

The stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Coleoptera, Lucanidae) found in Norway

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A 35 mm long male specimen of the stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* (Linnaeus, 1758) was found at Øynesvann, AAY, in the early 1980ies. The specimen was sitting on the stump of a cut oak tree. The specimen has been kept well preserved in a small insect collection on a farm in the area since it was collected. The species is likely to have been overlooked in Norway. The explanation for this may be the fact that the forest area where the beetle was found is large, sparsely populated and poorly investigated. Another explaining factor is the fact that the biology of the species makes the beetles hard to find even in areas with good populations.

Keywords: Stag beetle, *Lucanus cervus*, Lucanidae, Coleoptera, Norway

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Introduction

Several sources have indicated that the stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* (Linnaeus, 1758) occurs in Norway. Peter Christen Asbjørnsen reported in volume IV of his book series “Naturhistorie for Ungdommen”, published in 1848, that the stag beetle was claimed to be known from “Grevskaberne”, which corresponds approximately to the present county of Vestfold. In his book “Naturhistorie for Børn”, which was published in 1842, he was more explicit, saying that (translated): “In this country it is very rare, but it is occasionally caught in Grevskaberne”. However, no specimen has been preserved to substantiate these statements.

Of somewhat more relevance to the present finding, is the report of Siebke (1875) that the stag beetle was said to have been found by Adjunct

Bugge near Arendal. Since no specimen exists, even this claim has been considered too uncertain to justify the listing of the stag beetle as occurring in Norway.

Halvorsen et al. (1983) reported the presence of an abdomen from a stag beetle in an old private collection of presumably Norwegian insects at Mesterfjellet elementary school in Vestfold. According to Opheim (1983), this collection was established by Dr. Sölsberg, who in his student days collected insects together with his student friend and later prominent entomologist Hans Jacob Sparre Schneider. However, the abdomen was not labelled, and there is no firm basis for claiming that the abdomen is from a beetle of Norwegian origin.

The larvae of the stag beetle develop in hollow