

Name: _____

Rhinoceros Beetle

By Guy Belleranti



Have you ever seen a rhinoceros at the zoo? A rhino is a large, strong animal, which is famous for its distinctive horns. There is also an insect with similar characteristics — it's very large, very strong, and even has horns! It's the rhinoceros beetle.



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between the head and the abdomen). Females have no horns.

The male beetles even have duels. They sometimes lock horns with each other. They will try to push each other and even flip each other over. When they're not dueling, rhinoceros beetles use their horns to dig through leaf litter in search of food.



Many male rhinoceros beetles are over 2½ inches long. Hercules rhinoceros beetles can be over 6 inches long!

The rhinoceros beetle's size and fearsome appearance help protect it from predators. It will also hiss and squeak if it feels threatened. These squeaks aren't made by its mouth—they're made by rubbing the wings against the abdomen.

During the day, this big beetle hides under logs and other vegetation. At night, it comes out to look for food. It's favorite foods include plant sap, nectar, fruit, and decaying plants.

Rhinoceros beetles live on every continent except Antarctica. Most of the largest species, like the Hercules beetle and the elephant beetle, live in warm, tropical regions. Some smaller species, such as the unicorn beetle and Grant's beetle, live in the United States.

Like other insects, rhinoceros beetles have wings. And yes, despite their large



These two male rhinoceros beetles are having a duel.



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1. List three ways mentioned in the article that rhinoceroses and rhinoceros beetles are alike.



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3. Of course, a lion, bear, or elephant could crush a rhinoceros beetle. However, the article says that the rhinoceros beetle is "the strongest animal on Earth." How can this be?

4. What do rhinoceros beetles eat?

5. Are rhinoceros beetles herbivores, carnivores, or omnivores?

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The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.



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4. _____

a k u e s q

hint: A short, high-pitched sound

5. _____

i a v e e g o t t n

hint: plant life

6. _____

m l h e a s s r

hint: antonym for dangerous

7. _____

a r i c o p t l

hint: from a hot and humid place

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They eat plant sap, nectar, fruit, and decaying plants.

5. Are rhinoceros beetles herbivores, carnivores, or omnivores?

They are herbivores.

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hint: antonym for dangerous

7. **tropical**

a r i c o p t l

hint: from a hot and humid place