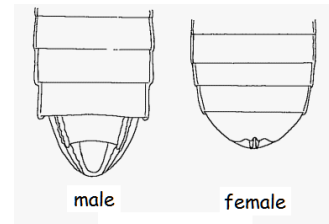


Family Cantharidae

Characterised by the long, thin legs and the obscured clypeus. The antennae are long and slender and are inserted on the frons between the eyes. The front border of the frons completely covers the clypeus. The second-to-last segment of the tarsi is bilobed and the claws are usually cleft or toothed. Body weakly chitinised. Prosternum with a raised process extending backwards between the front coxae. Middle coxae touching one another. Abdomen with seven visible sternites, in males often with a small additional anal sternite. The sexes differ in the structure of the end of the abdomen.



tip of the abdomen from below
(after Dahlgren)

The larvae are motile, elongate, quite convex in section and densely velvety hairy. The head is prognathous, well sclerotised and flattened on the top and bottom with a large, transversely elliptical ocellus visible on each side. They are usually velvet-black, sometimes with red or white spots with paler antennae and legs. The last sternite of the abdomen bears a suction-cup-like process. Larvae and adults are predacious on smaller insects and snails. The adults are found in the early summer in large numbers on low vegetation, shrubs and trees.

Source Material

These keys are adapted and translated from those published by Arved Lompe (2015) at <http://www.coleo-net.de/coleo/texte/cantharidae.htm> and linked pages. Reproduced here with permission. See also the information and links from Mark Telfer - <http://www.coleo-net.de/coleo/texte/cantharidae.htm>.

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 CANTHARINAE Imhoff, 1856

Tribe PODABRINI LeConte, 1881

Genus *PODABRUS* Westwood, 1838

alpinus (Paykull, 1798)

Tribe CANTHARINI Imhoff, 1856

Genus *ANCISTRONYCHA* Märkel in Kiesenwetter, 1852

abdominalis (Fabricius, 1798)

Genus *CANTHARIS* Linnaeus, 1758

Genus *RHAGONYCHA* Eschscholtz, 1830

Subfamily SILINAE Mulsant, 1862

Genus *SILIS* Charpentier, 1825

ruficollis (Fabricius, 1775)

Subfamily MALTHININAE Kiesenwetter, 1852

Tribe MALTHININI Kiesenwetter, 1852

Genus *MALTHINUS* Latreille, 1806

Tribe MALTHODINI Böving & Craighead, 1930

Genus *MALTHODES* Kiesenwetter, 1852

Image Credits

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Key to subfamily, tribe and genus

- 1 Last segment of the maxillary palps usually hatchet-shaped or asymmetrical. The elytra are not shortened and cover the wings (but do not always cover the whole abdomen); sometimes the wings are absent or rudimentary.2



Last segment of the maxillary palps slender, oval, rather pointed at the tip. The wings protrude beyond the shortened elytra. Subfamily Malthininae.6



Malthodes minimus. Photo by A Lompe

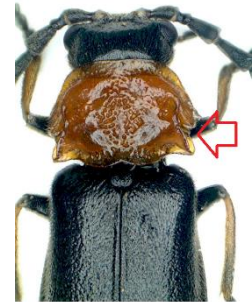


- 2 Hind margin of the second-to-last and third-to-last sternites straight. Pronotum of males without a constriction at the sides. Antennae filamentous. Subfamily Cantharinae.3

Second-to-last sternite cleft to the base; third-to-last sternite ± deeply and broadly notched. Pronotum in males with a deep constriction at the side. Antennae weakly toothed. Subfamily Silinae.

..... ***Silis ruficollis***

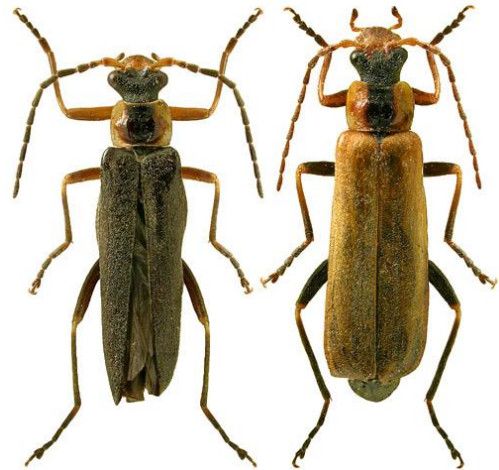
A local species in England south of The Wash, and Wales. Elytra with three slightly raised lines.



