

Cucujus cinnaberinus

Description: Red flat bark beetle (*Cucujus cinnaberinus*) is 11 to 15 mm in length and has a very flat body. Its top surface is orange-red from the head to the elytra. The limbs and antennae are black. The pale yellow-brown larvae are also flattened in shape. Characteristically, they have two larger and two smaller straight, spine-like protrusions in the last larval segment.

Life cycle: *Cucujus cinnaberinus* lays its eggs in May or June. Larval development takes at least two years. The larvae pupate in late summer or autumn in pupation chambers made from small twigs. The length of the pupal stage is two to four weeks, after which the beetle spends the winter in the adult form.

Food: Partly decomposed phloem layer of a dead aspen and the invertebrates living in it.

Tree species: Aspen.

Decaying wood type: Sturdy dead aspens in which the bark remains attached, with moist and black decomposing phloem under the bark. They may be snags or logs.

Habitats: Old herb-rich and mesic heath forests that have plenty of aspens with different degrees of decay.

Distribution: Mainly a species of the deciduous tree zone that only occurs in Finland on two sites in Häme.

Status: Critically endangered.

Status under legislation: A species under strict protection, listed in EU Habitats Directive Annexes II and IV.



Recommendations for habitat management on forestry land

- Preserving decaying aspen wood in all forest management. For *Cucujus cinnaberinus*, recently dead, relatively sturdy decaying aspens are the key, either logs or snags. As so many other threatened species depend on aspens, too, also preserving dead aspens with a smaller diameter and in different stages of decomposition is always a good idea.
- Preserving aspens of different ages in all types of fellings on suitable sites: game thickets, retention tree groups and different protection zones. Aspens can also be grown in a mixed forest, especially with spruces and other deciduous trees. By favouring aspens, the aspen continuum is maintained: aspens of different ages and with different degrees of decay are continuously available.

Further information:

Mattila, J. 2017. Punahärö (*Cucujus cinnaberinus* Scopoli, 1763) – In: Nieminen, M. & Ahola, A. (eds.), Euroopan unionin luontodirektiivin liitteen IV lajien (pl. lepakot) esittelyt. Suomen ympäristö 1/2017, pp. 31–34.