



**Region 6**  
**Presence/Absence Survey Protocol**  
**American Burying Beetle**  
**(*Nicrophorus americanus*)**

**February 2016**

**Introduction**

This document provides guidance for designing and conducting live-trapping presence/absence surveys for the endangered American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*, ABB) throughout its current and historical range. This guidance replaces any previous U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) recommended ABB survey guidance. These surveys may only be conducted by individuals possessing a valid Federal Fish & Wildlife Permit (Recovery Permit) for scientific recovery of the ABB (surveyors), as defined under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Other state permits to conduct ABB surveys may also be required for a federal recovery permit to be valid. Surveyors should contact the respective state resource agency to determine if other guidelines apply and state permits are required. Additional permits and/or authorizations may also be required for surveying on lands managed by other federal agencies.

Surveyors must contact the state ecological services field office prior to conducting **any** ABB surveys to determine where and in what cases surveys are recommended. The responsibility to ensure that ABB surveys are conducted in accordance with this protocol and cover all potential ABB habitats within a project area will lie with the surveyor. The Service expects surveyors to adhere to the protocols outlined within this document. If upon review, the Service discovers a survey to be invalid for any reason, the Service will return the project to the proponent as incomplete with directions to resubmit the project once they have conducted a valid survey. Additional reporting details are found below in the *Reporting Procedures* section of this document.

This guidance is based on the most current scientific data available at this time and will be updated as new information becomes available. Check with the local ecological services field office for any updates.

**Areas Unfavorable for the ABB**

The selection of areas to survey can be based on two perspectives. One is to determine if ABB's are present in an area and therefore whether or not a project has the potential to impact ABBs. The second is to determine if ABBs are present at a specific site and if the selection of that site will avoid impacts to ABBs.

The following information can be used to help determine whether surveys are appropriate and provides guidance for areas to avoid when selecting the placement of traps. While the ABB uses a wide variety of habitats, the Service currently believes that areas exhibiting the following characteristics are *unfavorable* for use by ABBs based on disturbance regime, vegetation structure, unsuitable soil conditions, and carrion availability:

1. Land that is tilled on a regular basis.
2. Land that has already been developed and no longer exhibits surficial topsoil, leaf litter, or vegetation.
3. Urban areas with maintained lawns, paved surfaces, or roadways.
4. Stockpiled soil without vegetation.
5. Wetlands with standing water or saturated soils (defined as sites exhibiting hydric-soils, and vegetation typical of saturated soils, and/or wetland hydrology).

NOTE: Areas adjacent to wetlands and/or riparian areas such as subirrigated wet meadows could be suitable for the ABB, as they may be important for ABBs seeking moist soils during dry conditions. ABBs have been shown to seek out moist soils when available.

Traps should not be placed in locations that are susceptible to disturbance or destruction (i.e., cattle trails, areas where livestock congregate, etc.)

## **Seasonal Parameters**

### Time of Year for Surveys

A valid ABB survey is one that has occurred during the ABB active period.

- The Service considers the ABB active period to begin after five consecutive nights when the minimum nightly temperature reaches 12.8 degrees Celsius/55 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) or greater (Bedick 1997, Kozol 1991, USFWS 1991). Surveyors will need to ensure nightly temperature criteria have been met before trapping begins by monitoring the closest weather station to the survey site (see more information in the Reporting Procedures section below) or by using data loggers.
- Surveys should not be conducted during the brood-rearing period (July 1-August 7) when most ABB are underground and trapping results may give false negatives in states (Nebraska and South Dakota) located in the northern portion of the ABB range. Alternatively, ABB survey results may be accepted if control traps reveal that teneral beetles are above ground before August 7. An acceptable survey, however, will need to demonstrate that the ABB active season began earlier in May than normal due to an early summer.
- ABB breeding activity tends to be asynchronous in the southern portion their range because they are not constrained by weather conditions (i.e., shorter active season) as they are in their northern range. For this reason, surveys in Kansas may be conducted during the ABB active time without concern for avoiding the brood-rearing period as would be necessary in Nebraska and South Dakota.

- Surveys may continue until the first night when the minimum temperature falls below 55°F after August 31, which generally signals the beginning of reduced ABB activity and thereby increases the probability of false negative results.

