

42,726 acres

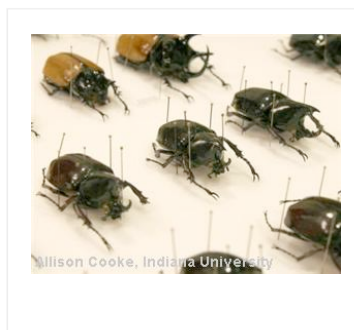
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My Cool Earth

A greater diversity than originally thought has been discovered among males of a species that can be found in the rainforest.

Previously, scientists thought there were only two types of dung beetle males, but new research suggests there is a third.

As well as the big-horned alpha male and a beta male with a smaller head and stubby horn, scientists at the University of New Mexico have identified a third type of male which resembles the female of the species more closely.



The scientists have said that this discovery suggests males adopt three different sexual tactics to secure offspring.

"Elaborate male weapons are also known to occur in many types of insects. Now it appears, as the research of Rowland and Emlen illustrates, that male weaponry and alternative mating tactics can be much more complex in the lives of beetles than previously imagined," said biology professor J Mark Rowland.

Earlier this year scientists discovered dung beetles in the rainforest of Peru do not always eat faeces instead attack and eat millipedes ten times as long as they are.

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