

BEETLES of GUERNSEY

by Mark P. Lawlor



Volume 6 : Chrysomelidae (part 1)
Seed & Leaf beetles

Timarcha goettingensis
(8 to 13 mm)



Chrysolina banksi
(7 to 11 mm)



Chrysolina haemoptera
(5 to 9 mm)



Chrysolina americana
(6.7 to 8.1 mm)



Crioceris asparagi
(5 to 6.5 mm)



Oulema melanopus
(4 to 5.5 mm)



Phratora laticollis
(3.5 to 5 mm)



Gastrophysa polygoni
(3.9 to 5 mm)



Cryptocephalus vittatus
(3 to 4.5 mm)



Cryptocephalus fulvus
(2 to 3.3 mm)



Bruchus rufipes
(2.5 to 3.5 mm)



Bruchidius varius
(2 to 3.2 mm)



Cassida nobilis
(4.3 to 6.0 mm)

Chrysomelidae

Chrysomelidae is a large family, often quite brightly coloured but their shape and size are very variable. There are many different subfamilies and tribes that the family can be subdivided into, one of the largest being the “flea beetles”. These are not covered in this guide, but will eventually be found in *Chrysomelidae* part 2. It is difficult to pick out definitive identification features for the whole family, but they do not have clubbed antennae and they have a 4,4,4 tarsal segment pattern (ignoring a tiny barely-visible 5th segment on each).

Some distinctive subfamilies are the “bean weevils” *Bruchinae* which used to be a separate family. These are small with short elytra which do not cover the whole body. The “tortoise beetles” *Cassidinae* have an expanded ‘skirt’ around the whole insect covering up the head and legs. The “pot beetles” *Cryptocephalinae* where the larvae make a protective case, or ‘pot’ to live inside. The larvae and adults of *Chrysomelidae* feed on a large variety of plants, and some species can be commercial pests.

Checklist :

a) species recorded since 1990:

<i>Bruchinae</i>	<i>Bruchus rufipes</i> <i>Bruchus loti</i> <i>Bruchidius varius</i> <i>Bruchidius villosus</i> <i>Spermophagus sericeus</i>
<i>Criocerinae</i>	<i>Oulema melanopus</i> <i>Crioceris asparagi</i> <i>Lilioceris lili</i>
<i>Cryptocephaliinae</i>	<i>Cryptocephalus bipunctatus</i> <i>Cryptocephalus fulvus</i> <i>Cryptocephalus vittatus</i>
<i>Chrysomelinae</i>	<i>Timarcha goettingensis</i> <i>Chrysolina americana</i> <i>Chrysolina banksi</i> <i>Chrysolina brunsvicensis</i> <i>Chrysolina haemoptera</i> <i>Chrysolina hyperici</i> <i>Chrysolina polita</i> <i>Gastrophysa polygona</i> <i>Phaedon armoraciae</i> <i>Phaedon cochleariae</i> <i>Prasocuris junci</i> <i>Gonioctena olivacea</i> <i>Phratora laticollis</i>
<i>Cassidinae</i>	<i>Cassida hemisphaerica</i> <i>Cassida nobilis</i> <i>Cassida vittata</i>

b) species listed during 20th Century prior to 1990 but not since:

Leptinotarsa decemlineata

Prasocuris phellandrii

c) species recorded by Luff in 1893-1907:

Bruchus rufimanus

Oulema obscura

Cryptocephalus moraei

Cassida nebulosa

d) additional species only listed in 1862 and not since:

Lema cyanella

Chrysolina marginata

Cassida viridis

e) additional species listed in database, but details of record cannot be traced at present:

Cryptocephalus pusillus

Phratora vulgatissima

Notes on the checklist:

Section a) shows the species that have been recorded on the island's insect database since 1990. This publication is concentrating on these species. These records are presumed to be reliable although the identification of many species is very difficult so the odd error is inevitably going to be present.

Section b) shows species that have been listed during the 20th century as occurring on Guernsey but not since 1990. It is very difficult to ascertain the reliability of some of these records without further investigation, but equally there are no particular reasons to doubt most of these records.

Section c) shows the species reliably recorded by Luff from the late 19th/early 20th century. Luff was a respected Victorian entomologist and all his identifications are presumed correct using the knowledge available at that time.

Section d) shows species that were listed in Ansted & Latham's 1862 list of the fauna of Guernsey but not since. This publication has been shown to contain errors in some areas. Most of the species listed were not authenticated and many lists were passed on secondhand. Local naturalists always presume this list to be somewhat unreliable.

Section e) shows species that seem to have reliably been recorded, but no details have been found about locations or dates, so it is difficult to know whether the record is genuine or not.

Bruchus rufipes

length 2.5 to 3.5 mm

BRUCHINAE

this subfamily, the 'bean weevils' are very distinct from the rest of Chrysomelidae. Small size, usually serrate antennae, striated elytra with flat hairs, often mottled, and notched eyes at the front, making them moon-shaped.



Antennae usually orange at base and dark from about half way (can be all pale)

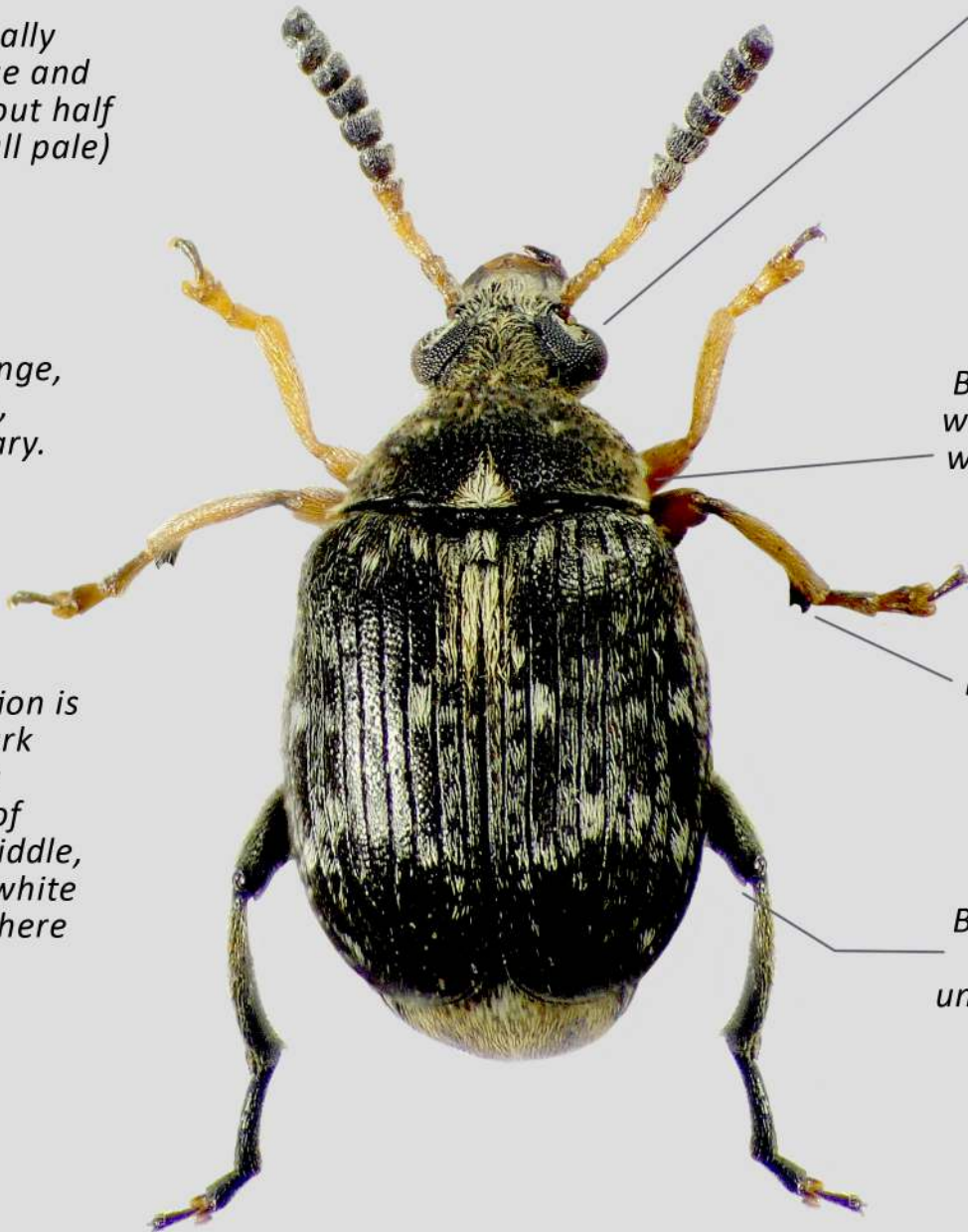
front legs orange, rear legs dark, middle legs vary.

base colouration is blackish to dark brown, with a cream stripe of hairs down middle, and variable white pattern elsewhere

Bruchus have a wide pronotum, with a notch on the side

Bruchus males have 1 or 2 spurs at apex

Bruchus have a tooth on the underside of the hind femora



superficially like a small weevil species, and can 'roll up' like many weevils.