### Control

A positive control trap should be used in association with ABB surveys. A positive control establishes that conditions were correct in a given geographic area and that ABB were active during the timeframe of the trapping. Only one ABB capture is necessary to establish a positive control. The positive control window may be up to seven days prior to trapping, or during, but not after the trapping timeframe. Positive control trapping should be done in areas with a recent history of populations that have been documented through regular survey work. Check with the local ecological services field office to determine if a positive control is required. In some locations, use of a control may be difficult because the ABB population is extremely small (Kansas) whereas in other locations (Nebraska) use of a control is essential.

### Timeframe Surveys are Valid

Surveys conducted for ABBs are valid for the active season when the survey was done or until the next active season. ABB density is cyclical and thus, can vary by active season. Additionally, other circumstances (e.g., flooding, drought) can alter ABB density beyond that expected due to normal population fluctuation.

Following metamorphosis from larva to adult, teneral (adult ABBs newly emerged from the pupal case) typically emerge from underground in mid-summer; though timing can vary based on latitude and weather conditions. Presence/absence surveys in the Nebraska Sandhills have documented teneral in early August. Teneral over-winter as adults and comprise the breeding population the following spring and summer (Kozol 1990). ABBs have a one-year life cycle; all ABBs that overwinter were produced the previous summer. In Oklahoma, by July 28, most new or teneral ABBs should have emerged and be actively seeking carcasses. In Nebraska, by August 7, most new or teneral ABBs should have emerged and be actively seeking carcasses. Surveys completed after teneral have completed emergence more accurately represent the density of ABBs prior to overwintering.

## **Trap Design**

### General

The Service requires surveyors to use an 18.92-liter (5-gallon) bucket-style trap when conducting ABB presence/absence surveys. Traps must be light in color, have smooth sides, and be free of any texture or ridges to prevent ABBs from climbing out. Each trap consists of a bucket with a cover and bait. Utilization of trap designs and equipment that deviate from the traps described herein must be coordinated with and approved by the Service prior to deployment. Surveyors may place buckets above ground or bury them as a pitfall trap, as described below. Check with the local ecological services field office for guidance on the use of above versus below ground pitfall traps for ABB surveys.

**Figure 1.** 5-gallon Above-ground Bucket Trap (typically used when soil is rocky and is difficult to dig)

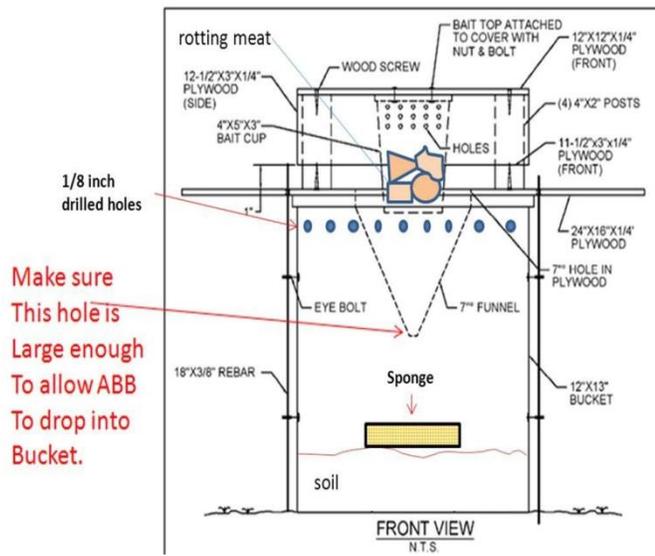


Figure 1 shows an alternate form of Leasure et al. 2012, pictured using soil and a sponge in the bottom of the bucket. This allows beetles to find refuge from other congeners, decreases competition, provides access to bait to replenish depleted energy, and reduces stress to captured ABBs.

See Appendix C (Leasure et al. 2012) for instructions, materials, figures and schematics. Funnels used to make these traps can come in different sizes. When selecting a funnel for your trap, the small end of the funnel **MUST** be large enough to allow a large ABB to fall through into the bucket (approximately 55 mm – 2.16 inches). If the funnel's small end opening is not large enough, you may need to cut it off to make the hole larger (Figure 1). Surveyors should drill additional 3.2 mm (1/8 inch) holes around the top edge of the bucket (see figure 1) to allow air circulation through the bucket while preventing beetles from escaping.

