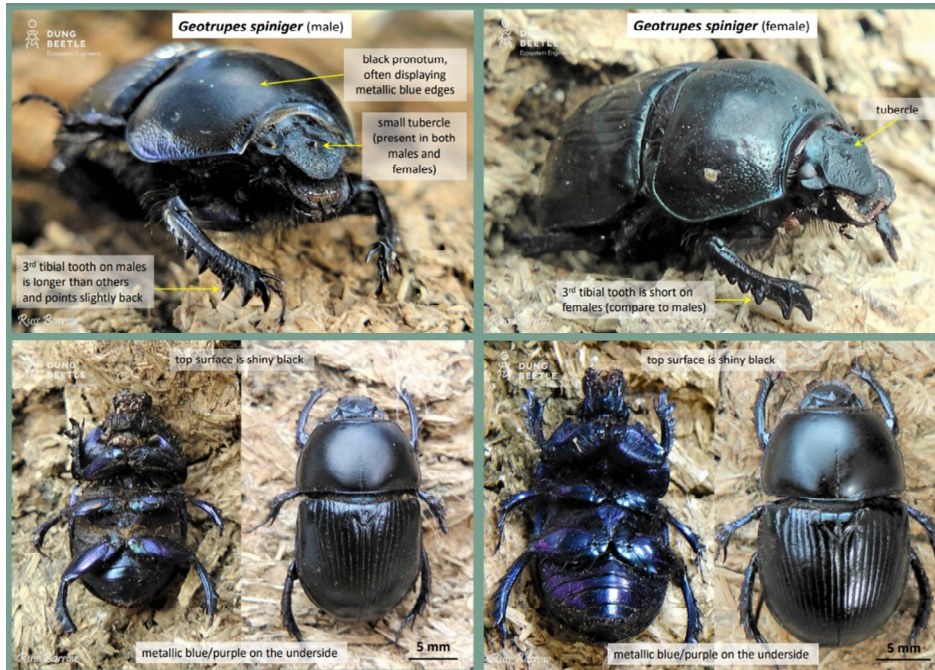


Geotrupes spiniger (introduced)



Size: 20—25mm

Colour: Shiny black with metallic blue/purple underside (good identifier)

Horns: None

Minor males/females: N/A

Flight time: Dawn and dusk

Active seasons: Early spring to early winter

Distribution in Australia: Tasmania, Victoria, south-east and north-east NSW

Origin: South-west Europe (including southern England)

South West Prime Lamb Group (SWPLG) demonstrations: *G. spiniger* was trapped once at Cashmore in February (2021) and also found near Hamilton, attracted to house lights May (2020). It had not been previously been recorded as occurring in the Glenelg Hopkins region.

Lifecycle: *G. spiniger* beetles live for four to six months and have one to two generations each year.

Dung burial: Buries dung to around 30—45cm. *G. spiniger* is one of the four deep tunnelling dung beetles found in southern Australia. The others include *Bubas bison*, *Onitis caffer* and *Copris hispanus*. *G. spiniger* was used in trials by the Lucyvale Landcare group in north-east Victoria to demonstrate improvements to soil health and fertility. In their unpublished results, the group measured changes to depth in phosphorus, sulphur, iron, zinc, boron and aluminium and an increase in the abundance of earthworms and soil biota.

Preferences and establishment: *G. spiniger* prefer wet clay and loam soils. Beetles can be purchased as starter colonies however, as with other species, if they fail to breed successfully, the reason why needs to be determined. *G. spiniger* has successfully established in north-east Victoria through a release program.

References:

Photos by Russ Barrow- Dung Beetle Ecosystem Engineer (DBEE) Project www.dungbeetles.com.au

Dung Beetle Ecosystem Engineer website: dungbeetles.com.au/species/geotrupes-spiniger

Dung Beetle Innovations NZ: dungbeetles.co.nz/about-beetles

Lucyvale Landcare project: youtube.com/watch?v=pYq0ZK1fAhw



Presence of *Geotrupes spiniger* Australia (Source: DBEE).