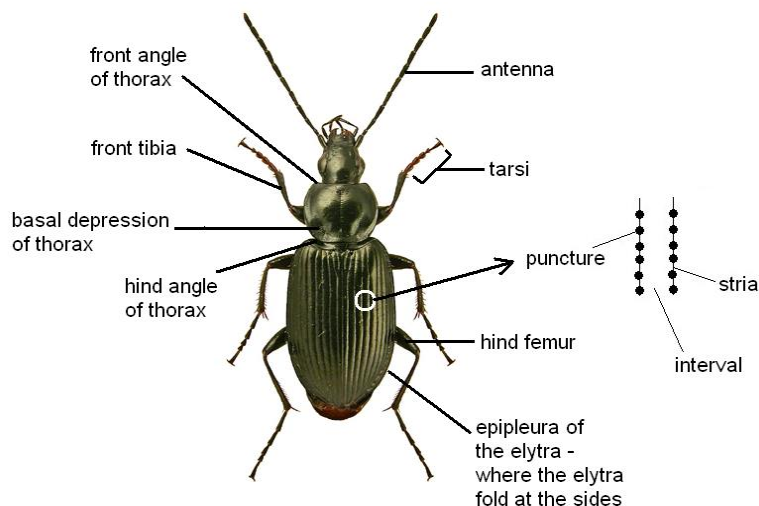


# Key to the British species of tribe Platynini

## Reference

The source of this translation is Schmidt (2004) *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas* Volume 2 and Lompe (2009) *Käfer Europas Agonum* and linked pages. The original text can be found <http://www.coleo-net.de/coleo/texte/agonum.htm> and linked pages.

Translated and adapted for the British fauna by Mike Hackston and reproduced here with the kind permission of Dr Arved Lompe.



## Checklist

From the Checklist of Beetles of the British Isles, 2012 edition, edited by A. G. Duff. Updated version available from Pemberley Books.

Genus ***Agonum*** Bonelli, 1810

Genus ***Anchomenus*** Bonelli, 1810

***dorsalis*** (Pontoppidan, 1763)

Genus ***Batenus*** Motschulsky, 1864

***livens*** (Gyllenhal, 1810)

Genus ***Olisthopus*** Dejean, 1828

***rotundatus*** (Paykull, 1790)

Genus ***Oxypselaphus*** Chaudoir, 1843

***obscurus*** (Herbst, 1784)

Genus ***Paranchus*** Lindroth, 1974

***albipes*** (Fabricius, 1796)

Genus ***Platynus*** Bonelli, 1810

***assimilis*** (Paykull, 1790)

Genus ***Sericoda*** Kirby, 1837

***quadripunctata*** (De Geer, 1774)

## Image Credits

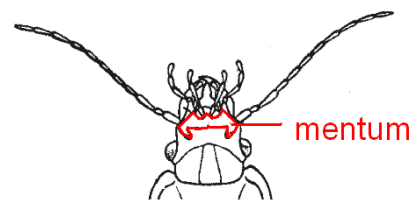
The photographs in this key are reproduced from the *Iconographia Coleopterorum Poloniae*, with permission kindly granted by Lech Borowiec. Line drawings are from Lindroth (1974) reproduced under the terms of the Creative Commons Licence.



- 1 Viewed from below the mentum at the base of the mouth-parts does not have a tooth. Pronotum as broad as the elytra at the shoulders. Second segment of the antennae more than half the length of third. ....  
 ..... ***Olisthopus rotundatus***



Viewed from below the mentum at the base of the mouth has a tooth. Pronotum narrower. Second segment of the antennae shorter. ....2



- 2 Elytra bright orange-brown with a large dark, metallic patch across the suture. Head and pronotum with a vivid green reflection. Base of antennae and legs orange-brown. Length 6.0-8.2 mm. ....

..... ***Anchomenus dorsalis***

In open meadows and grassland, usually on gravelly, clay or chalky soils. Somewhat local but often abundant, often large groups have been recorded under stones in the spring.