### 5-gallon Pitfall Bucket-Trap

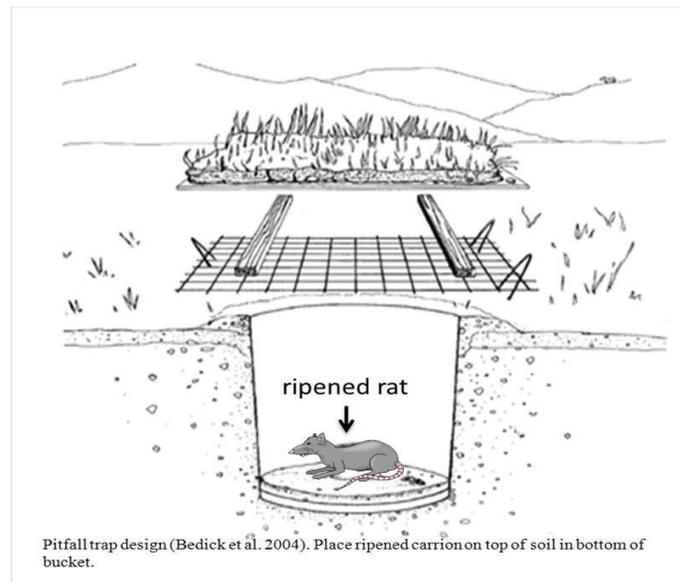
This pitfall trap design follows Bedick et al. (2004), although biologists have recommended a few modifications to this trap over the years to provide for better performance, such as allowing ABB access to bait within the trap to decrease competition and provide moisture for captured beetles. A schematic of the improved design is pictured in Figure 2. The following is a list of items needed to build these pitfall traps.

#### Materials

1. Single 18.92 liter (5-gallon) bucket with a diameter of 28.5 centimeters (11.2 inches) or greater
2. Piece of plywood at least 10.2 centimeters (4 inches) wider than diameter of bucket
3. Piece of wire mesh ( $\geq 2.5$  centimeters [1-inch] mesh size) to allow ABB to enter but still exclude scavengers.
4. Four garden staples

5. Two 2.5 centimeters by 2.5 centimeters (1-inch by 1-inch) sticks large enough to hold the cover off the bucket
6. Shovel or ground auger

**Figure 2.** Pitfall trap design typically used when soil is sandy or loamy and can be easily dug (based on Bedick et al. 2004)



Dig a hole approximately the size the bucket. Place the bucket in the hole. The rim of the bucket should be 5 to 8 centimeters (2 to 3 inches) above ground level and a berm of soil built up to the rim of the bucket to form a gradient from ground level upwards to the rim for ABBs to access the bucket. The higher level is necessary to prevent runoff from entering the survey buckets. This also prevents water runoff from filling the bucket and drowning ABBs and other insects. Place approximately 5-8 cm of moist soil in the bottom of the bucket to give trapped carrion beetles room to burrow into the soil to avoid competitors, high temperatures and low moisture levels.

If using a pit-fall trap design in areas where scavengers are a significant problem, surveyors should install wire mesh between the pitfall trap and the cover as pictured in Figure 2. Place the wire mesh over the buckets and secure in place with the garden staples to help exclude vertebrate scavengers. The openings in the wire mesh should allow ABBs access to the trap, but prevent larger animals from stealing the bait. Surveyors should secure the wire mesh to the ground with stakes.

Lay the 1 x 1 sticks over the wire mesh and place a hard cover on top of the sticks.

Place additional weight (plug of sod from bucket excavation, soil, rocks, etc.) on top of the trap cover to reduce bait loss due to vertebrate scavengers and prevent wind or small animals from moving the cover, as depicted in Figure 2.

Do not place traps in areas where inundation during rainfall events could occur as ABBs can drown easily in even a small amount of water. Often trapping occurs along public road right of ways—do not place traps in the bottom of ditches where water could inundate the trap and drown

ABBs and other insects. Close traps if high winds or severe thunderstorms are predicted for the survey area.

A cover is required to deter scavenger's access to the trap, to prevent rainfall from entering the trap, and to provide shade to captured insects to inhibit desiccation. The cover should be rigid, light in color, and weighted or secured to the trap or ground. Covers over pitfall traps should be raised off the trap about 1 inch to allow ABBs to crawl into the trap and to allow the scent of the bait to better permeate the air.