A single record for Guernsey in August 2019 at Baubigny, St. Sampsons (specimen above).

Bruchidius varius

length 2.0 to 3.2 mm

BRUCHINAE
this subfamily, the 'bean weevils' are very distinct from the rest of Chrysomelidae. Small size, usually serrate antennae, striated elytra with flat hairs, often mottled, and notched eyes at the front, making them moon-shaped.

Antennae usually orange at base and at the tip but dark in the middle - highly serrated

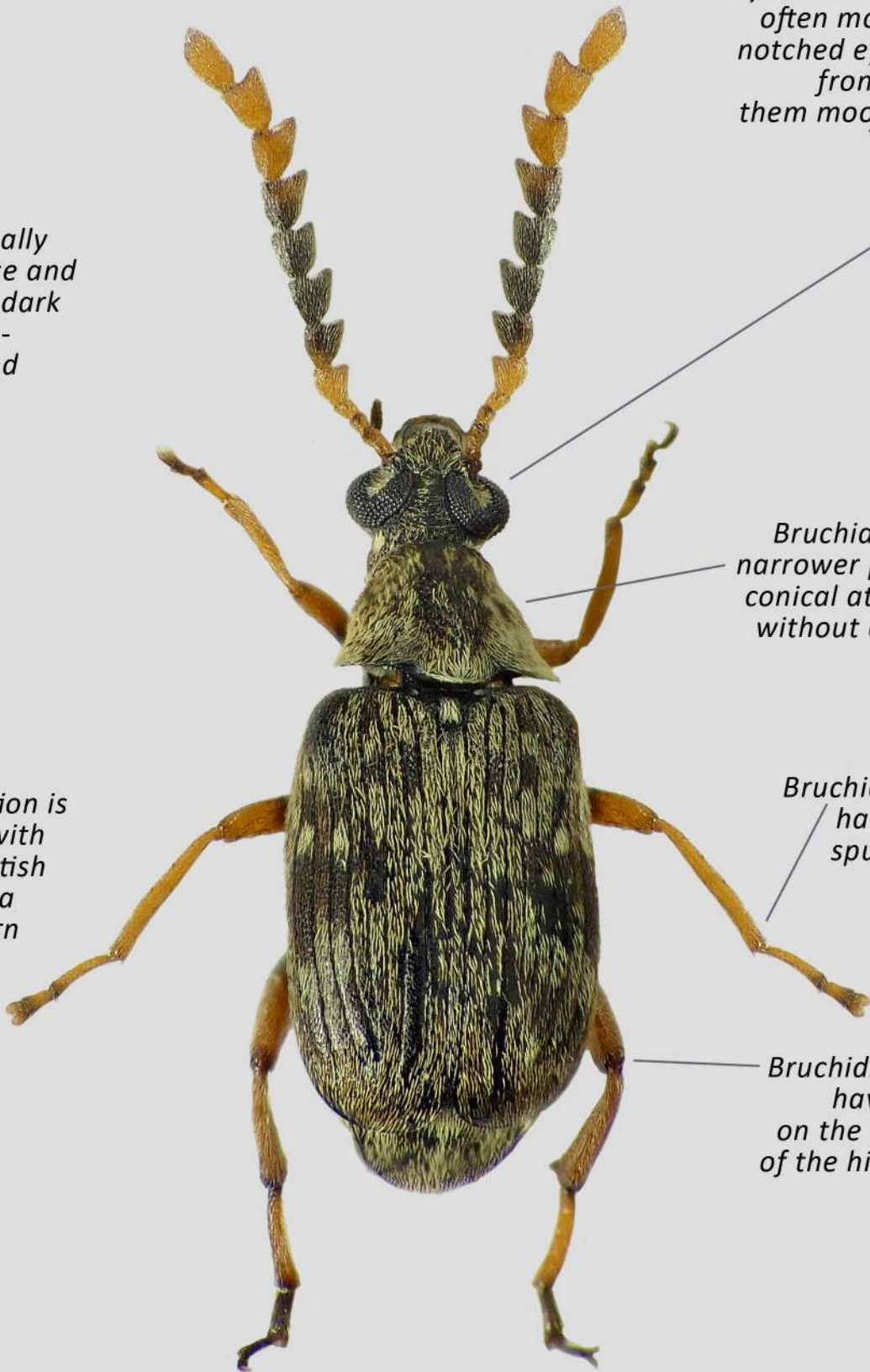
legs orange

base colouration is dark brown, with creamish/whitish hair scales in a distinct pattern

Bruchidius have a narrower pronotum, conical at the front, without a notch on the side

Bruchidius males have no tibia spurs at apex

Bruchidius do not have a tooth on the underside of the hind femora



A single record for Guernsey in July 2016 at Baubigny, St. Sampsons (specimen above).

