

Dermestidae

Dermestid beetles

Temporal range:
Norian-Recent



Varied carpet beetle (*Anthrenus verbasci*)

Scientific classification

[Edit this classification](#)

Domain: [Eukaryota](#)
Kingdom: [Animalia](#)
Phylum: [Arthropoda](#)
Class: [Insecta](#)
Order: [Coleoptera](#)
Suborder: [Polyphaga](#)
Infraorder: [Bostrichiformia](#)
Superfamily: [Bostrichoidea](#)
Family: [Dermestidae](#)
Latreille, 1804

Subfamilies

- [Attageninae](#)
- [Dermestinae](#)
- [Megatominae](#)
- [Orphilinae](#)
- [Thorictinae](#)
- [Trinodinae](#)

Dermestid beetles being used to clean a [human](#) skull at Skulls Unlimited International, [Oklahoma City, Oklahoma](#)

Dermestidae are a family of [Coleoptera](#). They are also known as **skin beetles**, larder beetles, hide beetles, leather beetles, carpet beetles, and khapra beetles. There are 500 to 700 [species](#) of dermestids. They can be up to 1–12 mm in length. Adults have round [oval](#)-shaped bodies covered in scales or [setae](#).^[1]

Most dermestids are [scavengers](#) that feed on dry animal or plant material.^[2] This includes skin or [pollen](#), animal hair, feathers, dead [insects](#), and natural [fibers](#). Dermestids can be found living in dead animals and feeding on them. Others can be found living in mammal, bird, bee, or [wasp nests](#). *Thaumaglossa* only lives in the egg cases of [mantids](#). Many *Trogoderma* species are [pests](#) that eat [grain](#).

The beetles found living in dead animals are studied in criminal investigations ([forensic entomology](#)). Many species are pests which can damage natural fibers in homes and businesses. Dermestids are sometimes used by [natural history museums](#) to clean animal [skeletons](#).

References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

1. [↑](#) Byrd, Jason. Castner, James 2001. [Forensic Entomology: The Utility of Arthropods in Legal Investigations](#)
2. [↑](#) Kingsolver, John M. 2002. *Dermestidae*. In Ross H. Arnett, Jr. and Michael C. Thomas, *American Beetles*. CRC Press, vol 2.

Books

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

- Pasquerault T. *et al* 2008. Répartition des espèces du genre Dermestes L. 1758 récoltés sur des cadavres humains (Coleoptera Dermestidae). *L'entomologiste* Tome 64 N°4 pp 221-224.
- Hinton H.E. 1945. *A monograph of the beetles associated with stored products*. **1**, 387-395 British Museum (Natural History), London. Keys to world adults and larvae, genera and species; excellent figures, full species information.
- Freude H; Harde K.W. & Lohse G.A. 1979. *Dermestidae. Die Käfer Mitteleuropas* **6**: Diversicornia (Lycidae — Byrrhidae) 1206 text figs. 367pp. Goecke & Evers. Text in German; the Dermestidae are on pages 304-327.

Other websites

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

[Wikispecies](#) has information on: [Dermestidae](#).

Wikimedia Commons has media related to [Dermestidae](#).

- [Dermestidae of the World](#)
- [List of North American Species Archived](#) 2008-02-05 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
- [Dermestidae-Literature](#)
- [Russian Atlas of Carpet Beetles-excellent images](#)
- [USDA Leaflet on Carpet beetles](#)
- on the [University of Florida](#) / [IFAS](#) Featured Creatures Web site
 - [Anthrenus flavipes](#), furniture carpet beetle
 - [Anthrenus scrophulariae](#), common carpet beetle
 - [Dermestes atar](#), black larder beetle
 - [Dermestes maculatus](#), hide beetle
- [Carpet Beetles, Kansas State University](#)^{[[permanent dead link](#)]}

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