



## Traditional Orchards

Traditional orchards are one of the Special Qualities of the Wye Valley National Landscape and 1% of England's traditional orchards and 6% of Wales' can be found here.

As such a locally and nationally important habitat, we aim to conserve, enhance, recover and promote this habitat, benefitting the species that depend upon it.



Photos: Ellie Baggett/People's Trust for Endangered Species/Wye Valley National Landscape

## How do I know if I have Noble Chafer Beetles in my orchard?

Adult noble chafers emerge in June and July, living for 4-6 weeks. You may spot them feeding on pollen and nectar from elder flowers, hog weed and other plants with clusters of tiny flowers called umbellifers. Please get in touch with us if you spot an adult beetle, frass or grubs.




*Young beetle grubs (larvae) feed on decaying wood in hollow trunks and boughs.*




*The grubs produce distinctive droppings, called frass, which look like coffee grounds.*

If you own or manage orchards talk to us about work to enhance habitats for this vulnerable species. We can help search for funding for orchard creation, maintenance and tree planting. Contact: [naturerecovery@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk](mailto:naturerecovery@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk)

Find out more with this Noble Chafer Factsheet produced by the People's Trust for Endangered Species: <https://ptes.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Noble-chafer-fact-file-low-res.pdf>

 [information@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk](mailto:information@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk)

 01600 713977

 [www.wyevalley-nl.org.uk](http://www.wyevalley-nl.org.uk)

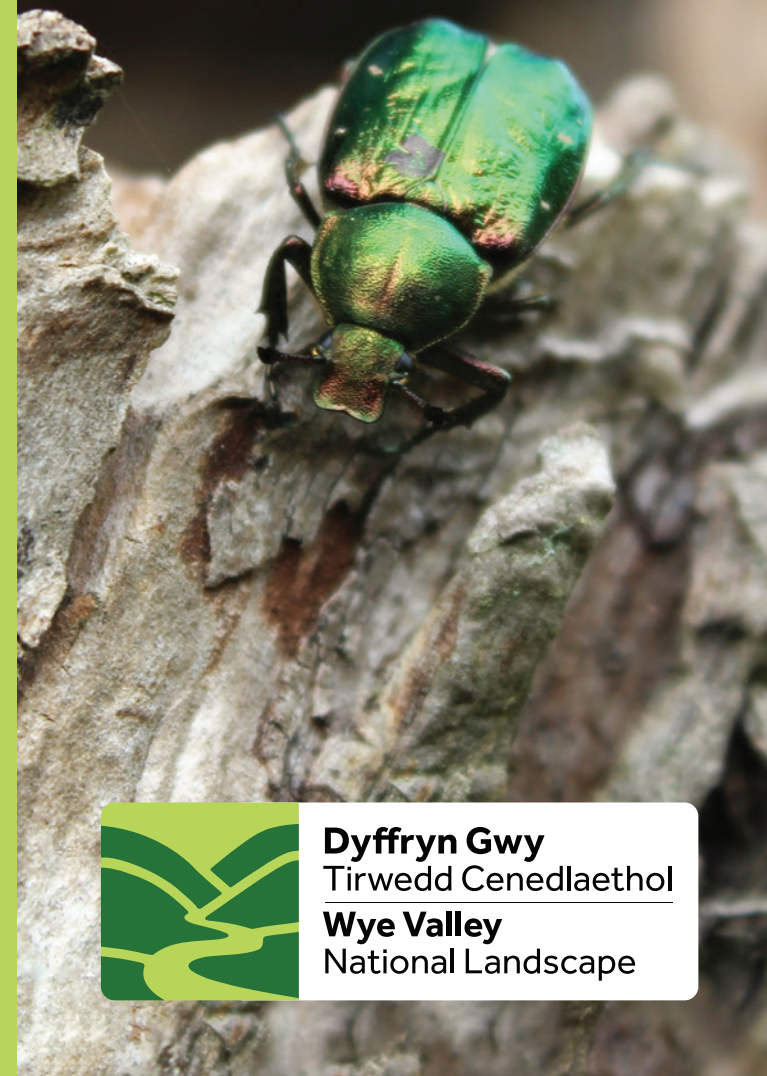


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# Noble Chafer Beetles in the Wye Valley



**Dyffryn Gwy**  
Tirwedd Cenedlaethol  
**Wye Valley**  
National Landscape



# Noble Chafer Beetle

(*Gnorimus nobilis*)

Noble Chafers are rare and beautiful beetles associated with traditional orchards and wood pastures, where they depend upon decaying wood within old trees. With the loss of traditional orchards in Britain, the Noble Chafer has undergone a considerable decline in range and now faces a very high risk of extinction.



## Species Recovery

The Wye Valley National Landscape Partnership has a priority species action plan for the Noble Chafer Beetle. We are working with landowners and conservation organisations to reverse the decline of this species.

The main distribution of Noble Chafer Beetles is in the old orchard country of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire. Within the Wye Valley National Landscape there are a small number of Noble Chafer records around the Woolhope Dome only.



## Our Work

### Pheromone Surveys

During Summer 2022 & 2023 pheromone surveys were conducted to determine the distribution of Noble Chafers within the Wye Valley National Landscape. A total of 5 beetles have been identified, more than doubling the previously known numbers recorded. The pheromone was developed by Dr Deborah Harvey at Royal Holloway University of London, and was then synthesised in Sweden.

We hung traps in orchards, each fitted with a synthesised pheromone lure specially developed to attract Noble chafers. This has allowed us to establish two separate local populations for targeted conservation action.

We can now identify wildlife corridors between sites where there is most potential to create suitable habitat by expanding, joining up or creating new orchards.

### Making homes for Noble Chafers

Specially designed nest boxes have been built and placed across several sites in the north of the Wye Valley National Landscape. These boxes contain rotting wood to create suitable habitat for chafers, and must remain in-situ at least three years for the habitat to develop and allow for the potential spread of the population.

### Orchard Creation & Maintenance

The Wye Valley National Landscape Partnership has hosted orchard maintenance training workshops and planted new fruit trees as part of a DEFRA funded Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) project.



## Managing Orchards for the Noble Chafer

### 5 top tips for orchard owners/managers

- 1 Sustainably prune and maintain old and veteran trees.
  - 2 Plant new/replacement fruit trees to create a rich age structure, and nurture future veterans.
  - 3 Create dead wood habitat by leaving fallen trees and decaying wood in the orchard and field margins.
- It's not all about the trees...**
- 4 Create space and encourage growth of nectaring sources for the Noble Chafer Beetle, especially in field margins. These plants include: hogweed, elderflower and other umbellifer species.
  - 5 Learn more about the Noble Chafer and how to identify them.



**90%** of traditional orchards lost in England and Wales since the 1950s. (PTES, 2022)