Oulema melanopus

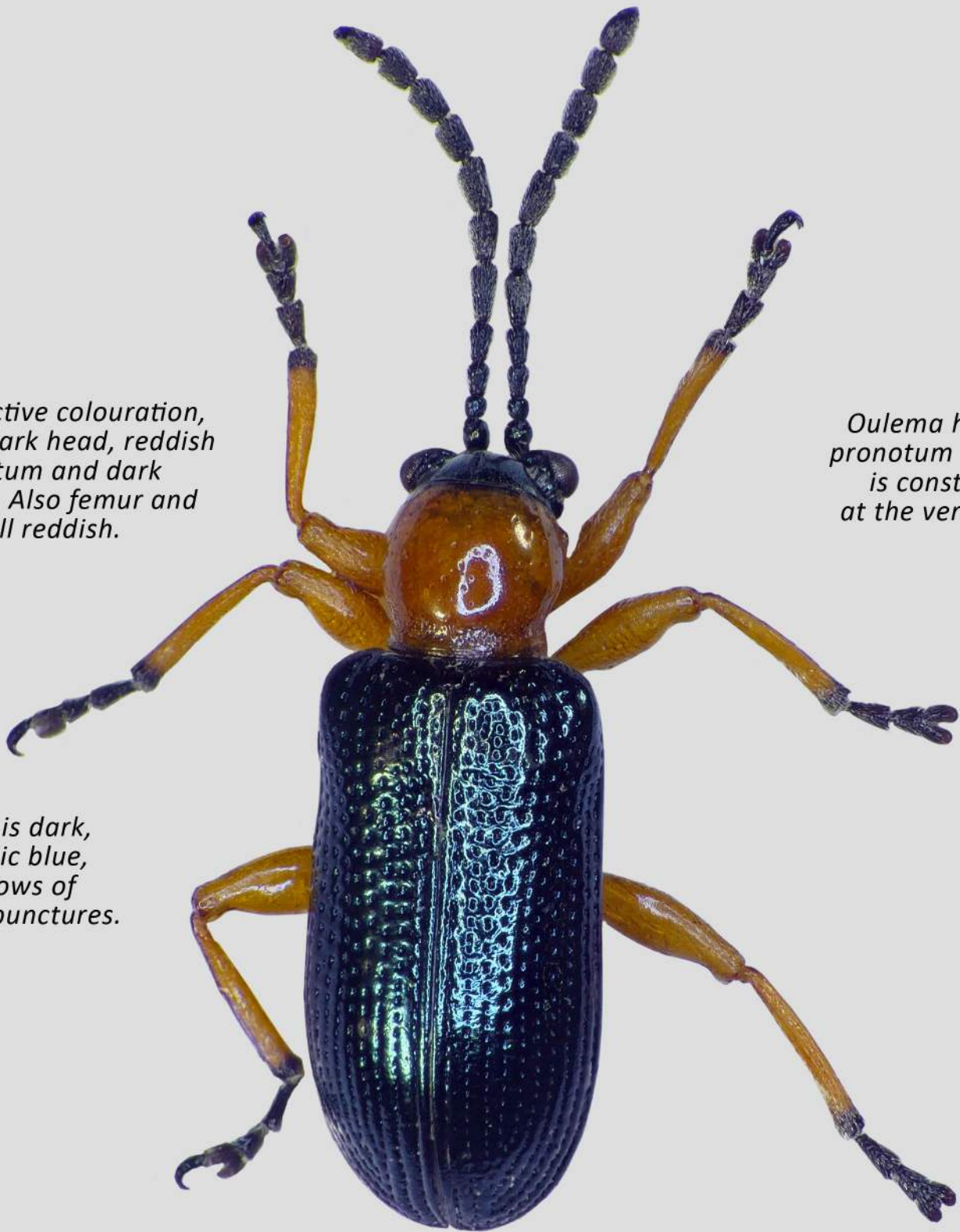
length 4.0 to 5.5 mm

CRIOCERINAE
this subfamily consists of mainly bright-coloured species, with rectangular elytra and a narrower pronotum.

Distinctive colouration, with dark head, reddish pronotum and dark elytra. Also femur and tibia all reddish.

Oulema have a pronotum which is constricted at the very rear

Elytra is dark, metallic blue, with rows of clear punctures.

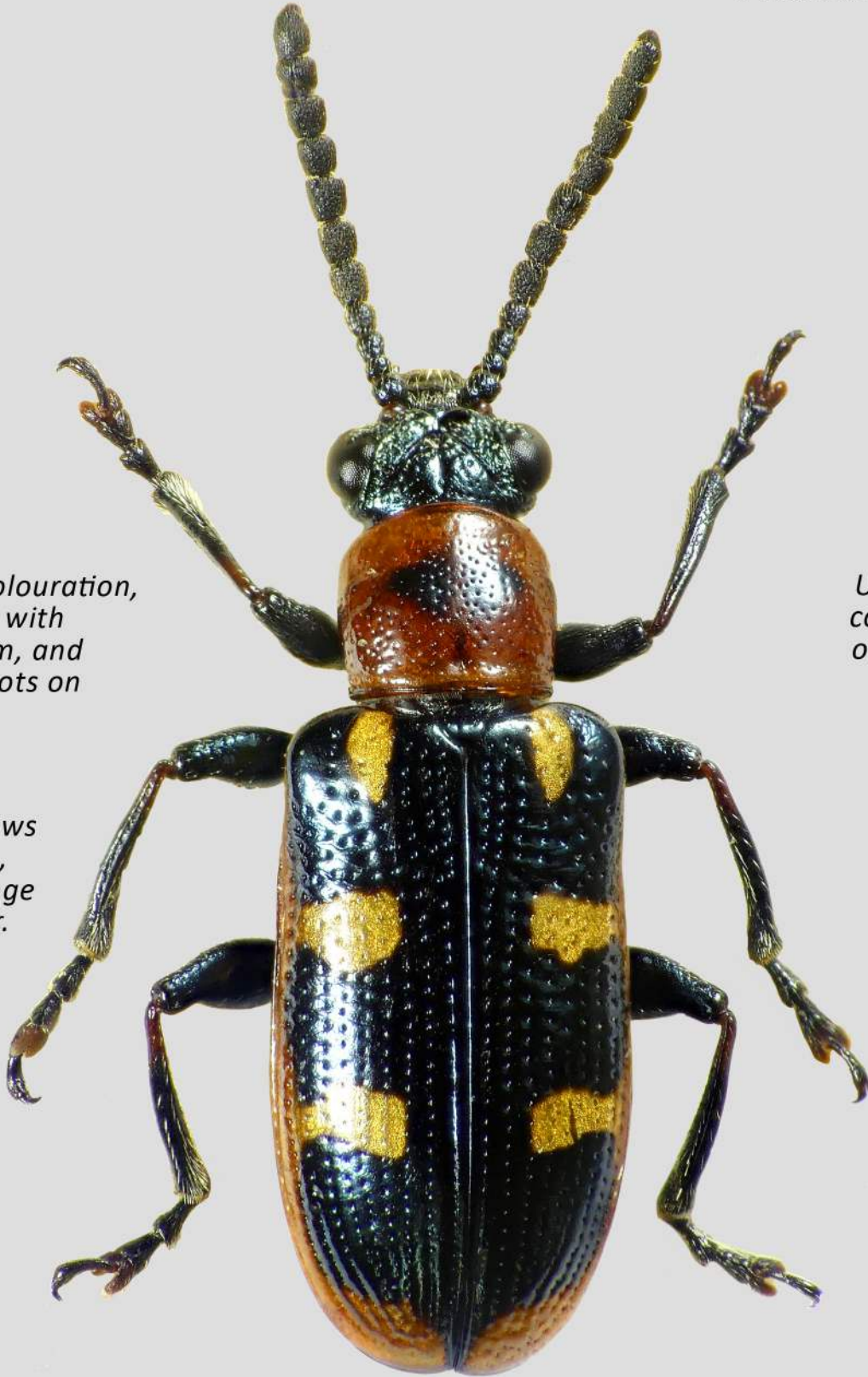


Multiple records of this species from Guernsey, so is presumably widespread. Feeds on cereals and grasses and is often known as the "Cereal Leaf Beetle".

Crioceris asparagi

length 5.0 to 6.5 mm

CRIOCERINAE
this subfamily consists of mainly
bright-coloured species, with
rectangular elytra and
a narrower pronotum.



Distinctive colouration,
mainly dark, with
red pronotum, and
six yellow spots on
the elytra.

Elytra has rows
of punctures,
with an orange
lower border.

Unlikely to be
confused with
other species.

Asparagus Beetle - Multiple records of this species from Guernsey, so is presumably widespread. Feeds on both garden and wild asparagus.