Crudosilis ruficollis male
Photo by A Lompe



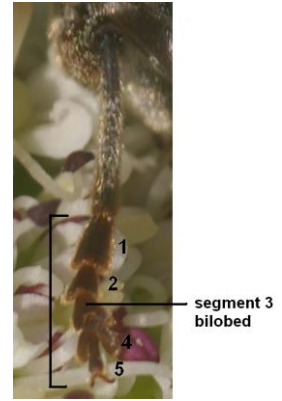
- 3 Pronotum distinctly broader than long; base of the pronotum broadly and evenly concave with the hind angles acute; front margin straight or concave. Head extended well in front of the pronotum often with an elongate neck so the temples are long. No raised tubercle between the antennae. Hair of the elytra short, not matted. Tribe Podabrini.
 ***Podabrus alpinus***



Base of the pronotum straight or curved towards the rear; front margin more or less rounded towards the front; hind angles not sharp. Head often covered by the front of the pronotum up to a level with the eyes, thus obscuring the shape of the back of the head. Tribe Cantharini.4



- 4 Tips of all claws simply pointed. Some species have a \pm well-developed lobe or tooth towards the base - do not confuse these with the tip of the claw. Third segment of the middle and hind tarsi divided into two lobes and thus similar in structure to the fourth segment. ..5



Tips of the claws on all legs or at least on the middle and hind legs divided into two. Frons without a swelling between the bases of the antennae. Front angles of the pronotum often distinct. Third segment of the middle and hind tarsi slightly notched in the same way as segments 1-2.
 Genus *Rhagonycha*



- 5 Both claws of all tarsi simply pointed in males, without a tooth towards the base; in females both claws of all tarsi have a tooth or rod-like process towards the base which may be indistinct or shortened on the middle and hind tarsi. Elytra yellow to reddish-yellow or clearly blue or greenish-blue. Old specimens may be black with a strong blue or green shine.

..... ***Ancistronycha abdominalis***

A rare species with records from upland northern England and Wales. Included in the *Cantharis* key if the claws can't be checked.

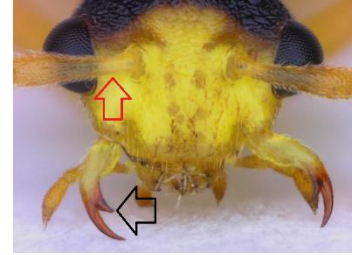


Front claws of all tarsi with a lobe or tooth towards the base but this is often greatly reduced in females. Elytra never clearly blue or greenish-blue (fresh specimens of a few species have black elytra with at most a hint of blue) but yellow, black or two-coloured.

..... Genus *Cantharis*



- 6 Cavities into which the antennae are inserted quite a way from the inner margin of the eyes. Mandibles with a long pointed tooth on the inner surface. Elytra not completely covering the wings when they are folded, often with regular rows of punctures in the front half. Frons and pronotum at least partly with a leathery texture, dull. Last sternite long oval, sometimes more or less incised towards the tip, spoon-shaped, covering the whole of the aedeagus. Tribe Malthinini.
 [Genus *Malthinus*](#)



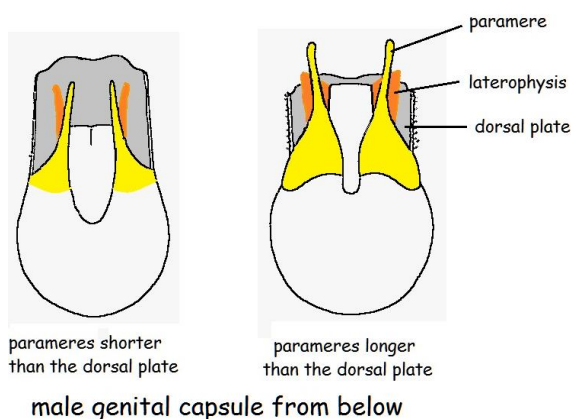
- Cavities into which the antennae are inserted very close to the inner margin of the eyes. The mandibles are usually smooth with at most an angular process on the inner surface, but often toothed or notched at the tip. Elytra without a trace of punctures arranged in rows. Frons and pronotum shining. Last sternite of the male abdomen viewed from below never oval nor spoon-shaped and not covering the whole aedeagus. Tribe Malthodini.
 [Genus *Malthodes*](#)



Genus *Cantharis*

Key to British species (translated and adapted from Lompe (2017), Käfer Europas: *Cantharis*)

Front margin of the pronotum convex; front corners rounded; hind angles not acutely projecting. Head with a longitudinal swelling between the bases of the antennae (sometimes indistinct). All claws simply pointed (do not confuse with the tooth-like onychium between the claws). Hair of the elytra not matted. Elytra not clearly blue or greenish-blue. In fresh specimens of *longicollis*, *livida* var. *rufipes* and *pellucida* the black elytra sometimes have a distinct hint of blue. Males have a simple, at most very slightly concave dorsal plate over the genital capsule.



