



## WEE BUT MIGHTY LADYBUG

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

Mr. Jones and his son Billy were gathering wood from their woodpile one cold winter morning. Billy lifted a small log and excitedly squealed, "Dad, look! A bunch of little red bugs with black spots all over them!"

Mr. Jones looked over Billy's shoulder and replied, "Well, I'll be. I have read about this but have never seen it myself. Billy, these are ladybugs."

"Are they all dead?"

"No. In the cold winter, they gather together in large groups to hibernate, a kind of sleep. The group's bodies keep them warm and safe. Sometimes thousands of ladybugs will be packed together."<sup>1</sup>

"Ladybugs aren't bugs, but beetles that belong to the *Coccinellidae* family. They are sometimes called ladybirds or lady beetles. You might think by their names that they are all female, but they can also be males. The way to tell the difference is to count the spots on their wings. If the spots are near the edge of the wing, it's a boy, and if the spots are in the middle, it's a girl."<sup>2,3</sup>

"Look closely, and you will see these

ladybugs have shiny red (sometimes orange) dome-shaped shells with black spots on their outer wings and a black head with white patches on both sides. Here, take one and hold it carefully in your hand. Can you see the seven spots on its wings? This kind is called a seven-spotted ladybug.<sup>4</sup>

"There are over 5,000 different types of ladybugs in the world. The color of their shells can be red, orange, yellow, pink, green, blue, or grey and they can have different patterns, such as stripes, circles, or spots. Some kinds of ladybugs have no spots on their shells, while others can have up to 23 spots."<sup>5</sup>

"Billy, if you gently touch your ladybug's shiny shell, you will feel it's hard. The shell is called an *exoskeleton*. This covers the ladybug's body along with its wings and helps protect it from predators and the weather. It also protects its short legs as they crawl around searching for food."<sup>6</sup>

"Ladybugs are good fliers. They fly using two sets of wings. The outer set is called *elytra*. They are hard and protect the thin, flexible inner wings (called hind wings). To fly, the ladybug will lift the elytra out of the way and beat the air with the inner wings. They can flap their wings about 85 times per second, which is faster than most insects. Although they can only fly for a few minutes, they have been known to fly as fast as 37 miles (59.5 km) per hour. They sometimes use the wind to soar for long distances."<sup>7,8</sup>



Elina Elena from Pixabay



Мария Агейкина from Pixabay

"Along with the exoskeleton and elytra, God has designed ladybugs with other ways to protect themselves. In their body is an oily, yellow liquid called *hemolymph*. This smells awful and tastes horrible. When threatened, they play dead and leak stinky hemolymph from their leg joints. This keeps many animals from eating them. Like many poisonous animals in nature, their bright colors warn predators that they taste bad."<sup>9,10</sup>

"Ladybugs are ravenous eaters. They eat small plant-eating insects, such as aphids, mites, fruit flies, and even young ladybugs! Aphids are tiny insects that suck the sap out of plants. They can harm and even kill the plants they are eating. This is why farmers and gardeners love ladybugs because ladybugs love to eat aphids. One ladybug can eat more than 50 aphids per day. In its 1 to 2 years of life, it can eat over 5,000 aphids. Some ladybugs will also eat the nectar, pollen, and other parts of flowers. They will also eat rotting fruit. They can smell food from far away but surprisingly use their antennae to smell, instead of their nose! As a ladybug travels from flower to flower, its body collects pollen that is passed on to other flowers. This pollen is needed for plants to reproduce and survive."<sup>11,12,13</sup>

"Billy, ladybugs have always been one of my favorite beetles. When I see their incredible design and beauty, I am reminded of God's Word, 'O LORD, how great are thy works! And thy thoughts are very deep.' Psalms 92:5. What an awesome God we serve!"