Cryptocephalus vittatus

length 3.0 to 4.5 mm

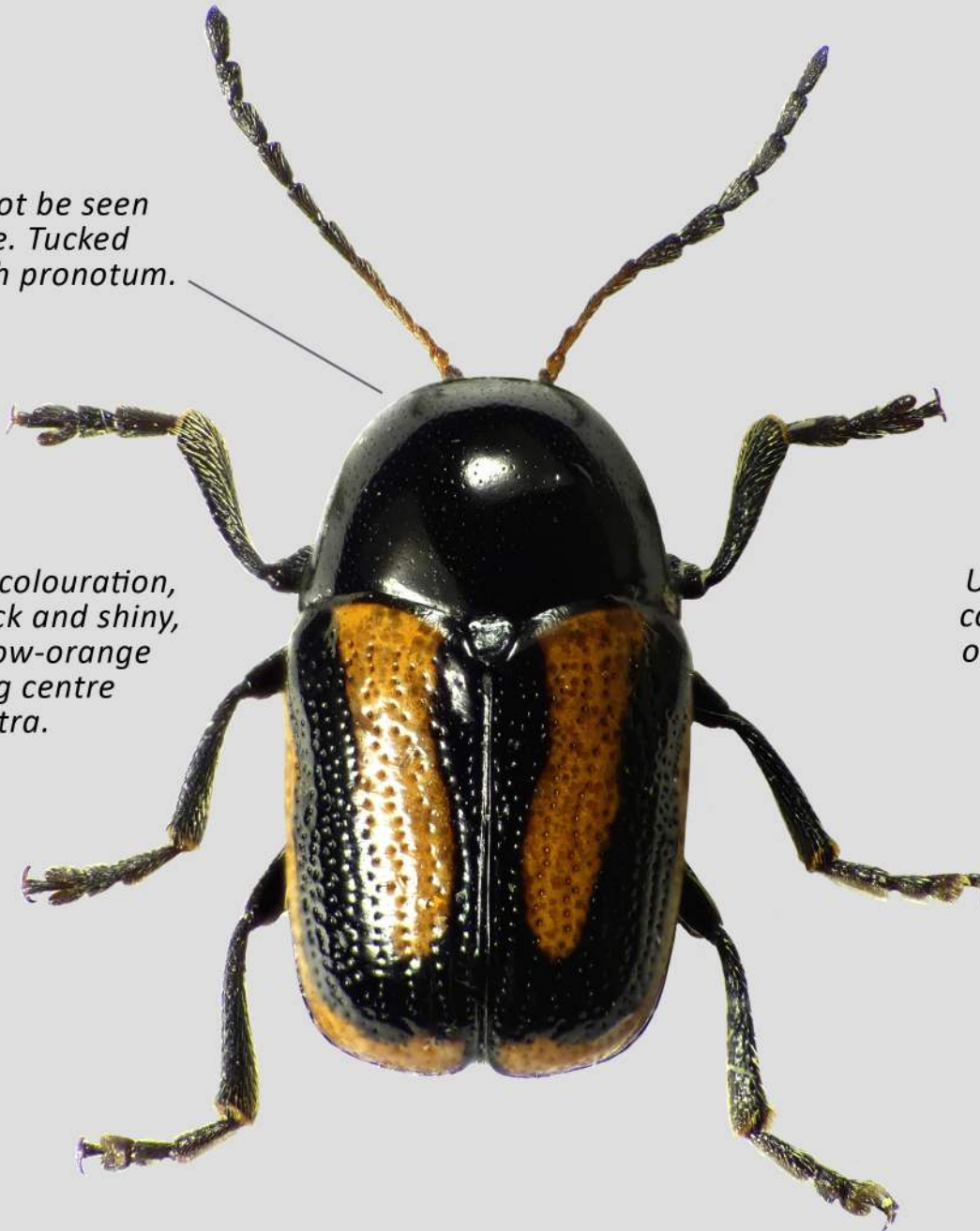
CRYPTOCEPHALINAE

this subfamily are generally small in size, and rounded at the front - due to a bulging pronotum and the head, which is usually hidden.

Head cannot be seen from above. Tucked underneath pronotum.

Distinctive colouration, mainly black and shiny, with a yellow-orange stripe along centre of each elytra.

Unlikely to be confused with other species.



Appears to be very common in Guernsey (but does not occur in the UK). Can be often found feeding on flowers along the cliff paths. Food plant is mainly Ox-eye Daisy.

Cryptocephalus fulvus

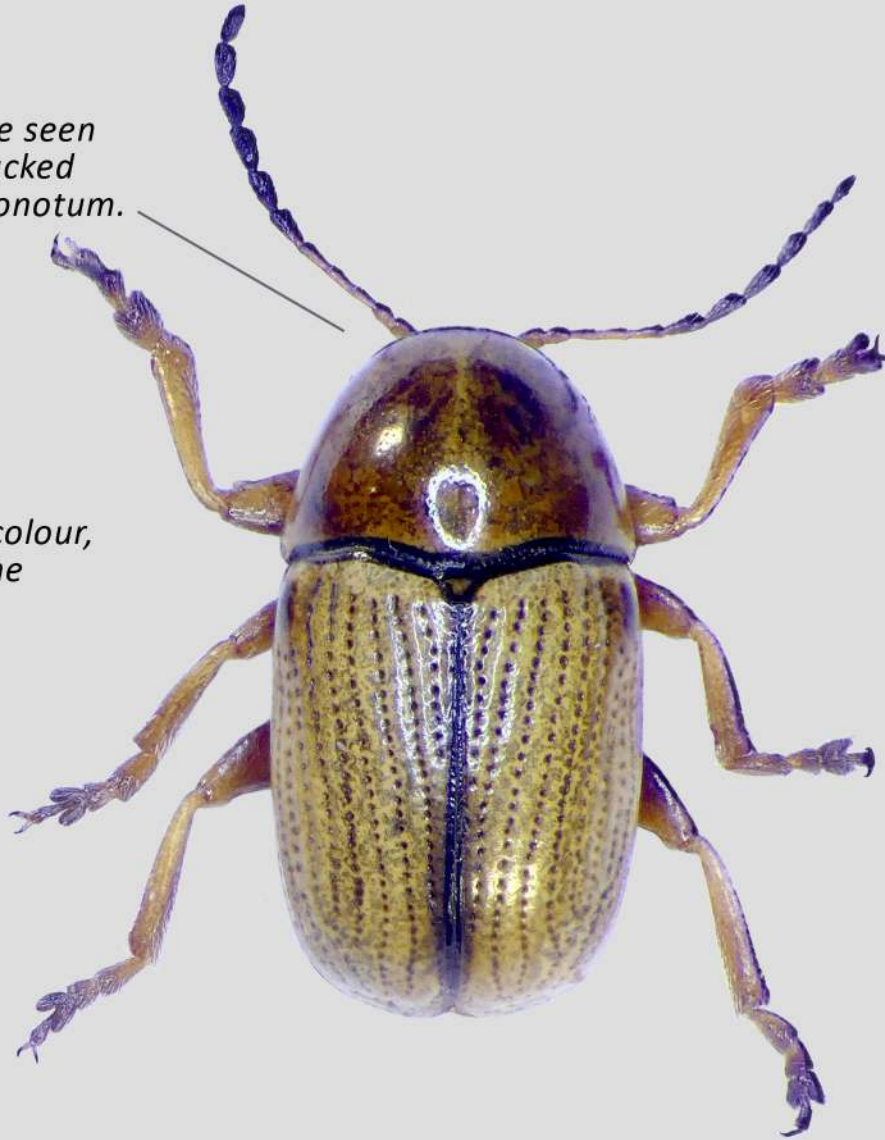
length 2.0 to 3.3 mm

CRYPTOCEPHALINAE

this subfamily are generally small in size, and rounded at the front - due to a bulging pronotum and the head, which is usually hidden.

Head cannot be seen from above. Tucked underneath pronotum.

Pale brown in colour, more rich on the pronotum.



Dark blackish markings along sutures in front of and along elytra.

Punctures all along elytra in lines, each with a black spot.

Not seen very often in Guernsey, mainly along coast, but it is very small and quite inconspicuous in its habits. Mainly associated with Sheep Sorrel, but also many other low-growing plants.

Other species of Bruchinae recorded in Guernsey:

Bruchus loti

(length 1.7 to 3mm)

A single record for Guernsey - Les Vicheries, 2003. Distinguished from *Bruchus rufipes* by being very plain with no patterning, blackish in colour covered in greyish hairs.

Bruchidius villosus

(length 1.7 to 3mm)

Two records for Guernsey - both at Bordeaux, 1999 & 2001. Closely associated with Broom. Distinguished from *Bruchidius varius* by being very plain and dark, with no patterning of pale-coloured hairs.

Spermophagus sericeus

(length 1.2 to 2.8mm)

A single record for Guernsey - Lihou headland, 2000. Rounder than the other species in this subfamily and all dark in colour with greyish hairs. Associated with Bindweed - not a British species.

Other species of Criocerinae recorded in Guernsey:

Lilioceris lili

(length 6.0 to 8.0mm)

Red Lily Beetle - A few records for Guernsey. Easily distinguished from the other members of this family because of the bright red colouration of the pronotum and elytra. The head, legs and underside are all black. Can be seen mostly in gardens on various species of lily.

Other species of Cryptocephalinae recorded in Guernsey:

Cryptocephalus bipunctatus

(length 4.0 to 6.0mm)

A single record for Guernsey - Lihou headland, 2004. Quite similar to *C. vittatus* but more reddish-orange with a single dark spot on each elytra (sometimes can be extended into a stripe).

Timarcha goettingensis

length 8.0 to 13.0 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE
this is the largest subfamily,
with beetles of various sizes.
They are mostly very round
in shape and often shiny
and colourful or metallic.

