

## Care guide

### Golden Stag Beetle (*Lamprima aurata*)



Golden Stag Beetles are moderately small but stunning stag beetles. Males usually grow to a length of around 15-20mm, while the smaller females are usually around 12-15mm. They are related to the well-known Rainbow Stag Beetle (*Phalacrognathus muelleri*). They have a satin metallic sheen and stunning colours. The males are a mix of red-gold and green, whilst the smaller females are rich green, with hints of blue and purple. The males have enlarged mandibles typical of stag beetles which are used to battle with rival males.

This species is found in coastal forests in southern and eastern Australia from Tasmania to Queensland. These beetles are not regarded as rare but not commonly encountered. They seem to be less frequently attracted to lights than other stag beetle species.

While the adults may live several months or longer, much of the life of this species is as a larva deep within the timber of a fallen tree. Golden Stag Beetles typically target the rotting wood of eucalypt trees. The larvae (grubs) will go through three instars before pupating to later emerge as an adult beetle. During the larval stage this species will feed upon on fungus-effected rotting wood, while as an adult the diet changes to a sugar-based diet largely comprising of fruits.

# Care guide

## Golden Stag Beetle (*Lamprima aurata*)

**Food (adults):** Fruits; banana, mango and apple. Offer small pieces and replace each day to avoid the fruit fermenting. An good alternative to fruit alone is the 'Stag beetle diet'; (3 parts banana, 1 part Maple syrup, 1 part natural yogurt). Offer a teaspoon of the Stag beetle diet in a small dish, discard and replace on a daily basis.

**Water:** Water does not need to be supplied in free form, however care must be taken to ensure enclosure conditions are maintained (below) to avoid dehydration.

**Enclosure:** Plastic terrariums and plastic tubs make ideal enclosures. The tub will need a secure lid and some ventilation, however the moisture level and humidity within the enclosure needs to be maintained at levels above 70%.

**Substrate:** Coco-peat is an ideal substrate for maintaining adult beetles. The substrate should be kept very moist (but not sodden) – there should be no free water pooling below the substrate. The substrate depth should be at least 30mm to allow the beetle to burrow. Some pulpy wood may be added to this, and some small logs are good for the beetle to cling to and these will help to prevent the beetle flipping onto its back when wandering around on the surface.

**Temperature:** The safe temperature range for these beetles is 18 -24°C. They will tolerate both higher and lower temperatures for short periods of time. Higher temperatures will result in much more activity, but also may result in shorter lifespan.

**Life span:** Several months is usual, however some adults have lived for around a year in captivity.

**Handling:** Can be handled, but care must be taken to do so gently. Never forcibly pull them off any surface (including your hand), as this may result in damage to the beetle's feet or legs. Golden Green Stag Beetles have very sharp curved tarsi (claws) on their feet and will lock into objects very well. If this occurs, allow the beetle to relax, then coax it forward by gently nudging the beetle from behind. You can gently lift the claws using your fingernails to encourage it to move on.

Adult beetles can fly. Never handle beetles in a situation where flight could result in damage (eg near operational ceiling fans) or loss (outside).

**Common issues:** Adult beetles are best kept separately to prevent any fighting between individuals which can result in damage to your beetle or even death.

For more information contact Minibeast Wildlife at [info@minibeastwildlife.com.au](mailto:info@minibeastwildlife.com.au)