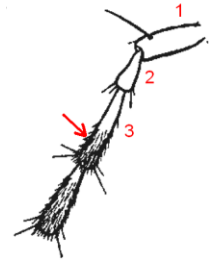


Elytra uniform in colour or with pale margins. ....3

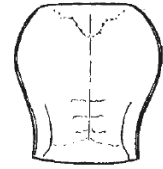
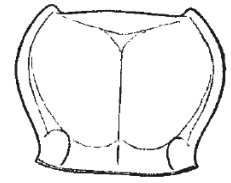
3 Third segment of the antennae with the normal apical bristles only.  
.....4



Third segment of the antennae hairy at least in apical half. ....  
..... Genus *Agonum*, subgenus *Europophilus*



4 Hind angles of pronotum sharp, acutely angled to about right angled. Body without a metallic shine. ....5



Hind angles of pronotum distinctly obtusely angled or entirely rounded. Body often with a metallic shine. ....7

- 5 Tarsi with a furrow along the middle. Third interval of the elytra with 2 dorsal punctures. Dark brown with the sides and suture of the elytra usually slightly paler; antennae and legs pale brown. Immature individuals long retain a reddish colour. Base of pronotum strongly punctured. Striae of the elytra fine, without punctures, waviness of the sides near the apex absent. Length 6.8-9 mm. ....

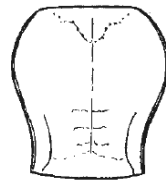


..... ***Paranchus albipes***

On open, damp, often barren, usually clay soils, near water; often on the seashore. Locally abundant and widespread.

Tarsi not furrowed. Elytra with at least three punctures in the third interval. ....6

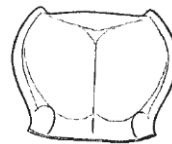
- 6 Pronotum narrow, only slightly wider than head with the lateral bead very narrow. Striae of the elytra strongly punctured; elytra yellowish brown, palest at shoulder. Head and pronotum dark brown or sometimes reddish. Legs chestnut brown. Wings usually quite reduced. Length 5-6.6 mm. ....



..... ***Oxypselaphus obscurus***

In damp deciduous woodland and in densely vegetated marshes, among leaves and mosses. Somewhat local but widespread; common in the south.

Pronotum much wider than head, sides broadly flattened. Striae of the elytra with tiny punctures. Body black; legs and antennae dark brown. Elytra very broad, widening behind middle; striae deep with the intervals between them convex. Length 8.7-12.3 mm. ....



..... ***Platynus assimilis***

In shady places, usually deciduous woodland, often under bark. Local but widespread.

- 7 Head constricted behind eyes, with transverse impression visible also dorsally. Dark brown; head almost always with two reddish spots. Antennae and legs dark reddish but apex of each antennal segment darkened as well as part of the legs. Striae of the elytra fine. Length 7.8-10.5 mm. ....

..... ***Batenus livens***

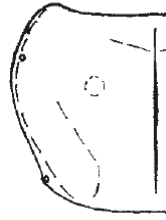
Very moisture demanding; in marshy deciduous woodland, often alder, among leaves and *Sphagnum* mosses. Local and usually rare; Hampshire to Nottinghamshire.



Head not so constricted. ....8



- 8 Elytra with the dorsal punctures wider, more like distinct depressions, occupying more than the width of the third interval. Dull black with bronze hue; tibiae more or less dark brown. Pronotum short with obtuse hind angles, but distinct. Elytra with 3-5 dorsal punctures. Length 4.5-5.8 mm. ....



..... ***Sericoda quadripunctata***

Attracted by forest fires, notably of conifers, often collected under bark. Scattered records; a recent colonist.

Dorsal punctures of the third interval small. Larger species.

..... Genus *Agonum* subgenus *Agonum*



# Genus *Agonum*

Genus **AGONUM** Bonelli, 1810

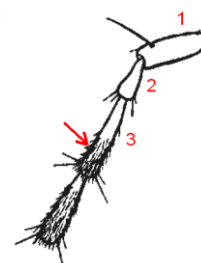
Subgenus *AGONUM*

- chalconotum*** Ménériés, 1832
- emarginatum*** (Gyllenhal, 1827)
- ericeti*** (Panzer, 1809)
- gracilipes*** (Duftschmid, 1812)
- lugens*** (Duftschmid, 1812)
- marginatum*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
- muelleri*** (Herbst, 1784)
- nigrum*** Dejean, 1828
- sexpunctatum*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
- versutum*** Sturm, 1824
- viduum*** (Panzer, 1796)

Subgenus *EUROPHILUS* Chaudoir, 1859

- fuliginosum*** (Panzer, 1809)
- gracile*** Sturm, 1824
- micans*** Nicolai, 1822
- piceum*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
- scitulum*** Dejean, 1828
- thoreyi*** Dejean, 1828

- 1 Third segment of the antennae densely and finely hairy in the apical two-thirds. Subgenus *Europhilus*. .....2  
Third interval of the elytra with 4-7 bristle-bearing pores.