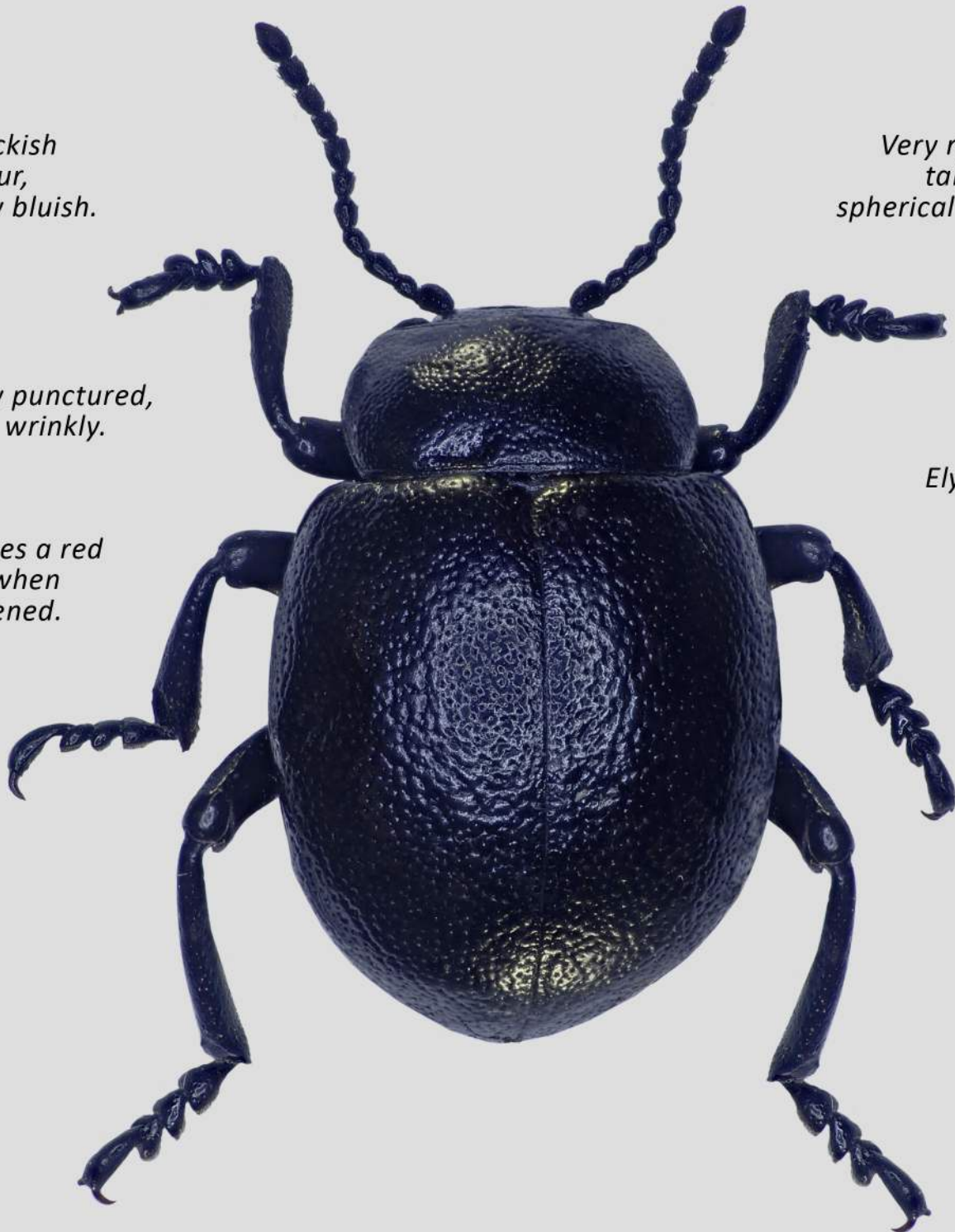
All blackish
in colour,
slightly bluish.

Very round and
tall, almost
spherical in shape.

Heavily punctured,
almost wrinkly.

Produces a red
liquid when
threatened.

Elytra fused
together,
wingless.



Lesser Bloody-nose Beetle - Quite common in Guernsey, mainly along coast, and regularly seen wandering out in the open. (N.B. the Greater Bloody-nose Beetle has not been recorded here)

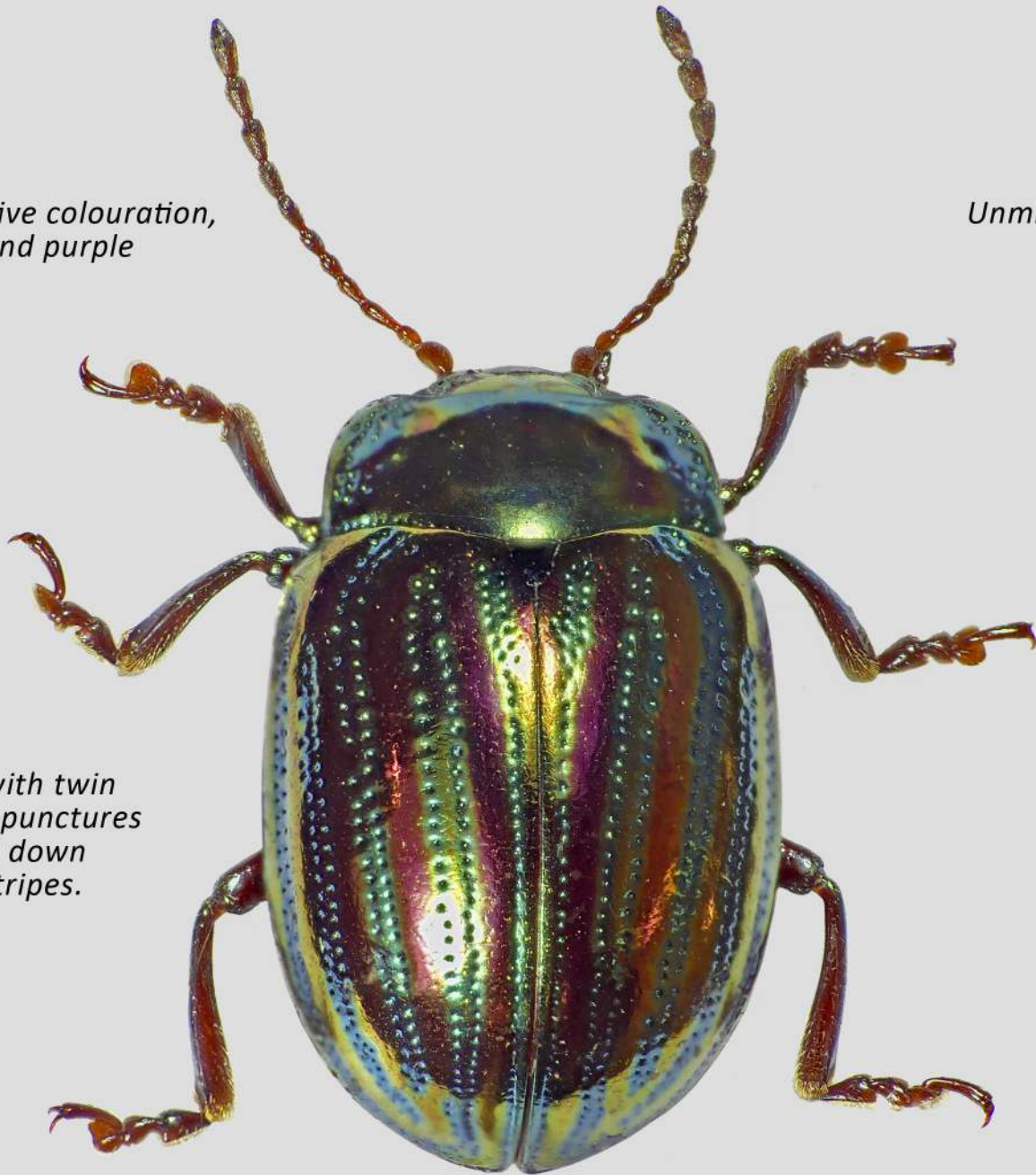
Chrysolina americana

length 6.7 to 8.1 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE
this is the largest subfamily,
with beetles of various sizes.
They are mostly very round
in shape and often shiny
and colourful or metallic.