Genus **CANTHARIS** Linnaeus, 1758

- cryptica*** Ashe, 1947
- decipiens*** Baudi, 1871
- figurata*** Mannerheim, 1843
- fusca*** Linnaeus, 1758
- lateralis*** Linnaeus, 1758
- livida*** Linnaeus, 1758
- nigra*** (De Geer, 1774)
- nigricans*** (Müller, O.F., 1776)
- obscura*** Linnaeus, 1758
- pallida*** Goeze, 1777
- paludosa*** Fallén, 1807
- pellucida*** Fabricius, 1792
- rufa*** Linnaeus, 1758
- rustica*** Fallén, 1807
- thoracica*** (Olivier, 1790)



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1 Elytra black or dark brownish-black.[2](#)

Elytra reddish-yellow along with most of the rest of the body. Sometimes the tips of the elytra are black.[14](#)



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2 Elytra with fine, short, silky-shining pale hairs interspersed with erect longer hairs. Elytra appearing grey.[3](#)

Elytra with the hairs all alike, at most with rather rougher hair towards the tip. ...[4](#)



- 3 Elytra greyish-black with the sides narrowly yellowish-red. Front half of the head yellowish-red; rear half black. Pronotum yellowish-red, rarely with two dark median patches that are close together. Legs yellowish red; hind tibiae often partly darkened. Length 5-7 mm.
 ***Cantharis lateralis***



Elytra not yellowish-red towards the sides. Pronotum yellow with or without black patches on the top. Front half of the head reddish-yellow; rear half black. Legs yellowish-red; tips of the hind femora usually black; tibiae partly darkened; tarsi dark. Length 8-11 mm.
 ***Cantharis nigricans***



4 Pronotum black, sometimes with the margins \pm yellowish-red.[5](#)

Pronotum red or yellow, at most with 1-2 darker patches on top.[7](#)



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- 5 Pronotum black, at most with a narrow, poorly differentiated, dirty reddish-brown margin. Very small species, length 5-6 mm.
..... ***Cantharis paludosa***
Head and elytra black. Particularly in swampy grassland.



Pronotum black with a broad, well-defined yellowish or reddish margin, sometimes (*pulicaria*) with the front and rear margins narrowly yellow.[6](#)



6 The whole of the front half of the head red.
..... ***Cantharis fusca***

Head black with at most the cheeks and maxillae yellow; the
black colour reaches the front of the head in the middle.
..... ***Cantharis obscura***



7 Head orange-brown, often with a black marking on the vertex which may be extensive leaving only the temples yellow.[8](#)

Rear part of the head completely black from level with the eyes.[10](#)



8 Larger species, from 10-18 mm.9

Smaller species, from 5-7.5 mm.
..... ***Cantharis thoracica***



- 9 Elytra black, sometimes with a yellowish-red longitudinal patch inside the swellings on the shoulder. Pronotum reddish-yellow, unmarked. The parameres do not extend beyond the dorsal plate; laterophyses rod-shaped. Length 10-13.5 mm. Head reddish-yellow, usually with a black patch on the vertex which can sometimes be so broad as to only leave the temples pale (rarely the rear half of the head is completely black). Legs reddish-yellow; hind tibiae black, tarsi brown - rarely the legs may be extensively darkened with the exception of the base of the femora.
 **Cantharis livida** var. *rufipes*



Elytra black, brown or brownish-yellow. Pronotum reddish-yellow, usually with a darkened M-shaped patch in the middle. The parameres extend beyond the dorsal plate; laterophyses not rod-shaped, but pointed. Smaller species, 7-10 mm. The elytra are often shortened. Antennae and legs shorter.
 **Cantharis rufa** var. *darwiniana*
 Halophilic race amongst tidal deposits on the North Sea coast.



10 Larger species from 10-18 mm.11

Smaller species from 5-7.5 mm.

