



Violet Click Beetle
Bredon Hill, Worcestershire
Dixton Wood, Gloucestershire
Windsor Great Park, Berkshire / Surrey

11 July 2022

Dear violet click beetle.

I want to hear you click. Click. Watch you spring from your back with that click. Click. Please don't let it be the last click.

Your science name contains clicks. *Limoniscus violaceus*. Clicks buried here, deep in the heartwood. You are particular about where you live. Only in ancient trees. Ash and beech. Damp sooty wood, aged black and soft over centuries. You are content with your lot, staying in the same tree until it rots away. Shy. Or prudent. Or simply getting on with it.

When you sense danger or get stuck on your back, you catapult yourself into the air with that click.

In your picture you have a blue sheen. Violet shining black, lilac. Coal, magpie feather, cordierite. Click. Black moonstone, mussel shell, obsidian. Bright gem gleaming in dark powdered wood.

You have been added to our red list. Red. A drum sound, padded, thudding. Soft drumming red.

Critically endangered. Click. Almost extinct. Click. Not the kind of threat you can click yourself out of alone. Even you, with your peg and groove deeply etched into your thorax; click carved into your very being: you cannot overcome this by yourself.

You live in only three places on my island. Bredon Hill. Dixton Wood. Windsor Great Park.

You click to respond to danger. To right yourself. Are you clicking now? All of you clicking. Please don't let it be the last click.

In the picture, you look like you have righted yourself. With that click of yours. But you cannot right yourself entirely. You did not ask for the felling of ancient woods, tarmac spread like black butter, rotten wood cleared for a neat and tidy land.

Violet beetle, click. Teach us how to click. How to right ourselves. To click. To right you.

Let this letter be my click to you. Hear me click. My catapult, my peg and groove, my springing to the world. A click to danger, to threat.

A call to right ourselves. So you can right yourself. Click.

Yours sincerely

Rachel

Dr Rachel Bower, Sheffield