*Distinctive colouration,
green and purple
stripes.*

*Unmistakable
species.*



*Elytra with twin
lines of punctures
running down
green stripes.*

Rosemary Beetle - Quite common in Guernsey, mainly in gardens, where it feeds mainly on Rosemary and Lavenders.

Chrysolina banksi

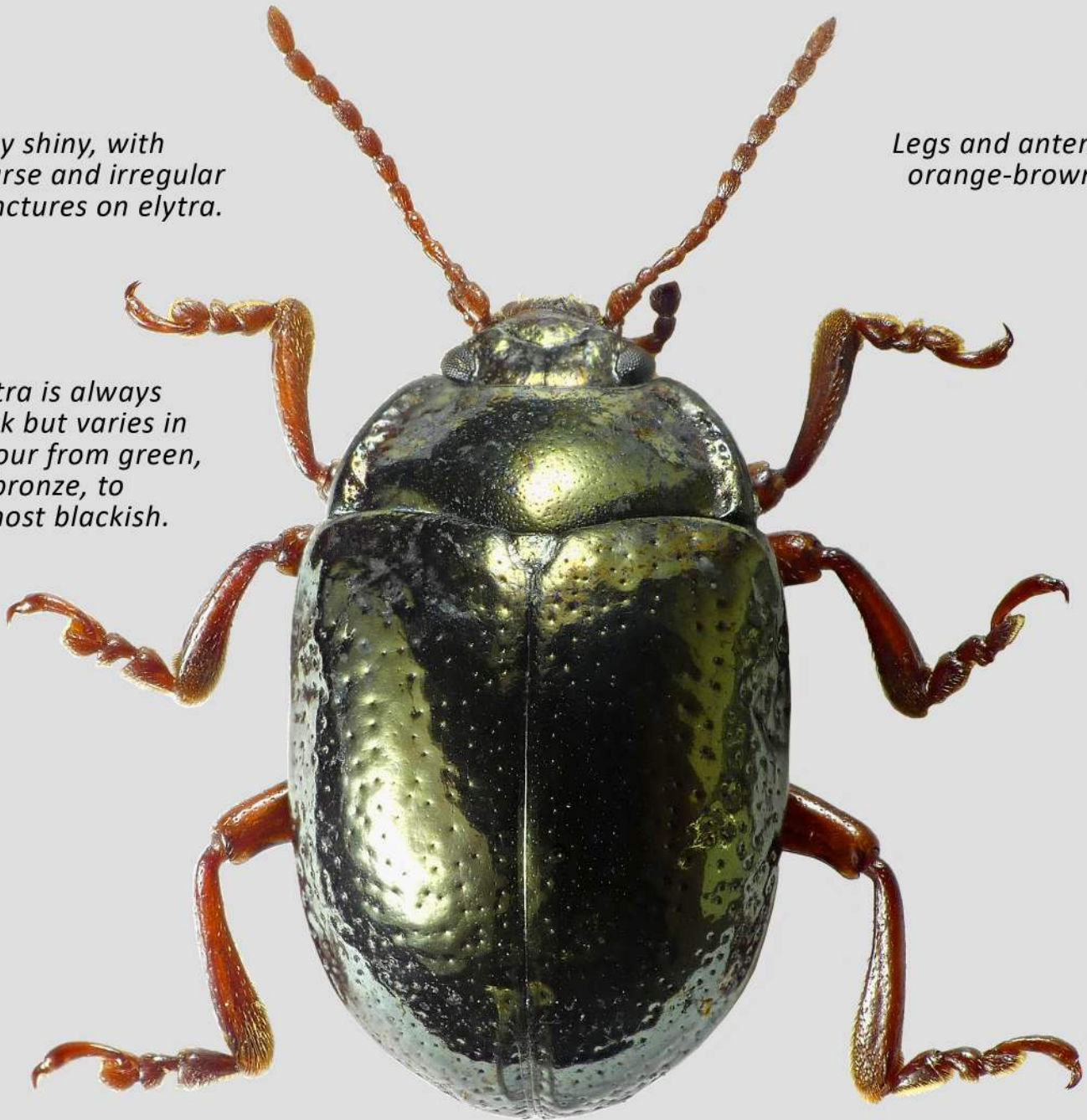
length 7.0 to 11.0 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE
this is the largest subfamily,
with beetles of various sizes.
They are mostly very round
in shape and often shiny
and colourful or metallic.

Very shiny, with
sparse and irregular
punctures on elytra.

Legs and antennae
orange-brownish.

Elytra is always
dark but varies in
colour from green,
to bronze, to
almost blackish.



Common in Guernsey, most common of the *Chrysolina*, and found in a variety of habitats, feeding on a variety of plants.

Chrysolina haemoptera

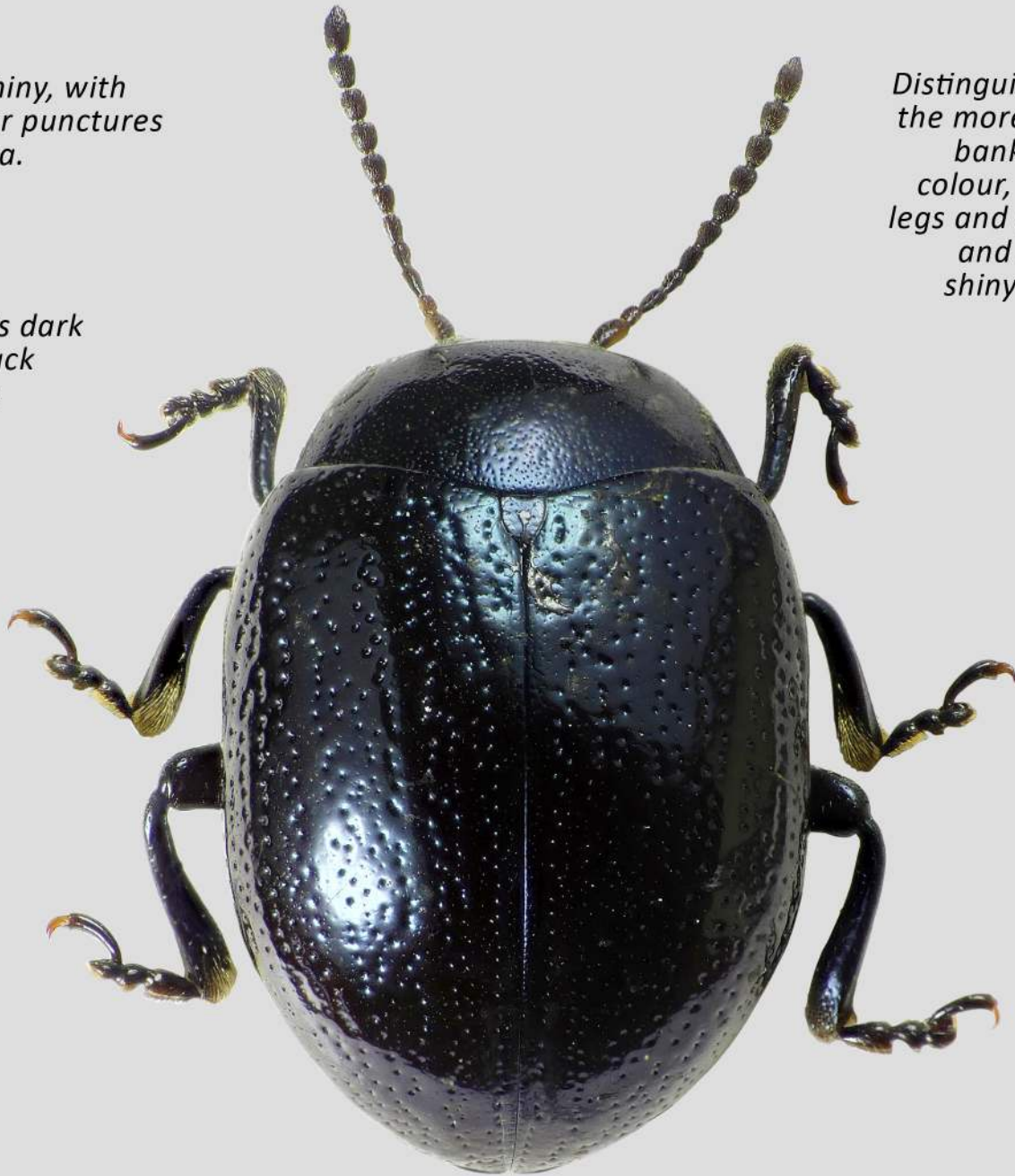
length 5.0 to 9.0 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE
this is the largest subfamily,
with beetles of various sizes.
They are mostly very round
in shape and often shiny
and colourful or metallic.