- Third segment of the antennae with only apical bristles. Subgenus *Agonum*. .....7



## Subgenus *EUROPHILUS*

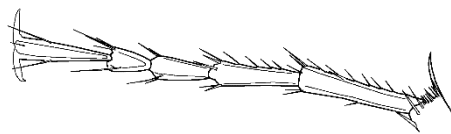
- 2 Tarsi with a more or less deep furrow along the top surface (particularly well-marked on the last segment before the claws). Pronotum longer relative to its width (width only up to 1.1 times the length). Head black; elytra, palps, legs and first segment of the antennae brownish yellow; sides of the pronotum paler; rest of body pitchy brown. Length 6.5-7.8 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum thoreyi***

In variety *puellum* Dejean, 1828, (lower photograph) the body is almost black with only the sides of the pronotum and elytra weakly paler brown and with the legs, palps and antennae darker than the normal form. On exposed banks of standing nutrient-rich waters especially amongst tall vegetation.



(C) Jan Muilwijk

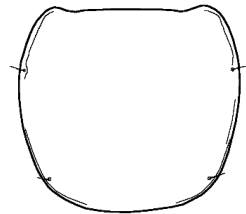


- Tarsi without a furrow along the top surface, at most with a slight concavity. Pronotum more than 1.1 times broader than long. ....3

- 3 Upper surface and at least the femora black; the tibia usually only slightly paler than the femora. Front margin of the pronotum straight between the forwardly-lobed front angles. ....

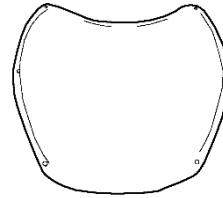
..... ***Agonum gracile***

Black without a metallic shine. Pronotum clearly narrowed towards the base with the sides convex with a narrow lateral keel. Base of the pronotum not flattened next to the hind angles which are very rounded. Usually in very wet habitats with rank vegetation, immediately next to bodies of water.



Upper surface pitchy brown; elytra often paler than the head and pronotum. Legs pale to reddish brown. If the upper surface is black then the front margin of the pronotum is evenly curved (see *scitulum* in the next couplet). .....4

- 4 Upper surface black with a green or blue sheen. Tibiae clearly paler than the femora. Sides of the pronotum running in a straight line from the middle to the base or even slightly concave. Length 6-7.5 mm. ....  
 ..... ***Agonum scitulum***



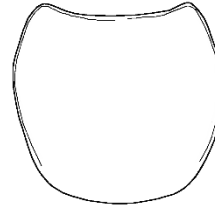
from Lompe (2018)

Upper surface not as dark, pitchy brown. Elytra somewhat or distinctly paler than the head and pronotum. Sides of the pronotum evenly convex from the broadest point to the base, sometimes paler. ....5

- 5 Pronotum longer relative to the elytra (more so than other species in this subgenus), more than a third of the length of the elytra. Pronotum very evenly curved with only a very narrow linear side border, and only very slightly flattened towards the base. Length 6-7 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum fuliginosum***

A species of damp habitats in woodland, not dependent on bodies of water.  
Frequent amongst alder and willows.



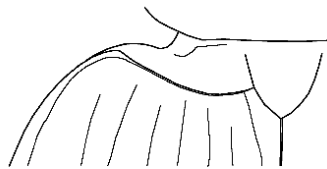
pronotum

Length of the pronotum scarcely a third of the length of the elytra. Keel at the sides of the pronotum becoming broader towards the base, there united with a distinct basal depression. ....6

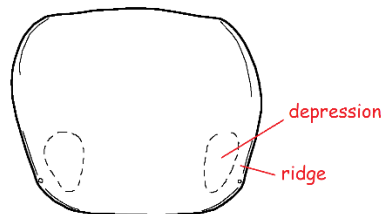
- 6 Elytra comparatively broader, not or only slightly paler than the pronotum. Pronotum with distinct basal impressions; sides with a broad ridge separating it from the edge; margin not pale and translucent. Elytra evenly rounded at the base and running into the side margin. Upper surface with a more or less metallic bronzy shine. Length 6.2-7.5 mm.....

..... ***Agonum micans***

Damp habitats at the sides of rivers and lakes.



