

de la Garde – Beetles

Selection of de la Garde's beetles, or Coleoptera

Worldwide

Beetles come in many diverse forms, sizes and colours. Differentiating and identifying the myriads of tiny, dark specimens became the speciality of Philip le Hardy de la Garde.

De la Garde joined the Royal Navy in 1885. For the next 20 years he served on eight vessels as clerk, rising to paymaster. The fleet took him around the world, including the Mediterranean, South Africa, China, Australia and the South Pacific and North America.

Such was de la Garde's passion for beetles that whenever his duties allowed, he went on-shore and collected. Then he had the task of 'setting' the specimens which required extraordinary skill. With the assistance of a hand lens or microscope, he manipulated the tiny insects' legs, antennae and mouthparts into position with a fine brush.

He needed a steady hand to glue each minute specimen to card whilst still on-board ship.