Quite shiny, with
irregular punctures
on elytra.

Colour is dark
blue-black
all over.

Distinguished from
the more-common
banksi by dark
colour, especially
legs and antennae,
and being less
shiny & slightly
smaller



Probably quite common in Guernsey, but seen much less often than *banksi*. Mostly seen around coast, where it feeds on plantains.

Other species of Chrysolina recorded in Guernsey:

Chrysolina brunsvicensis

(length 5.3 to 6.3mm)

A single record for Guernsey - Petit Bot, 2003. Most similar to *Chrysolina banksi* but somewhat smaller, with the punctures on the elytra less irregular, with the larger ones arranged in lines. Feeds on St John's worts.

Chrysolina hyperici

(length 4.8 to 7.3mm)

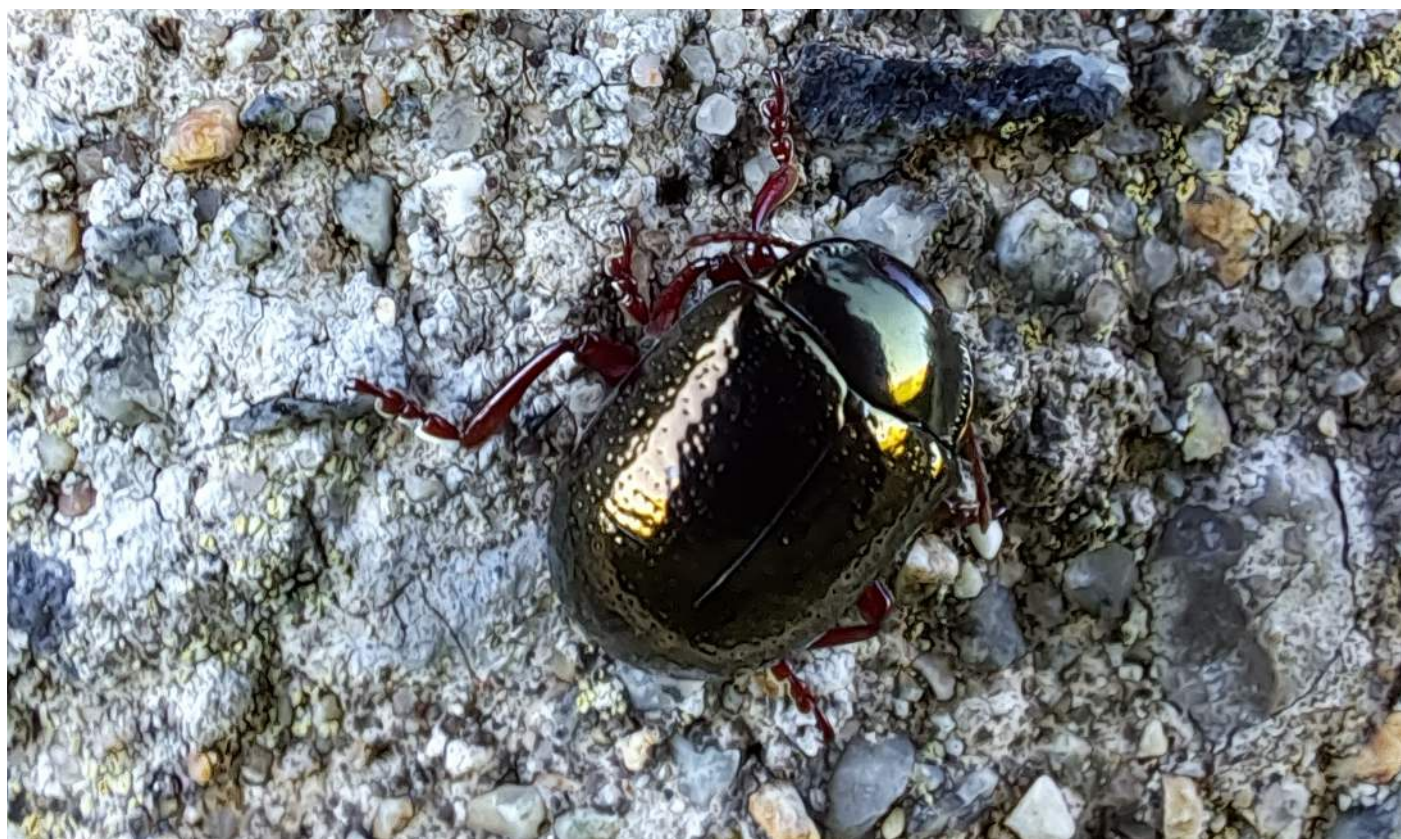
A single record for Guernsey - Fort George, 1999. Very similar to *Chrysolina brunsvicensis* but there are slight differences in the punctures on the elytra, colour depth and pronotum shape. Like that species, feeds on St John's worts.

Chrysolina polita

(length 5.5 to 9.5mm)

A single record for Guernsey - Herm Common, 1993. Distinctive colouration, with green head, legs and underside, contrasting with reddish-brown elytra. Feeds on nettles, mints and thyme, which is abundant on Herm Common.

Chrysolina banksi crawling up a bunker wall at Mont Herault



Gastrophysa polygoni

length 3.9 to 5.0 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE
this is the largest subfamily,
with beetles of various sizes.
They are mostly very round
in shape and often shiny
and colourful or metallic.

Dark head and
elytra, with red
pronotum and
legs.

Base of antennae red.

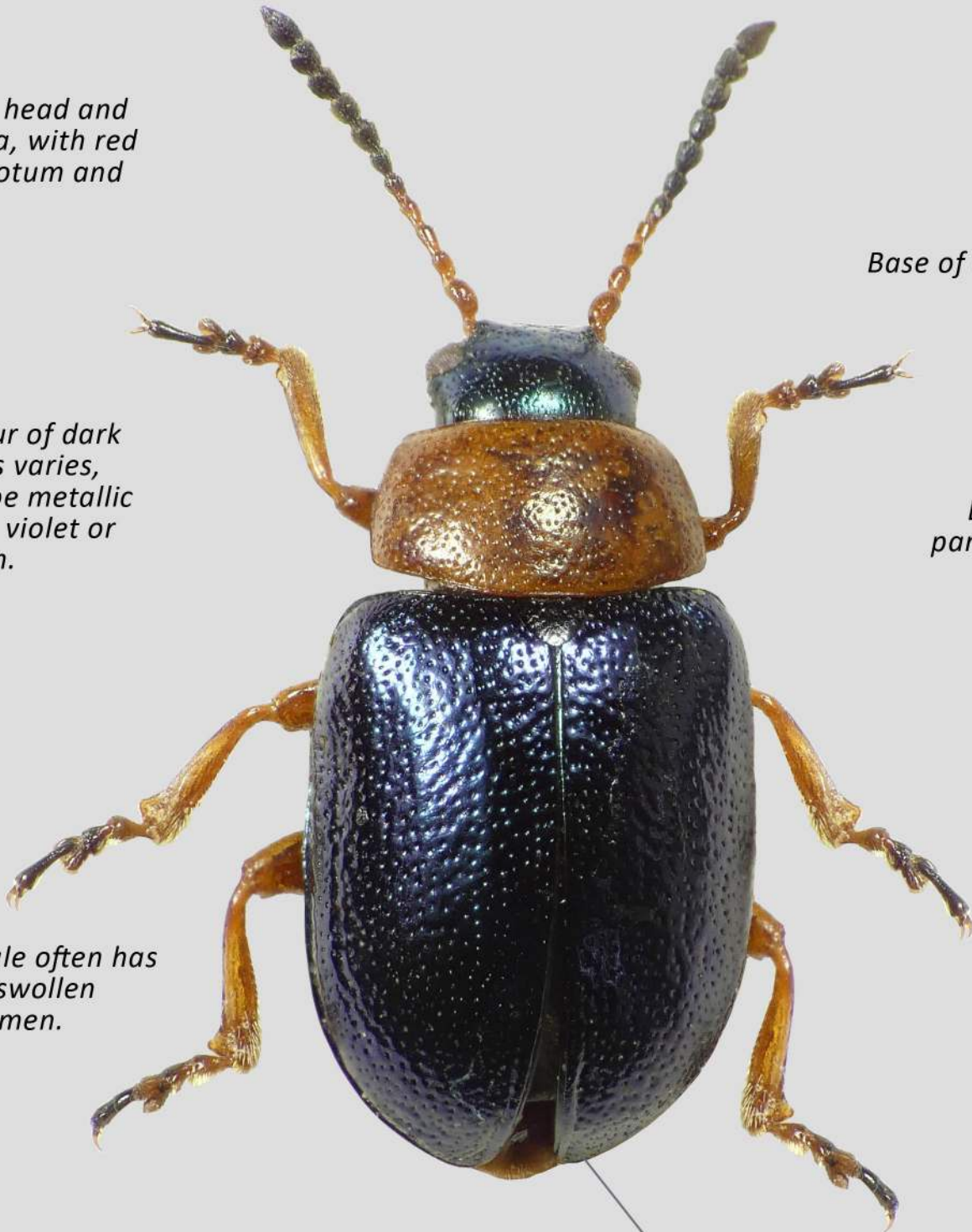
Colour of dark
areas varies,
can be metallic
blue, violet or
green.