## **Trap Deployment**

### Minimum Survey Effort (Temporal Scale)

To determine presence/absence of ABBs, surveyors shall set traps for a minimum of **five (5) consecutive nights**. Surveys with 5 consecutive nights reduce the potential for false negatives and are consistent with recommendations in Bedick et al. (2004), Butler et al. (2012), and guidance used in other portions of the ABB range. A minimum survey effort of 5 nights was required to eliminate false negatives in 123 surveys conducted in 2011 (Hoback 2011 Unpublished). See "Weather Requirements" section below for additional information about timing of surveys with invalid nights.

### Weather Requirements

The following environmental conditions are not conducive to ABB presence/absence surveys and therefore invalidate survey results unless additional nights of surveying are added. Additional night(s) of surveying are required when:

- Nighttime temperature falls below 55°F (during the survey period),
- Wind speed is greater than 10 mph in excess of 20% of the time (1 hour 24 minutes) between 9:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m.,
- Precipitation exceeds 0.5 inches between 9:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m., or
- Surveys are interrupted by 3 nights of unsuitable weather conditions.

Minimum survey effort shall include five consecutive nights of suitable weather conditions. Surveyors should collect the necessary precipitation, temperature, and wind information from the closest weather station to the survey site to establish that surveys were conducted when conditions were favorable for ABB activity (see more information in the Reporting Procedures section below). If unsuitable weather conditions invalidate one or more survey nights during the overall survey effort, surveyors should continue surveying until they reach five valid nights. It is not necessary to restart surveys to obtain five (5) consecutive nights of sampling, unless surveys are interrupted by three (3) consecutive nights of unsuitable weather. Record which survey nights did not meet weather requirements on the "*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*" (Appendix A) and the total number of nights with unsuitable weather conditions on the "*ABB Survey Summary Report*" (Appendix B).

### Disturbed bait or traps

An additional night of trapping is required for every night the trap or bait is disturbed. Record which survey night(s) the disturbance occurred on the "*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*"

(Appendix A) and the total number of nights of trap disturbance on the “*ABB Survey Summary Report*” (Appendix B).

### Trap Spacing and Placement

**The effective survey radius for each trap is 0.8 km (0.5 miles).** Therefore, surveyors should space traps 1.6 km (1.0 mile) apart to achieve adequate survey results. The Service determined this effective survey radius based on the ABB’s mobility, size, recorded movement distances, and the distance from which ABBs can detect carrion. Surveyors should place traps along the upwind edge of the survey area, if possible. In general, low elevation, mesic meadows with a thick layer of vegetation litter is more conducive to ABB capture than dry, elevated areas.

### Baiting and Checking Traps

Any type of carrion is suitable for use as bait, as long as it is the appropriate size in correlation with trap size and produces a pungent odor that ABBs are able to detect (Bedick et al 2004, Leasure *et al.* 2012). All bait must be aged or ripened and emit a pungent odor to be effective. Surveyors should store the bait outside in airtight containers for 2 to 3 days, or until adequately aged to produce a sufficiently robust odor. Do not fill the container or bag completely full, because as the bait rots, gas pressure inside the container increases, and expands the container.

The Service recommends that surveyors bait the bottom of the pitfall bucket traps with whole carcasses, hair/feathers intact. Surveyors may use previously frozen, 275-374 gram (9.7-13.2 ounce) laboratory rats (*Rattus norvegicus*), available from pet stores and online dealers (RodentPRO.com), as bait. If rats are not available, bait items of comparable size and structure may be used. Additionally, if using the aboveground 5-gallon bucket, surveyors will utilize the bait cup attached to the lid to ensure that the pungent odor of carrion is effectively dispersed. This bait need not be a whole carcass and may consist of aged pieces that have neither skin nor hair. Baiting traps consists of:

