

Winter-Active Bubas bison Dung Beetle Colonies

Bred in Narrabri, NSW

\$1,500 including GST	400 beetles
One-time purchase	Approximately 50% male and 50% female

Why winter-active dung beetles matter

Based on local trapping and project monitoring, there is currently no effective winter-active dung beetle established at useful levels across Narrabri Shire and nearby areas. This leaves a seasonal gap when livestock dung can remain on the soil surface for much longer through the cooler months.

Bubas bison is a winter-active, deep-tunnelling dung beetle that buries livestock dung below the surface and creates deep channels through the soil. It is particularly suited to filling this winter gap and can continue working when many warmer-season dung beetles are inactive.

Benefits of Bubas bison

- Works through the cooler months, helping break down dung during the winter activity gap.
- Deep tunnelling can move dung and nutrients well below the soil surface, with Bubas bison known to bury dung to around 60 cm.
- Creates channels that improve water infiltration and help rainfall move deeper into the soil profile.
- Can help reduce surface runoff and slow the movement of water across paddocks during heavy rainfall and local flood conditions.
- Helps retain more moisture in the soil profile, supporting pasture and plant roots through dry periods and drought conditions.
- Improves soil aeration and creates pathways for roots, water, nutrients and soil organisms.
- Moves nutrients, carbon and organic matter from livestock dung into the root zone instead of leaving them concentrated on the surface.
- Helps return dung-covered pasture to grazing sooner by breaking down and burying dung pats.
- Reduces suitable breeding habitat for some dung-breeding pest flies and livestock parasites.
- Supports longer-term soil structure, biological activity and nutrient cycling through repeated tunnelling and dung burial.

Colony details and what to expect

Colony size	400 live Bubas bison beetles
Sex ratio	Approximately 200 males and 200 females
Origin	Bred in Narrabri, NSW
Price	\$1,500 including GST
Purchase type	One-time purchase - no ongoing colony fee

1 egg	10,000-18,000	Self-sustaining
approximately every 2 days during active breeding	estimated eggs or brood balls after a full breeding season	the aim after successful establishment

Breeding after release

After the colony is introduced into a suitable livestock paddock, breeding begins underground beneath fresh dung. During active breeding, females can produce approximately one egg every two days. For a colony containing around 200 females, the local project estimate is approximately 10,000 to 18,000 eggs or brood balls underground by the end of a full breeding season, depending on conditions. These remain below ground to produce the next generation.

How the colony moves and spreads

As livestock move between paddocks and continue depositing fresh dung, the beetles can follow available dung resources across the property. Bubas bison does not rapidly travel very large distances, so it generally remains where livestock dung is consistently available.

Where neighbouring livestock properties provide suitable dung and habitat, beetles may also gradually establish beyond the original release property over time.

Establishment notes

Successful establishment depends on local conditions including soil type, moisture, weather, dung availability and livestock management. Breeding figures are estimates rather than guaranteed outcomes. Some livestock treatments and insecticides can also affect dung beetles.

General information sources

Species activity, deep tunnelling and general soil-benefit information: Agriculture Victoria, Bubas bison (introduced) and The value of dung beetles; Meat & Livestock Australia, Dung beetles and related producer demonstration work. Local winter-gap observations, colony composition and breeding estimates are based on local project monitoring and breeding records supplied for this information sheet.