Elytra quite
parallel-sided.

Female often has
very swollen
abdomen.

Gastrophysa have a raised ridge
along rear edge of suture.

Quite common and can be found walking on bare ground. Feeds on plants such as Knotgrass and others from the same family.



Phratora laticollis

length 3.5 to 5.0 mm

CHRYSOMELINAE

this is the largest subfamily, with beetles of various sizes. They are mostly very round in shape and often shiny and colourful or metallic.

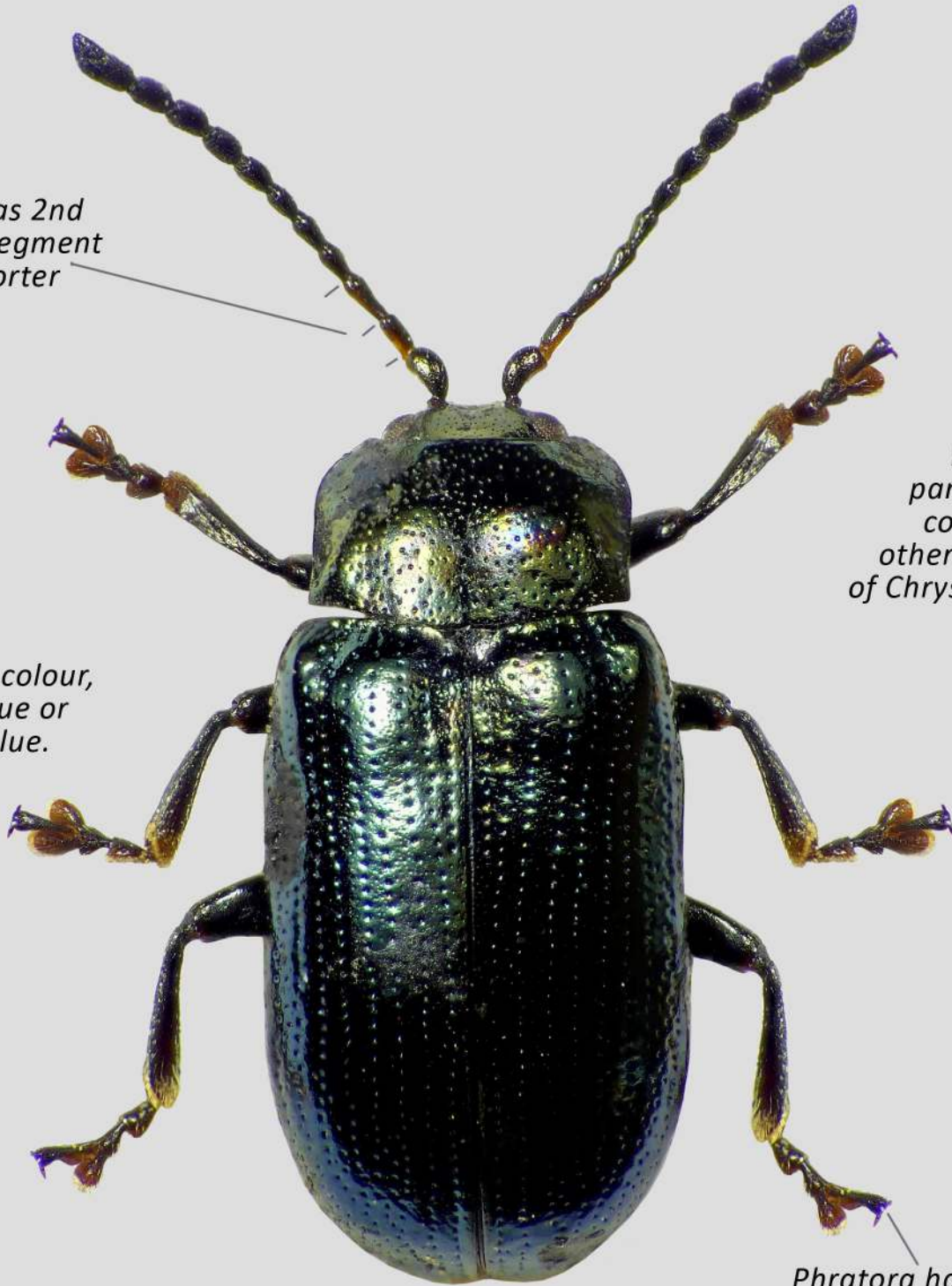
laticollis has 2nd antennal segment slightly shorter than 3rd.

Elytra very parallel-sided compared to other members of Chrysomelinae.

All dark in colour, metallic blue or greenish-blue.

Phratora have a small bulge at base of claws (not visible here).

Appears to be quite common on Poplar trees in Guernsey. Very similar to a few other species of *Phratora* which may also occur here.



Other species of Chrysomelinae recorded in Guernsey:

Phaedon armoraciae

(length 3.0 to 4.7mm)

A few records in wetland areas of Guernsey, feeding on various plant species, especially Brooklime. A very rounded, oval beetle, all dark metallic blue in colour.

Phaedon cochleariae

(length 2.6 to 4.0mm)

A few records in wetland areas of Guernsey, especially on wetland brassicas such as water-cress. Very similar to armoraciae but slight differences in shape and striae, usually with orange on antennae bases.

Prasocuris junci

(length 4.0 to 5.0mm)

A few old and one recent record record for Guernsey - Rue des Bergers, 2001. Dark metallic blue, with punctures and striae, and much more elongate in shape than others in this family. Found in wetland areas.

Gonioctena olivacea

(length 3.0 to 5.2mm)

A few records, mainly from the south cliffs, as this is a species that feeds on Broom. It is orange-brown in colour with black stripes down elytra - one down suture and one on the outer-middle of each elytra - which vary in intensity.

Cassida nobilis

length 4.3 to 6.0 mm

CASSIDINAE
this subfamily, known as the
'tortoise beetles' have the
edges of the pronotum and
elytra splayed out and flattened,
covering the head and legs.

Antennae and
head darker.

The flattened edge
of the pronotum is
almost transparent,
and quite rounded
on rear corner..

Overall colour
pale brown or
yellow-green,
with lines of
heavy punctures
down elytra.



In life, the species
has an electric green
or golden stripe
along each elytra.



Other species of Cassidinae recorded in Guernsey:

Cassida hemisphaerica

(length 4.3 to 5.4mm)

A few records in Guernsey. A very broad and bright green or yellowish-green tortoise beetle, with random punctures, not in lines.

Cassida vittata

(length 5.0 to 6.5mm)

Most records of this species are old and there seems to be very few recent sightings. Very similar to *nobilis* with slight differences including pronotum shape and paler antennae.