1. Secure the bucket to the ground.
2. Place approximately 2.5 to 5.1 centimeters (2 to 3 inches) of loose, friable, moist (but not wet) soil with little or no clay content in the bottom of the pitfall bucket or above-ground bucket if bait is placed in the bottom. When checking traps, care must be taken when sifting the dirt to determine ABB presence.
3. Place a wetted sponge and/or soil in the bottom of the 5-gallon bucket. The rotting carcass in below and above ground traps also releases moisture during decomposition that often provides sufficient soil moisture.
4. If you are using a pitfall trap, place the carcass on top of the soil in the bottom of the trap. OR if you are using the 5-gallon above-ground bucket trap, surveyors may place the bait in the perforated bait cup that is attached to the lid and/or may place additional bait in the bottom on top of the soil layer.
5. During trapping efforts, surveyors must replace or supplement any bait that has dried out, is full of maggots, and/or no longer emits a pungent odor with new, prepared bait. Generally, supplemental bait will need to be provided on the third day of trapping. Do not leave discarded or old bait at or near the current trapping area while trapping. This could lure ABBs away from the baited traps. Leave old bait in the pitfall trap (unless excessive maggots are present) and supplement with new prepared bait. Surveyors must wash all buckets with bleach and thoroughly rinse with water prior to each

- trapping survey effort.
6. Secure the tops of the traps to ensure predators do not have access to the contents of the bucket.
  7. All traps must be in place and baited by dusk each night.

Surveyors must check and clear all ABB traps by 12:00 p.m. every day the traps are set. Exposure to full sunlight and temperatures over 25°C (77°F) even for a few hours, can result in mortality (Kozol 1990, USFWS 1991, Kozol 1992) therefore traps must be checked no later than 12:00 p.m. daily to minimize any temperature-related mortality. On days of extreme heat, checking traps prior to 12:00 p.m. may be necessary to avoid 77°F. Delay in checking traps subjects trapped ABBs and other insects to heat stress and mortality. Surveyors may bait traps at the same time they check traps each morning, provided the bait does not dry out. Because ABBs are nocturnal, the risk of ABB captures during the day is extremely low.

Checking traps consists of:

1. Record and release all *Nicrophorus* and *Silphidae* species.
2. Replace any missing or dry bait and moisten the sponge (when used in above ground trapping).
3. Replace/repair any disturbed parts of the trap.
4. Return the bait to the trap after recording all *Nicrophorus* and *Silphidae* species.
5. Replace the cover.

Surveyors should immediately release any injured or lethargic ABBs that are clearly alive. Surveyors should monitor all ABBs that appear to be dead, holding for at least 20 minutes for accurate determination of their condition. Process any dead ABBs as described below under “*Accidental Death of ABBs*”. All ABBs held for observation are to be placed in ventilated containers that are kept out of direct sun and in a cool, shaded location.

### Ants

Surveyors should not place traps within 7 meters (23 feet) of any ant colonies. If ants are in a trap, the surveyor should relocate the trap at least 23 feet away.

## **Processing Captures**

### Identification and processing of *Nicrophorus* Species

A complete Survey Package will include the daily field data sheets, the electronic summary sheet, and weather data. Photographs of each ABB collected may also be required if deemed necessary and feasible by the ecological service field office. Only complete packages will be accepted. The Service prefers information be sent using electronic media. If the “*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*” (Appendix A) is sent by U.S. Mail, then the accompanying “*ABB Survey Summary Report*” (Appendix B) must also be submitted at this time so that all data and summaries are received together. This can be accomplish by sending a CD of the information in lieu of the [abbcontact@fws.gov](mailto:abbcontact@fws.gov)

Surveyors must identify and record all *Nicrophorus* and *Silphidae* species. Appendix D provides descriptions of the *Nicrophorus* species, and Appendix E provides a dichotomous key.

Processing ABBs includes collecting data on gender determination, age determination, pronotal width, marking (if authorized,) and data recording of all ABBs captured. Surveyors must record all information on the “*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*” (Appendix A.)

ABBs are sensitive to prolonged heat exposure. Surveyors should not hold captured ABBs for longer than 30 minutes, preferably much less. If more than 10 minutes is required for processing, surveyors should place ABBs in a hard plastic container with a damp sponge or moistened paper towels, which should be stored in an ice cooler until processing commences. The plastic container should be held away from direct sunlight.

Surveyors should not mark (clipping of elytra, adhesion of bee tags, painting) ABBs in any way unless approved by the Service. Morphometric measurements of individuals, such as pronotal width, can be measured using a caliper or photographic images taken in the field on a piece of reference grid paper and analyzed using freeware such as ImageJ (<http://imagej.nih.gov/ij/>).