..... ***Cantharis nigra***

Base of the abdomen dark along the centre; pronotum orange-brown, sometimes with a black patch in the middle or predominantly black. Front part of the head orange-brown. Rear part of the head and the elytra black. In damp habitats.



- 11 Legs black with the inner surface of the front tibiae, the base of the front femora and the front tarsi sometimes yellowish. Length 11-15 mm.
..... ***Cantharis fusca***



Legs reddish-yellow for the most part or otherwise coloured.[12](#)



12 Pronotum narrower than the elytra measured across the shoulders. Front margin of the pronotum convex; brownish-yellow, without dark patches.

..... ***Cantharis lividus*** var. *rufipes*

Examples with the rear half of the head completely black will key here

Pronotum narrower than the elytra measured across the shoulders; sides of the pronotum much less rounded so that the front angles are indicated.[13](#)



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- 13 Pronotum rarely uniformly red, usually with a black patch in the middle which does not reach the front margin; this patch is rounded, rarely with a notch at the front. Front half of the head red; rear half of the head and the elytra black. Legs black with the femora red with black tips or with only the base red. Length 10-14.5 mm. Male: aedeagus without a dorsal plate.
..... ***Cantharis rustica***



Pronotum uniformly reddish-yellow. Generally more slender. Rear half of the head and the elytra black (very rarely the temples are reddish-yellow. Front half of the head and the legs reddish-yellow with the following darker - front tibiae and tarsi (rarely), middle tibiae and tarsi (sometimes) hind tibiae and tarsi (usually), femora (very rarely). Length 10-13.5 mm. Male: aedeagus with a dorsal plate.
..... ***Cantharis pellucida***



14 Elytra yellow with blackened tips.
..... Genus *Ancistronycha*

Elytra uniformly yellow or reddish-brown, or darkened along the suture or the
sides. 15



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15 Head black behind the antennae.[16](#)

Head yellowish brown behind the antennae, sometimes with a black patch
behind the eyes or on the vertex.[17](#)



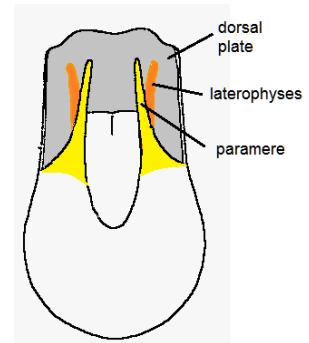
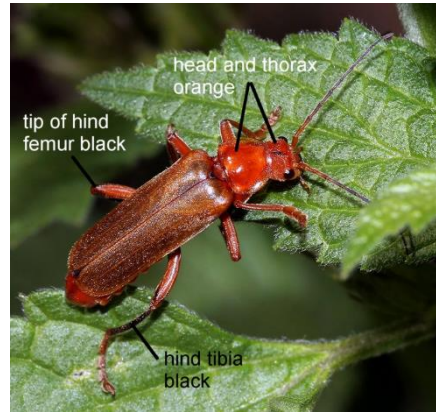
- 16 Front and middle femora yellow; hind femora with black markings. Pronotum yellow with a black, quite well-defined black patch in the middle. Front half of the head and the elytra yellow; rear half of the head black. Hairs of the elytra of two types: long, rather erect hairs and much shorter, more prostrate hairs. Length 6-8 mm.
..... ***Cantharis decipiens***



Front and middle femora partly darkened. The darkened patch in the middle of the pronotum is not well-defined at the edges. Hairs on the elytra not of two types as above.
..... ***Cantharis figurata* var. *scotica***



17 Front angles of the pronotum very broadly rounded, with an evenly curved transition from the sides to the front; hind angles broadly rounded, although indicated at their extreme tip. Parameres not longer than the dorsal plate; laterophyses rod-shaped, of even thickness. Head and pronotum reddish-yellow, usually with a black patch on the vertex. Elytra yellow (nominant form). Legs reddish-yellow with the tarsi brown, hind tibiae black and often with the outer half of the hind femora, the middle tibiae and the middle knees black. Length 9-13.5 mm
 ***Cantharis livida***



