

# Lady Beetles

Lady beetles, or “ladybugs,” are round- or half-dome-shaped insects with hard wing covers.

About 200 species occur in California and most are predators both as adults and larvae. Some species specialize on aphids or other groups; others have a broader diet.

## Convergent Lady Beetle, *Hippodamia convergens*



Lady beetle eggs (left) are oblong or spindle-shaped and often yellowish. Larvae (right) are active, have 6 long legs, and resemble tiny alligators. Some species have spines.

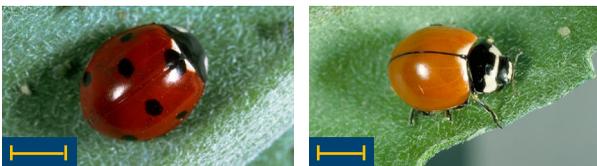


During the inactive pupal stage (left), the larva transforms to an adult (right). This species has converging white marks on the thorax. Number of spots may range from 0 to 13.

## Other Aphid-Feeding Lady Beetles (commonly reddish)



The California lady beetle (left) has no spots on its wings and two widely spaced white spots on its thorax, but no white band between its eyes. The twospotted lady beetle (right) is red with two black spots on the wings and two white blotches on a black thorax, or black with four reddish spots on the wings.



The seven-spotted lady beetle (left) has a black head with two white spots. The nine-spotted lady beetle (right) has a white band on its thorax and a pale white band between its eyes. The California population does not have spots.

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## Other Lady Beetles



Twenty-spotted lady beetle (left) is about 1/16 inch long. It eats powdery mildew fungus spores and conidia. The mealybug destroyer lady beetle (right) is dark with an orange head and tail. Its wax-covered larva (bottom right) resembles its mealybug prey.



The multicolored Asian lady beetle (left) ranges from red to yellow with no spots or up to 19 spots on the wings. The thorax is often cream colored with black markings. This larger lady beetle feeds on aphids, scales, psyllids and other insects. The vedalia lady beetle (right) eats only cottony cushion scale, a pest of citrus and certain ornamentals, often providing complete biological control.



*Axion plagiatum* (left) shown here with its pupa, is shiny black with two red spots and feeds on aphids, oak leaf phylloxera, and sycamore scale. The black lady beetle (right), *Rhyzobius forestieri*, (adult at bottom left and larva in center) and *Chilocorus bipustulatus* (adult at bottom center and larva at bottom right) are both scale feeders. Three lecanium scales feed near the leaf vein at top.



The ashy gray lady beetle has black spots on its light gray or yellowish wings. A black form with two red spots also occurs. It feeds on aphids and psyllids.

This is NOT a lady beetle! The long antennae of the spotted cucumber beetle distinguish this plant-feeding pest. Lady beetles have short, clubbed antennae.

## Pesticides affect natural enemies, rivers, and oceans!