

# Ground Beetle



GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  

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ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# GROUND BEETLE

FAMILY: Carabidae

ORDER: Coleoptera

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ 1/8 - 1 1/8 inches long
- ◆ usually shiny black but some have bright colors
- ◆ body is slightly flattened
- ◆ long legs; they are fast runners
- ◆ head narrow with threadlike antennae, compound eyes and large chewing mouthparts



### Where to Look:

Ground beetles can be found under logs, rocks and leaf litter in lawns, woods, fields and vacant lots.

### Who Eats It?

Ground beetles are eaten by birds, toads and frogs.



### LIFE CYCLE

#### COMPLETE METAMORPHOSIS

Adults lay single eggs in the soil or as groups in cells made of mud and leaves. The larvae are predatory and pupate to overwinter. Adults emerge in the spring.

### What It Eats.

Ground beetles eat many kinds of soft-bodied larvae like caterpillars and fly larvae. They also eat earthworms, snails and slugs.

### Role in the Ecosystem

They are important predators of many species of "pest" caterpillars.



### Did You Know

One type of ground beetle called the bombardier beetle defends itself by shooting off a poison liquid the temperature of boiling water. The liquid turns into a puff that creates a protective screen.