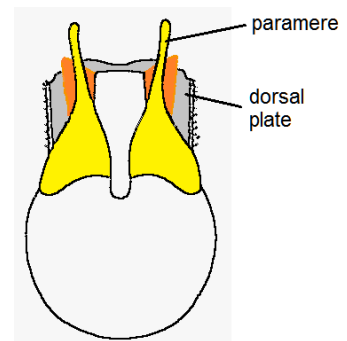
Hind angles of the pronotum much more distinct; front margin not evenly curved. Laterophyses not rod-shaped but broad, with a more or less triangular tip. Rear half of the head yellowish-brown, often with black patch behind each eye. Smaller species, 6-11.5 mm.[18](#)



18 Length 8-11.5 mm. Parameres extend beyond the dorsal plate. Upper surface reddish-yellow. Rear half of the head often with a black patch behind the eyes. Middle and hind femora rarely with a black mark in the middle. In variety *liturata* and variety *darwiniana* the pronotum has a black M-shaped marking and the legs are usually partly black. The nominate form is distinguished from *C. livida* by the usually unmarked legs while variety *liturata* is distinguished by the marking on the pronotum.

..... ***Cantharis rufa***

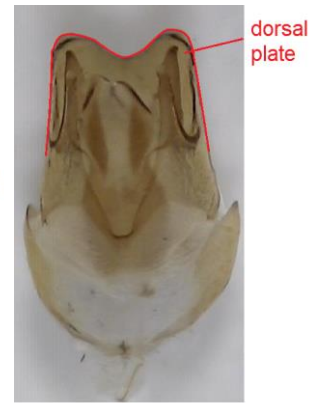
Common in Central Europe, mainly as the nominate form (illustrated). In northern Europe variety *liturata* is almost always the normal form. In coastal areas of the North Sea the halophilic variety *darwiniana* occurs which has shorter, usually darker elytra and short antennae and legs (see couplet 9).



Length 6-8.5 mm. The parameres do not project behind the dorsal plate.[19](#)



- 19 Dorsal plate deeply concave.
Head, pronotum, elytra and legs
yellowish-brown with the tips of the
middle and hind femora often
darker or black. Length 7-8 mm.
..... ***Cantharis cryptica***



from Lompe (2017)

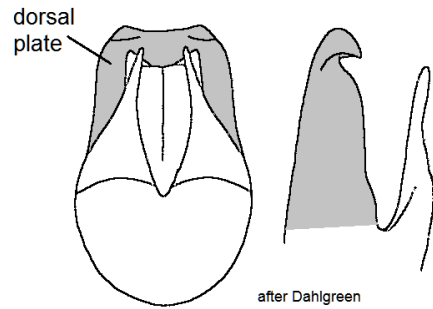
Dorsal plate only slightly concave.[20](#)



20 Viewed from the side the apical margin of the dorsal plate is more clearly curved; viewed from above the apical part of the dorsal plate is usually broader. Legs more robust. Coloured as in *cryptica*, rarely the knees are more clearly darkened along with the middle and hind tibiae and tarsi. Length 6-8.5 mm.

..... ***Cantharis pallida***

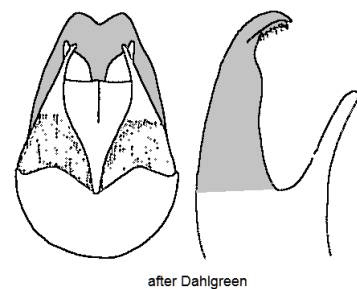
Damp habitats.



Viewed from the side the apical margin of the dorsal plate appears more slightly curved; viewed from above the apical section of the dorsal plate is usually narrower. Often coloured as in *pallida*, although sometimes the head has a black patch behind the eyes and the pronotum has a black ± M-shaped marking in the middle; in addition the femora and tarsi are often partly black and the hind tibiae are sometimes so; knees always pale; legs more slender. In variety *scotica* the front and middle femora are partly darkened, the rear half of the head black and the marking in the middle of the pronotum is indistinctly edged. Length 6.4-8.5 mm.

..... ***Cantharis figurata***

Shows a preference for damp habitats such as good quality fen and marshy grassland. The dark M-shaped marking on the pronotum may be indistinct at the edges and spread over much of the surface.



Genus *Rhagonycha*

Key to British species (translated and adapted from Lompe (2015), Käfer Europas: *Rhagonycha*)

- elongata* (Fallén, 1807)
- fulva* (Scopoli, 1763)
- lignosa* (Müller, O.F., 1764)
- limbata* Thomson, C.G., 1864
- lutea* (Müller, O.F., 1764)
- testacea* (Linnaeus, 1758)
- translucida* (Krynicky, 1832)

Head without a swelling between the base of the antennae. Tips of all claws divided into two. Dorsal plate in males always present. Hairs on the elytra short and not patchy. Determination of some species requires examination of the male genital capsule.