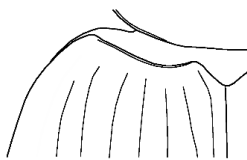
base of elytron



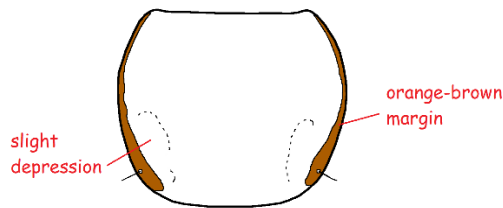
Elytra relatively longer compared to the width, usually clearly paler than the pronotum. Pronotum with a slight basal impression and a narrow side margin which is somewhat paler. The transition between the basal edge of the elytra and the sides is sharper, almost obtusely angled. Length 5.5-7 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum piceum***

Always in damp habitats at the sides of rivers and lakes.



base of elytron



## Subgenus *AGONUM*

- 7 Elytra with a broad yellow to orange-brown border. Upper surface pale to dark green, often coppery. First segment of the antennae and the tibiae paler. Third interval of the elytra with 3 pore-punctures. Pronotum broader than long with the hind angles rounded. Length 8.5-10.5 mm. ....  
..... ***Agonum marginatum***

A pioneer salt-tolerant species found in saline sites, on lake-sides and other damp habitats.

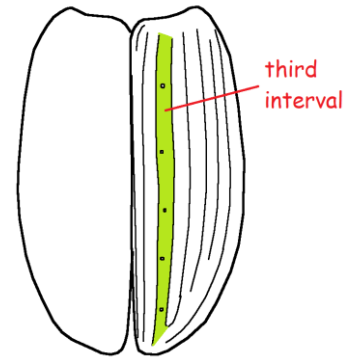


Otherwise coloured. If green then without a yellowish edge to the elytra. ....8





- 8 Antennae and legs all black; upper surface usually vividly metallic and shining (beware that black variants may occur). Pronotum with deepened basal depressions which have a surface sculpture of punctures or parallel wrinkles. Third interval of the elytra with 4-7 well-developed pore-punctures. ....9



Black or only weakly metallic shining species. Tibiae often paler. Basal depressions on the pronotum with at most sparse and fine punctures. Third interval of the elytra usually with three pore-punctures (more in *gracillipes* and aberrant specimens of other species). ....10

- 9 On average smaller, 6.5-8.5 mm. Pronotum more slender with a narrower marginal keel, narrowing for a greater distance before the hind angles. Male aedeagus evenly curved. Female with the gonocoxites compact, with very strong bristles. Usually uniformly green to bronze (rarely all black). .....

..... ***Agonum ericeti***

Heathland and moorland species on acid soils.



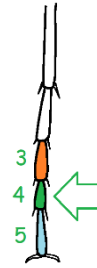
On average larger, 7.0-9.5 mm. Pronotum much broader compared to its length with a broader marginal keel with the sides narrowing about evenly towards the front and the rear. Male aedeagus swollen in the middle. Female with the gonocoxites more slender, with finer bristles. Metallic green to reddish bronze, usually bicolored. ....

..... ***Agonum sexpunctatum***

In damp open habitats.

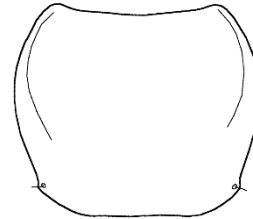


- 10 Third interval of the elytra with 4-7 pore-punctures. Segments of the hind tarsi slender with the fourth segment much longer than wide, very indistinctly furrowed on top; last segment of the tarsi rather shorter than the third and fourth combined. Pronotum comparatively less broad compared to its length with a broad marginal keel with the hind angles often forming a small projecting tooth. Upper surface dull, greenish to bronzy or brown. Slender, rather flattened species. Length 6.5-9 mm. ....



..... ***Agonum gracilipes***

Often attracted to light.



pronotum

- Third interval with more than three pore-punctures only in aberrant specimens. Segments of the hind tarsi less slender with the fourth segment only slightly longer than wide or strongly furrowed above; last segment of the hind tarsus usually slightly longer than the third and fourth combined. More robust and domed species with comparatively broader pronotum or pronotum with only a narrow lateral keel and smooth basal cavities. ....11

- 11 Tarsal segments with a clear fine keel above, extending onto the fifth segment flanked on each side by longitudinal furrows. Hind angle of the pronotum produced into a distinct tooth close to the pore-puncture. Elongate species. Length 8-10 mm. Dull black, commonly with paler tarsi and tibiae. Elytra with a silky sheen due to a well-developed microscopic sculpture. ....

..... ***Agonum lugens***

In reed beds on the margins of nutrient rich bogs, silted areas and river flood plains.



