The Singing Pollux *(Cantabo coleoptera)*

The most notable physical attribute of the singing pollux are its extremely prominent, pointy, protruding antennae; it looks like a miniature Eastern Asian elk. As well as looking striking, the antennae serve an important purpose – they protect the singing pollux’s ability to sing. At dawn and dusk, it emits its mating call – a serene, song-like siren that resonates through the trees, like a mermaid calling out to nearby sailors. Floating across the infamous flora and fauna of the Amazon, these whimsical, enchanting and mesmerising melodies put other beetles under a conjuror’s trance. Like moths to the flame, beetles are drawn to the hypnotic call.

Discovered in the dark depths of Brazil’s Amazon basin by scientists in 2008, this beautiful, beguiling beetle moves as gracefully as a member of the Bolshoi ballet company. It is famous for using its delicate, mesh-like wings to dance across the surface of water, travelling from one sweetly scented Amazonian lily to another, using them as islands to cross the sea. Despite appearing outwardly beautiful and unassumingly innocent, the singing pollux’s appearance is deceptive. As well as being for protection, its antennae also guard four, oversized fangs, specifically evolved for the sole purpose of consuming one thing: other singing pollux. In order to stay alive, it must devour more than three times its body weight each day, the singing pollux is the carnivorous cannibal of the beetle world.

With its striking, bold, flashes of colour darting across its exoskeleton, the singing pollux is one of the most remarkable (and formidable!) beetles discovered to date. It is as shy and evasive as lightning and, because of this reclusiveness, it is hardly ever captured on camera. On the rare occasion that a fleeting glimpse is caught of this brutal beetle, the singing pollux radiates beauty and elegance; a rainbow of colour on a dismal day. Many entomologists believe this superior species to be the most stunning and evolved insect found in the Amazon.