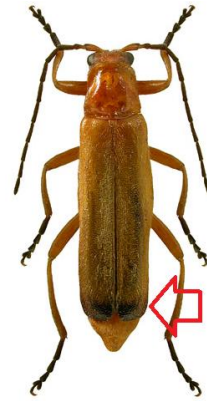
- 1 Pronotum completely yellowish-brown or reddish-yellow.[2](#)



- Pronotum completely black to blackish-brown or partly yellowish-brown and partly black to blackish-brown.[5](#)



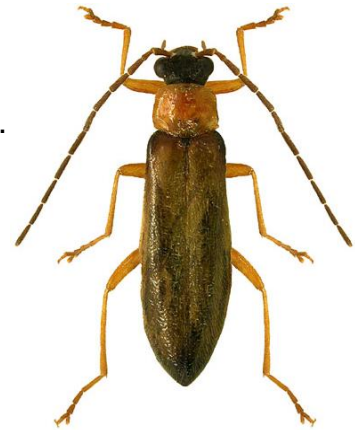
2 Tips of the elytra dark brown to black.[3](#)



Elytra uniformly yellowish-brown.[4](#)



- 3 Head and scutellum black. Pronotum orange-brown. Elytra dirty yellowish-brown with darker brown to black tips (rarely with a darker line over the shoulders. Length 6-9 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha lutea***



- Reddish-yellow species with only the eyes, antennae (except for the first segment) and the tips of the elytra black. Length 7-10 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha fulva***



- 4 Larger species, 7.5-11 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha translucida***



- Smaller species, 5-6 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha testacea***
This species is variable in the colouration of the pronotum.



5 Pronotum centrally black to blackish-brown and orange-brown towards the sides.
.....[6](#)

Pronotum uniformly black to blackish-brown.[7](#)



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- 6 Legs uniformly yellow. Head and pronotum black with the sides of the pronotum broadly yellowish brown. Elytra yellowish brown. Sometimes the pronotum is completely yellowish brown. 5-6 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha testacea***



Femora at least partly black. Head black; pronotum yellowish brown with the middle black to blackish-brown, although specimens do occur (at least in Central Europe) with pronotum completely dark. Elytra yellowish brown. Length 5-6 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha limbata***



- 7 Legs and elytra yellowish brown or with the tips of the elytra darkened. Head and pronotum black. Males thin and narrow with large bulging eyes. Length 5-7 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha lignosa***



- Legs at least partly darkened. Elytra brownish black or black. Length 6-7.5 mm.
..... ***Rhagonycha elongata***



Genus *Malthinus*

Key to British species (translated and adapted from Lompe (2017), Käfer Europas:
Malthinus)

Genus **MALTHINUS** Latreille, 1806
balteatus Suffrian, 1851
flaveolus (Herbst, 1786)
frontalis (Marsham, 1802)
seriepunctatus Kiesenwetter, 1852

Eyes in males very strongly bulging (smaller in females) with the head behind the eyes very strongly and (at least in males) conically narrowed.

- 1 Pronotum uniformly yellow or with a \pm distinct, sometimes interrupted dark longitudinal stripe. Elytra brown with yellow tips.2

Pronotum uniformly black; elytra uniformly darkened.
..... ***Malthinus frontalis***



- 2 Elytra with at most indistinct punctures; elytra marked by fine longitudinal furrows but these never contain rows of punctures. Length 5-6 mm.
..... ***Malthinus flaveolus***



after Lompe (2017)

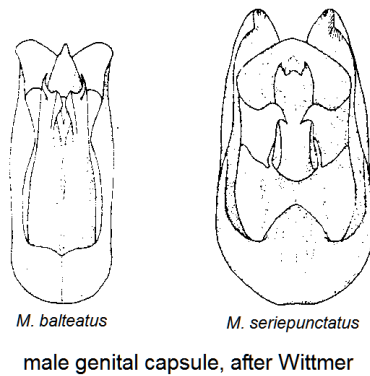
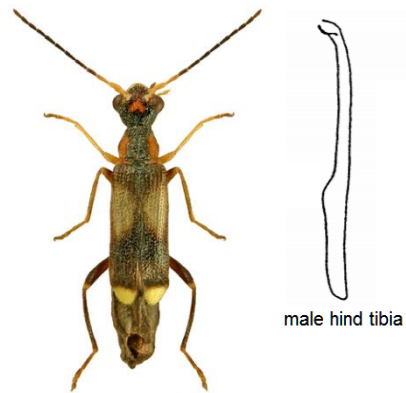
Elytra with rows of punctures.3