At least the fifth segment of the tarsi simply rounded on the top surface or with the slightest indication of a lateral furrow. Hind angles of the pronotum rarely with a small projecting tooth. ....12

12 Fifth stria of the elytra with a short shallow indentation (sometimes rather indistinct). Sides of the pronotum clearly margined all the way to the base, although the marginal keel is very narrow in the middle. ....13

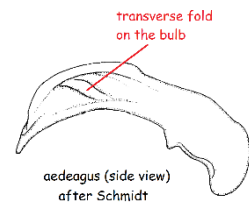
Fifth stria of the elytra without an indentation. Sides of the pronotum usually not bordered in the rear part; marginal keel usually broad in the middle although sometimes as above. ....14



- 13 Black, somewhat shining. Basal depressions on the pronotum becoming deeper and narrower towards the centre line and with the area between them and the sides less flattened. Pronotum less transverse, only about 1.2-1.3 times broader than long. The impression before the end of the fifth stria of the elytra is often very indistinct. Aedeagus more robust and more pointed at the tip; bulb with a distinct transverse fold. Length 7-8.5 mm.

..... ***Agonum nigrum***

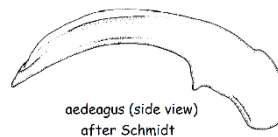
Salt tolerant species in reed beds and swamps



Usually distinctly metallic green. Pronotum more than 1.3 times broader than long; basal depressions more extensive with the area between them and the sides of the pronotum distinctly flattened. Elytra uniformly coloured or with some bronze colour (very rarely dark). Tibiae usually distinctly paler than the femora. Hind angles of the pronotum evenly and broadly rounded. Aedeagus broadly rounded with an inconspicuous bulb. Length 7-9 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum muelleri***

Damp habitats.



***Agonum chalconotum*** has not been recorded since 1914 when it was found by the river Clyde below Glasgow. It is distinguished from *A. muelleri* as follows:

Upper surface uniformly coloured, from green or coppery to almost black. Microscopic sculpture of the elytra almost regularly equal-sided. Pronotum narrower and flatter with lateral reflection more pronounced towards the base. Basal margin of elytra less curving. Lateral furrows of basal segments of the hind tarsus stronger. Length 7.5- 8.3 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum chalconotum***



15 Pronotum more strongly domed and transverse with the margin distinct right up to the base and with the marginal keel very narrow in the middle. First segment of the antennae pale. ....16

Pronotum without a clear margin right to the base and with the marginal keel clearly developed in the middle. First segment of the antennae black. Third pore-puncture in the third interval of the elytra in the apical fifth. Tarsi more slender. Aedeagus more slender. ....17



16 Intervals between the striae flat towards the tip of the elytra. ....

..... ***Agonum muelleri***

Dark specimens with the depression on the fifth stria of the elytra indistinct or absent will key here.

Intervals between the striae convex towards the tip of the elytra. The second pore-puncture on the third interval of the elytra is located against the second stria. Elytra less convex at the sides than the following species, often rather parallel-sided; the rear pore-puncture in the third interval is located further forward, often around the start of the second third. Tarsi noticeably short. Aedeagus robust, strongly curved and appearing very broad when viewed from above. Male: segment 9 with a broad basal plate. Female gonocoxites small. Black species with the upper surface with a brassy shine or metallic greenish or bluish. Length 6.5-8.5 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum versutum***



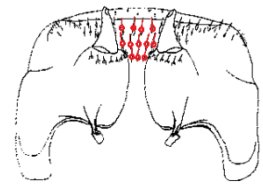


17 Often metallic greenish or bluish, rarely black. Elytra relatively strongly curved at the sides, ovately rounded, shortly concavely pointed at the rear. Striae deep with the intervals raised in between; second pore-puncture located in the third interval, usually against the second stria. Hind tarsi relatively shorter with the fourth segment simply rounded above at the sides or with a discontinuous furrow. Aedeagus with the normal preputial fold in the ostium. Male segment 9 with a distinct plate in males. Female gonocoxite small, the ventrite only having three rows of bristles. Length 7.0-9.5 mm. ....

..... ***Agonum viduum***



male aedeagus  
after Lompe (2021)

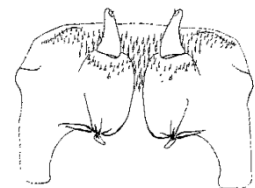


Female gonocoxite  
from below  
from Schmidt

Always completely black species. Elytra less curved at the sides, usually appearing more slender and rounded at the tip without a concavity. Striae and intervals flatter; second pore-puncture on the third interval usually located against the third stria or in the middle of the interval. Hind tarsi more slender, the fourth segment with a distinct furrow towards the sides of the upper surface. Female gonocoxite more robust, the ventrite with numerous bristles. ....

..... ***Agonum emarginatum***

An extremely variable species of damp meadows



Female gonocoxite  
from below  
from Schmidt



male aedeagus  
after Lompe (2021)

