

## Glow worm *Lampyris noctiluca* in Defford

Wendy Carter

On the evening of 2nd July 2021, not long after dusk had disappeared, I left the door open while I went to fill up bird feeders and put out hedgehog food. When I came back inside I noticed something on the carpet that hadn't been there when I went out. On closer inspection, I realised that it was a beetle (01 and 02).

I picked it up and my first thought was how similar it looked to a glow worm larva. Then it dawned on me that it was, in fact, a male glow worm *Lampyris noctiluca*. I assume that he had been attracted by the light in the house but where he had come up from remains a mystery. The only previous records for my village (Defford) were in the early 1990s and the grid references are so wide that they don't pinpoint the location/s.

Female glow worms are wingless so it's up to the males to locate them - perhaps he thought my light represented either a very large female or a huge aggregation! My understanding from reading about glow worms is that the males can fly but don't like to fly further than they have to. Is there an unknown colony clinging on somewhere nearby? Evening walks along the village roads resulted in no glowing females and most of the land around my garden is privately owned and inaccessible so further searches were rendered nigh on impossible. At the bottom of the garden is a horse paddock surrounded by hedges and gardens. The grass margins appear to be quite heavily managed but is there just enough grass left unmanaged to sustain a small population? Or had the individual glow worm travelled some distance, trying to spread his genes into a new population?

I may never know but I'm certainly now on the lookout for slivers of light on summer evenings.



01. Male Glow-worm, Defford. Wendy Carter.

### Images

01. Male Glow-worm, Defford. Wendy Carter.

02. Male Glow-worm, Defford. Wendy Carter.



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