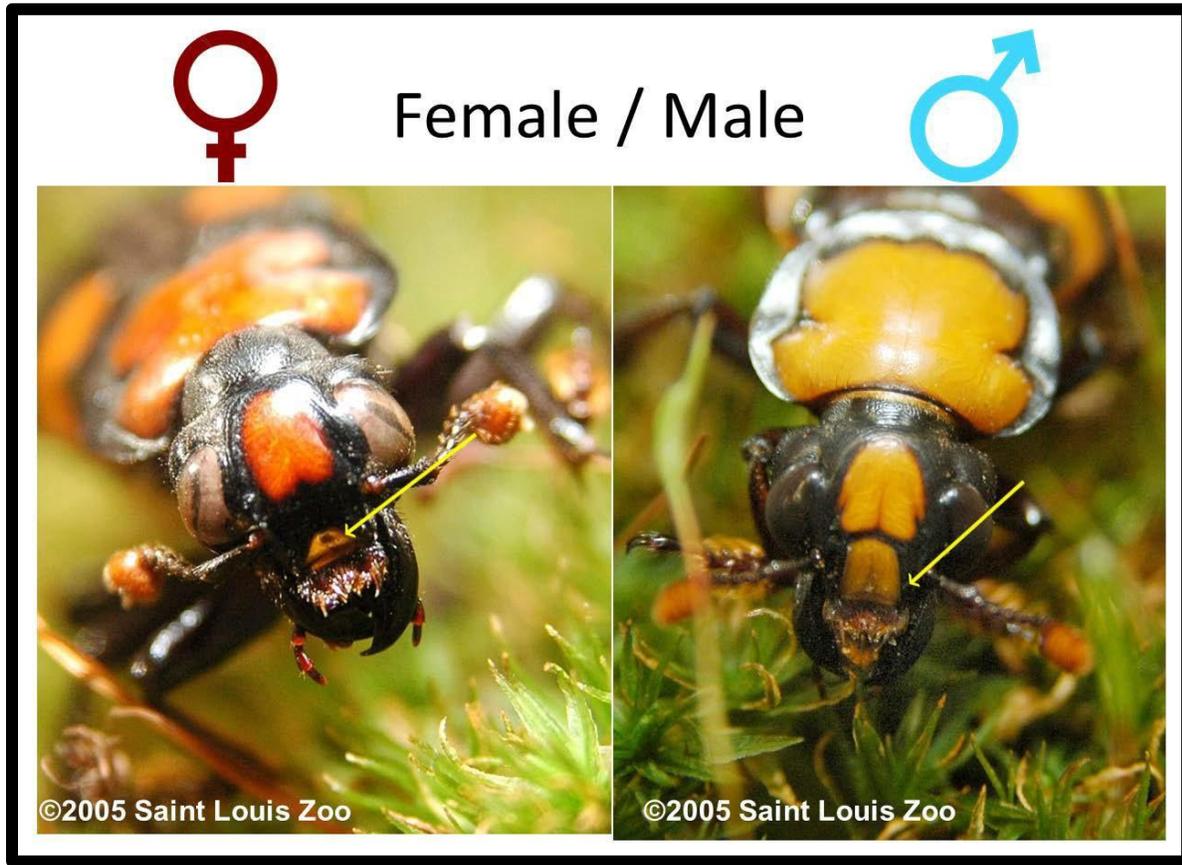
ABBs are to be released near (within 609 meters/2,000 feet) the transect where they were captured, but at least 3 meters (10 feet) away from foot traffic along the transect and a minimum of 152 meters (500 feet) from any vehicle pathway, to avoid trampling. Excavate a small diameter hole approximately 5 inches deep in moist soil and gently place the individual ABB in the excavated hole. ABBs may be released into grass/leaf litter if litter is a minimum of 3” thick.

#### Age Determination

ABBs that have pupated during the current active period are referenced as new (i.e., newly emerged or teneral) and ABBs pupated the previous year are referenced as old (emerged the previous active period and overwintered as teneral adults). Surveyors can distinguish newly emerged ABBs from older ABBs by their softer bodies, a more shiny appearance, and the pronotum appears more orange (less red) and lighter in hue (Figure 3). An older ABB’s pronotum appears red rather than orange, is deeper in hue, body parts (especially legs or antennae) are often missing, and their mandibles appear more worn at the tip. Surveyors must record the ages of ABBs as mature, senescent, teneral, or unknown, on all data forms. It is also important to consider the time of year when assessing age. More mature ABBs will emerge earlier in the period while there may be higher numbers of younger ABBs captured later in the period.