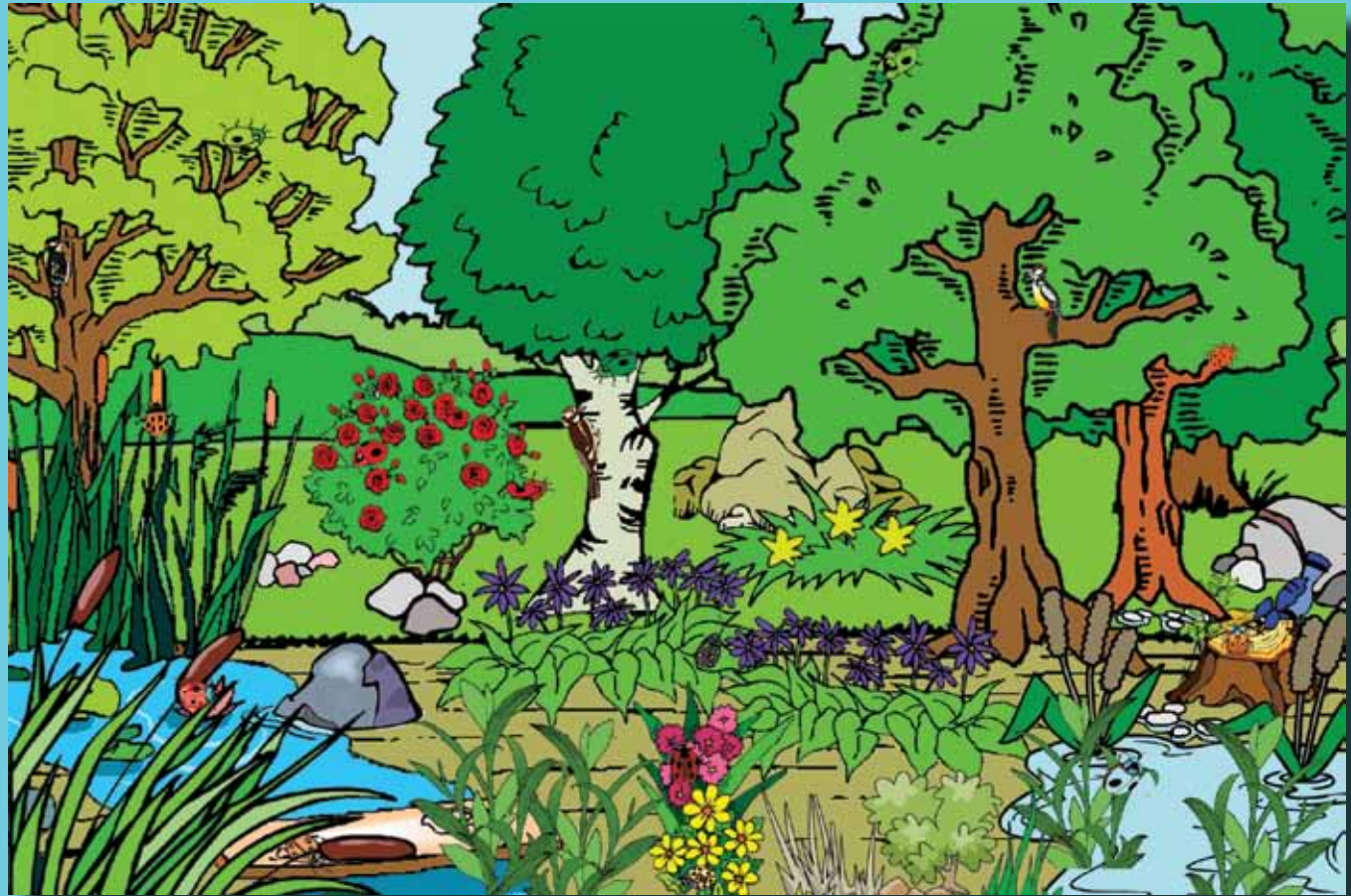


References

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.coolfactsforkids.com/ladybug-facts-for-kids-facts-about-ladybugs/>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://kids.lovetoknow.com/childrens-education/ladybug-facts-kids>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://theantijuncleaver.com/all-about-ladybugs-for-kids/>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/facts/ladybug>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://factsforkids.com/ladybug/>
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid
- <sup>7</sup> <https://factsforkids.com/ladybug/>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://kids.lovetoknow.com/childrens-education/ladybug-facts-kids>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://factsforkids.com/ladybug/Ibid>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://kids.lovetoknow.com/childrens-education/ladybug-facts-kids>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/facts/ladybug>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://factsforkids.com/ladybug/>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.coolfactsforkids.com/ladybug-facts-for-kidsfacts-about-ladybugs/>

Ladybugs live almost all over the world, except in the north and south poles and the top parts of North America and Russia, where it is very cold. You can find ladybugs in forests and grasslands, but they also like cities.

Find the 14 ladybugs (Not to scale) in the picture below.



**WORDSEARCH**

Look for the words from the WORD LISTS below. The hidden word might be up, down, sideways or slanted, but not backwards.

E	X	O	S	K	E	L	E	T	O	N
W	L	U	P	Y	Y	J	A	D	R	U
I	A	Y	O	V	C	E	P	H	Z	C
N	D	Z	T	K	I	E	H	A	B	J
G	Y	P	S	R	E	H	I	N	D	S
S	B	W	P	L	A	V	D	E	K	N
T	U	J	T	Q	U	X	S	C	P	D
F	G	E	S	N	I	A	X	T	T	W
P	E	Y	W	L	E	X	Z	A	H	P
B	P	O	L	L	E	N	H	R	U	H
H	E	M	O	L	Y	M	P	H	G	T

**WORD LIST**

APHIDS BEETLE ELYTRA  
 EXOSKELETON HEMOLYMPH  
 HIND LADYBUG NECTAR  
 POLLEN SPOTS WINGS

FOR ANSWERS, GO TO:  
[www.discovercreation.org/kids/newsletteranswers.htm](http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/newsletteranswers.htm)

Puzzles by Lanny Johnson  
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