- 3 Male: hind tibiae straight.
 Female: spur of the front tibiae very long, almost reaching the middle of the first segment of the tarsi or a little beyond half way; hind legs yellow.
 ***Malthinus seriepunctatus***



- Male: hind tibiae with a thickening on the inner surface in the apical half
 Female: spur of the front tibiae short, reaching at most to one third of the length of the first segment of the tarsi; hind legs brown.
 ***Malthinus balteatus***



Genus *Malthodes*

Key to males from Wittmer (1979), Die Käfer Mitteleuropas

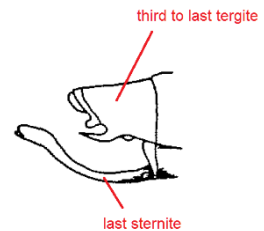
[Click here](#) to have a go at females

Genus **MALTHODES** Kiesenwetter, 1852

- crassicornis*** (Mäklin, 1846)
- dispar*** (Germar, 1824)
- fibulatus*** Kiesenwetter, 1852
- flavoguttatus*** Kiesenwetter, 1852
- fuscus*** (Waltl, 1838)
- guttifer*** Kiesenwetter, 1852
- lobatus*** Kiesenwetter, 1852
- marginatus*** (Latreille, 1806)
- maurus*** (Laporte, 1840)
- minimus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
- mysticus*** Kiesenwetter, 1852
- pumilus*** (Brébisson, 1835)

The species of this genus are easiest to distinguish in males using the diagnostic features of the last sternite and the last three tergites.

- 1 Third to last tergite with a short thorn on the side or with a long straight or curved process which is curved back but not downwards.2



- Third to last tergite with a rather rectangular extension each side, pointing backwards.3



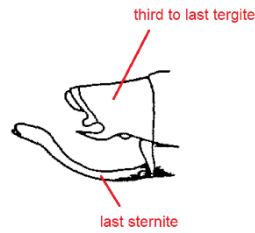
- Third to last tergite without special features.4



2 Third to last tergite with a quite long, straight or very weakly curved thorn-like process towards the side. Last sternite of the abdomen strap-like and generally curved upwards and when viewed from the side generally thickened. Length 3.5-5 mm.

..... ***Malthodes flavoguttatus***

Generally distributed through Great Britain



Third to last tergite with a longer process which is hooked and broadens slightly towards the tip. Last sternite strap-like and bent upwards in a right angle at about half-way and then suddenly slightly broadening. Length 4-5 mm.

..... ***Malthodes dispar***

Widespread in England and Wales, becoming rare in Scotland.



3 Middle section of the aedeagus cleft, dorsally with a relatively long process which partly covers the section below it. Last sternite viewed from below formed of a very narrow parallel-sided strap which only becomes broader close to the tip, and ends in two sharp points.

..... ***Malthodes fibulatus***

Less common species, scattered records in England and Wales.



Middle section of the aedeagus undivided and thus without a dorsal process. Last sternite viewed from below tapering to about half-way and then broadening again to the tip, ending in two blunt teeth.

..... ***Malthodes maurus***

Uncommon but with records widely scattered in Great Britain.



4 Last tergite without special features – not deeply indented or forked or with a broad border – rarely very weakly incised or spatulate (broadening towards the tip), at most weakly emarginate.5

Last tergite deeply indented or forked.10

last tergite cleft



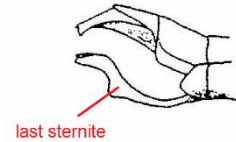
5 Last tergite spatulate, broadened towards the tip and appearing snipped off at the tip, straight in the middle or very weakly emarginate6

Last tergite otherwise.7



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- 6 Last sternite forming two branches towards the tip, with a knee-like swelling two-thirds of the way along. Last tergite spatulate, broadening towards the tip and appearing snipped off at the tip or very weakly emarginate. Length 3.5-5 mm. ..
 ***Malthodes mysticus***



- Last sternite formed of two weakly outwardly-curved branches which are joined beyond half-way by a translucent strip.
 ***Malthodes guttifer***



7 Last sternite long and narrow with the tip undivided.
..... ***Malthodes fuscus***



Last sternite quite deeply divided towards the tip.8



8 Last sternite forked towards the tip (not to be confused with *marginatus* in which the branches of the last sternite are joined to one another). Pronotum often uniformly reddish-orange or with a fairly large dark marking in the middle. Length 3.3-4.0 mm.