### Gender Determination

The gender of ABBs is distinguishable by the orange-red marking located between the frons and mandibles on the head. These markings are rectangular on males and triangular on females (Figure 3). Surveyors must record ABB gender on the “*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*”.



**Figure 3.** Distinguishing female from male ABB. Color variations can be seen within the species. This female is darker in hue and appears more red (left,) consistent with an older adult senescent coloring; while this male (right) is lighter in hue and appears more orange, consistent with characteristics of a teneral adult.

## Reporting Procedures

Surveyors should collect the necessary precipitation, temperature, and wind information from the weather station closest to the survey site, which can be found at <http://www.wunderground.com/history/> (or other appropriate weather reporting website, such as a Mesonet site). Local temperatures during the survey should also be collected using an on-site data logger. Print out and submit all data logger information along with information from the weather reporting website and submit data with survey results. Surveyors must record this information on the “*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*” and include the total number of valid nights surveyed on the “*ABB Survey Summary Report*” (Appendix B).

To automatically find the closest weather station:

- From the homepage, hover over the Weather tab and click on the bold Weather History heading.
- Enter the closest town to the survey site and the date of the survey into the drop down menus. Remember that the valid hours of a survey are from 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. This requires the surveyor to review the weather data for two consecutive days for each night of survey effort (i.e., the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> to determine if the survey effort for the 4<sup>th</sup> is valid).
- The weather data for the day selected will display at the top of the page. Scroll down this page to view the hourly weather data.
- If the weather station that Weather Underground takes you to does not contain all the necessary information, you will need to search for a personal weather station using the Personal Weather Station (PWS) option in Weather Underground.

To locate the closest Personal Weather Station in Weather Underground:

- Type <http://www.wunderground.com/weatherstation/setup.asp> in your web browser.
- Under the PWS network box on the right side of the page, select the state that you are working at from the “select a state” drop down box.
- Review the list of weather stations and select the closest **reputable** weather station to your survey site (i.e., city hall, hospital, emergency management center).
- Enter the date into the drop down box and click view.
- Ensure that the weather station contains all the required data to validate the survey effort.

## Location Data

At each trap, a GPS location (in decimal degrees, NAD 83) must document the location of the trap and note the general habitat characteristics of the trap site. Note whether the area is disturbed or native, woodland or grassland, and note any other component of the landscape that has the potential to affect the trapability of the ABBs within the survey radius.

## Submission

For each survey effort, surveyors should complete an “*ABB Survey Data Collection Form*” (Appendix A), an “*ABB Survey Summary Report*” (Appendix B), and if required by the ecological services field office, a digital photo of each ABB captured. Surveyors should electronically submit Appendix B (“*ABB Survey Summary Report*”) and the digital photographs (if required) to the local ecological services field office and **ABBContact@fws.gov** for **every** survey conducted. Surveyors should submit Appendix B in Excel format only. Surveyors may decide whether to submit the “*ABB Survey Data Collection Forms*” either electronically or by mail. When submitting the data forms, everything should be included in a single pdf file. If sending survey information by U.S. Mail, all information should be contained within the submission. Electronic information should be placed onto a CD or other similar electronic media. Surveyors must ensure all reports are **accurate** and **complete**. The Service will consider incomplete and/or inaccurate submissions as invalid. When sending corrected forms, surveyors should indicate on the form that it is a corrected form, the project name, and identify each specific correction.

Permittees must submit the results of their ABB surveys with the required end of year recovery permit reports. However, surveys may be submitted at any time. The Service reserves the right to request that surveyors provide ABB survey results at any time.

It is the project proponent and surveyor’s responsibility to ensure that the surveys are conducted in accordance with this protocol and cover all potential ABB habitats within a project area. The Service will, however, periodically spot check submitted surveys for accuracy and review all surveys that are part of a submitted Project Review Package (as part of the Endangered Species Act Consultation or Technical Assistance process).

