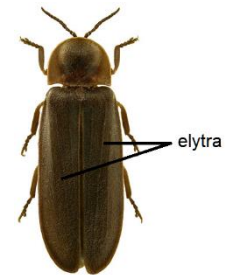
Genus *Lamprohiza* Motschulsky, 1853

splendidula (Linnaeus, 1767) – probably extinct

Genus *Phosphaenus* Laporte, 1833

hemipterus (Goeze, 1777) – New Forest and SE England

1 Elytra and wings fully developed and beetle capable of flight. ...[2](#)



Elytra shortened to small flaps.[3](#)



Elytra completely absent.[4](#)



- 2 Pronotum with two transparent patches on the front margin. Hind angles of the pronotum rounded. Last segment of the abdomen viewed from below broadly incised at the back; fifth and sixth segments with large light-producing patches.

..... ***Lamprohiza splendidula*** (males)

No records since the nineteenth century.



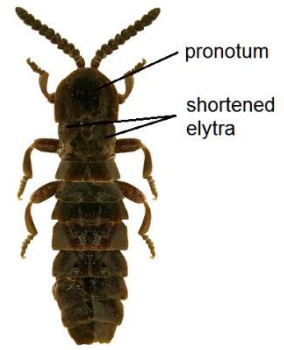
Pronotum with very indistinct transparent patches towards the front margin. Hind angles of the pronotum pointed. Last segment of the abdomen viewed from below not incised but somewhat rounded.

..... ***Lampyris noctiluca*** (males)

Common and widely distributed but with much less common in Scotland. Records of this species should be passed to the UK glow-worm survey at www.glowworms.org.uk.



- 3 Antennae comparatively thickened, much longer than the pronotum. Dark brown species. Pronotum almost parallel-sided in the rear half, only slightly broadening to the base. Eyes small, broadly separated.
 ***Phosphaenus hemipterus*** (males)
 Local in central southern and SE England.



Antennae thin, scarcely longer than the pronotum. Pronotum pale brown; abdomen dirty cream. Pronotum semi-circular, broadest at the base. Eyes larger.
 ***Lamprohiza splendidula*** (female)

Photograph from <http://www.chemie.uni-jena.de/institute/oc/weiss/gloworm.htm>
 No records since the nineteenth century.



- 4 Smaller species, about 10 mm. Segments of the antennae almost twice as wide as long. Palps not as below and exposed. Scutellum present slightly incised at the tip. Light-producing patches only present under segment 7 of the abdomen. ***Phosphaenus hemipterus*** (females)

Local in central southern and SE England. Do not identify from size alone as larvae of *Lampyris noctiluca* are 10 mm. or less.

Larger species, 15-20 mm. or more Antennae slender with the segments longer than wide. Palps with the base broad and quickly tapering towards the tip, covered by the labium. Scutellum absent. Large light-producing patches present on segments 6-7 of the abdomen and smaller ones on segment 8, viewed from below.

..... ***Lampyris noctiluca*** (females)

Common and widely distributed but with frequency thinning into Scotland.