..... ***Malthodes minimus***

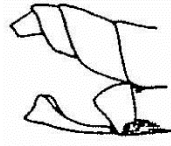
The commonest species in northern and central Europe.



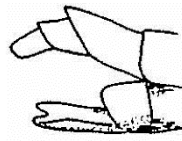
Last sternite only slightly forked towards the tip.9



- 9 Larger species, 4.0-5.5 mm. Third segment of the antennae distinctly longer than the second. Margins of the last sternite thickened, the middle part thin and rather transparent broadened towards the tip and curving upwards; border towards the tip difficult to see due to the dense hair. ***Malthodes marginatus***



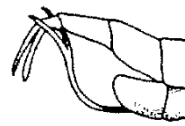
Smaller species, 2.3-2.8 mm. Third segment of the antennae as long as the second. Margins of the last sternite not thickened, rounded at the tip and with a clear border in the middle. ***Malthodes crassicornis***



- 10 Second to last tergite with a fairly long downwardly-pointing tooth towards the side. Last sternite comparatively broad ending with two broad lobes.
 ***Malthodes lobatus***



- Second to last tergite without a process at the side. Last sternite narrow with two long narrow teeth at the tip, with the appearance of a snake's tongue.
 ***Malthodes pumilus***



Genus *Malthodes*

Provisional key for use with females, adapted from Fitton (1973)

- 1 Length less than 1.8 mm. Elytra appear to be uniformly coloured - the tips are at most very indistinctly paler.2

Length more than 2.5 mm. Elytra appear to be uniformly coloured or the tip is clearly paler.4

- 2 Head parallel for some distance behind the eyes. Pronotum not as broad compared to the length and with the hind angles more obtuse.3

Head narrowing from immediately or almost immediately behind the eyes (more so in males than females). Pronotum relatively broader compared to the length with the hind angles nearly right angled.
..... ***Malthodes crassicornis***

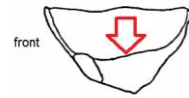
- 3 Elytra very short, extending back to between the middle and hind legs, about equal to the length of the head.
..... ***Malthodes lobatus***

Elytra longer, extending at least to the base of the hind legs, much longer than the length of the head.
..... ***Malthodes pumilus***



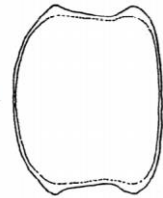
- 4 Pronotum bordered at the sides (easiest to see from the side), the border as broad as the border along the rear margin (viewed from above).5

pronotum side view



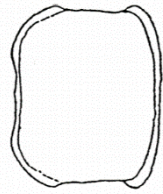
front

top view



front

- Pronotum not bordered at the sides. Length 3-4 mm.6



- 5 Elytra more elongate, at least 2.45 times longer than wide (measured across the shoulders).
 ***Malthodes marginatus***
- Elytra shorter, at most 2.35 times longer than wide (measured across the shoulders).
 ***Malthodes mysticus*** and ***M. guttifer***
- 6 Elytra appearing uniformly coloured to the eye, at most indistinctly paler at the tips.7
 Tips of the elytra distinctly yellow.8
- 7 Pronotum uniformly very dark brown.
 ***Malthodes maurus***
- Pronotum with a narrow but distinct yellow border.
 ***Malthodes fibulatus***
- 8 Pronotum with at least the angles broadly reddish or yellow (occasionally entirely pitchy in *minimus*).9
 Pronotum uniformly black or very dark brown (occasionally very narrowly yellowish at the front and sides.10
- 9 Antennae uniformly brown. Pronotum uniformly reddish-yellow. Elytra more elongate with the length at least 2.3 times greater than the width measured across the shoulders.
 ***Malthodes fuscus***
- Antennae with the segments towards the base paler, yellow. Pronotum usually pale with the central part ± dark brown (occasionally uniformly dark brown or completely pale). Elytra shorter with the length <2.25 times the width measured across the shoulders.
 ***Malthodes minimus***
- 10 Antennae uniformly dark brown to black.
 ***Malthodes flavoguttatus***
- Antennae with the segments at the base paler, reddish to yellowish.
 ***Malthodes dispar***