Specific data entry criteria is required to maintain functionality of the Service’s ABB database. All names of companies, months, locations, soil types, plant species, persons, etc. are to be spelled out, no abbreviations (i.e., May instead of 5, Joe Smith instead of J. Smith, with no punctuation (i.e., Joe L Smith instead of Joe L. Smith). Report all latitude and longitude data in decimal degrees with NAD 83 coordinate system/projection. Longitude should have a negative sign preceding the number. Do not include the N or W with the latitude or longitude number. Each survey should have a specific and individual name to distinguish it from other surveys (e.g., Acme oil well 14). Specific and individual survey report identifiers are necessary to ensure the proper survey is referenced when the Service responds to a survey effort, if questions arise, or if the survey is for a specific project. Specify the project proponent and their project name in the ABB survey report and any other correspondence submitted to the Service (Acme Company, XYZ pipeline). The project proponent is the company that is ultimately responsible for the project, not just the consulting firm that may have hired you to perform these surveys.

## Accidental Death of ABBs

Surveyors must record all mortalities of ABBs on the “*ABB Accidental Death Form*” (Appendix F). Surveyors must submit this form electronically within two (2) calendar days of collection via email to the local ecological services field office and **abbcontact@fws.gov**. The recovery permit should be checked to ensure that other requirements related to notification have been met. Surveyors must also submit the electronic version of the “*ABB Accidental Death Form*” with their annual recovery permit report.

Surveyors should put any dead specimens on ice until they can be prepared for submission. When storing and submitting dead specimens, surveyors will preserve all ABB mortalities in 70-90% ethanol (preferable; better) or 70% Isopropyl (rubbing alcohol; easier) rather than preserving as dried specimens. Mortalities thus preserved should then be stored in a freezer until delivered to the Service or Service-approved facility. Each specimen must have a unique alphanumeric name assigned by the surveyor and included inside each container to ensure future identification. This alphanumeric name should be the first letter of the first two (2) words of the permittee company or individual (e.g., Acme Company, first dead ABB = AC001). Additionally, a label must accompany the specimen and include: the date the ABB was found dead, permittee, legal description of where the beetle was found (down to quarter section at least), and a latitude and longitude coordinate in decimal degrees; NAD 83.

Surveyors should deliver dead specimens, along with a hardcopy of the “*ABB Accidental Death Form*” (Appendix F) to the local ecological services field office or a Service-approved facility. Contact your local ecological services field office for recommendations as to which facility or facilities would be acceptable for deposits.

### Protocols and Forms

All forms (including the ABB survey guidance appendices listed below) are located on the Oklahoma Ecological Services Field Office’s website  
[http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/Oklahoma/ABB\\_Add\\_Info.htm](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/Oklahoma/ABB_Add_Info.htm).

#### *ABB Survey Guidance Appendices*

Survey Guidance Appendix A- ABB Survey Data Collection Form  
Survey Guidance Appendix B- ABB Survey Summary Report  
Survey Guidance Appendix C- Leasure et al. 2012  
Survey Guidance Appendix D- Description of Nicrophorus Species  
Survey Guidance Appendix E- Dichotomous Key  
Survey Guidance Appendix F- ABB Accidental Death Form  
Survey Guidance Appendix G – Carrion Types for Attracting ABBs  
Other Appendices on webpage:

- ABB Summary Report Entry Guidance
- USFWS Automated Surveyor Forms

#### *Other Federal and/or State Requirements*

Federal recovery permits are only valid if accompanied by a state permit. Contact the local state conservation agency to determine if state permits are also necessary.

### **Conclusion**

The Service appreciates compliance with this protocol and associated reporting. The reports enable the Service to monitor the status of the ABB. However, these surveys also provide the necessary information for companies to avoid impacts to ABBs from project implementation. Additionally, maintaining a survey database provides data that can be utilized by the public during project planning.

## **Points of Contact**

Questions about this ABB survey protocol should be directed to:

Kevin Stubbs, National ABB Lead  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Oklahoma Ecological Services Field Office  
9014 East 21st Street  
Tulsa, OK 74129  
Phone: (918) 382-4516  
E-mail: kevin\_stubbs@fws.gov

Robert Harms, Region 6 ABB Contact  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Nebraska Ecological Services Field Office  
9325 South Alda Road  
Wood River, NE 68883  
Phone: (308) 382-6468, extension 208  
E-mail: robert\_harms@fws.gov

## References

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