BEETLES.CRITTERS.IM

Is it a beetle?

Five official yeses from the Natural History Museum, and one official no.

Typographic only. No photographs inside.

Name	Official wording
Ladybird	Yes. “The most famous beetles in the UK are probably ladybirds.” The seven-spot ladybird “is one of the most common.”
Glow-worm	Yes. “Despite their name, glow-worms aren’t worms at all – they’re beetles.” They belong to Lampyridae. Lampyris noctiluca is the species most often seen in the UK.
Firefly	Yes. “The beetles in this group are commonly known as fireflies or lightning bugs.” In non-glow-worm fireflies, males and females communicate by flashing.
Weevil	Yes. “There are an estimated 83,000 species of true weevil (Curculionidae), making them the largest taxonomic family of beetles. About 480 species of weevil can be found in the UK.”
Stag beetle	Yes. “The European stag beetle (Lucanus cervus) is the biggest beetle species found in the UK.”
New Zealand glow-worm	No. “The fly genus Arachnocampa comprises five species of fungus gnat.” Unlike glow-worm beetles, “the gnats use their luminosity to entice prey.”

A short quiz

1. Are glow-worms worms?
2. Is a firefly a beetle?
3. What is a New Zealand glow-worm?

Answers. No: they are beetles. Yes: fireflies are beetles in Lampyridae. A fungus gnat in the genus Arachnocampa.

Wording from the Natural History Museum’s glow-worm, UK-beetles, biggest-beetle and stag-beetle pages, re-opened 18 November 2026. beetles.critters.im is independent of the museum. Typographic sheet: no photographs inside.