

Pests have enemies, too!

Aphids and Ladybugs

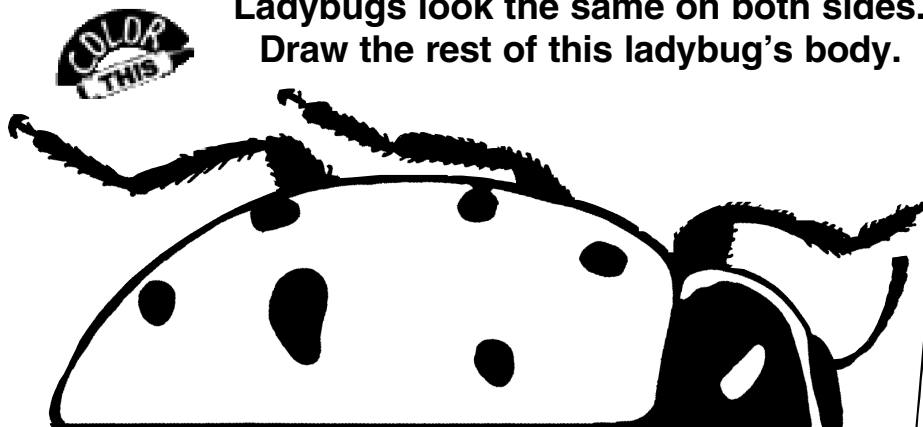


Aphids are tiny insect pests. They suck the sap from plants—vegetables, crops, flowers, and trees. They take away the plant's nutrients, and they can give the plant viruses. Aphids attract even more pests to the plant with the sweet, sticky juices they make.

Natural enemies that gobble up aphids are lacewings, assassin bugs, wasps, spiders, and chickadees. But ladybugs (ladybird beetles) are the champion aphid eaters.



**Ladybugs look the same on both sides.
Draw the rest of this ladybug's body.**



Ladybugs won't harm any of your plants, but they eat many pests that do! Let ladybugs do their work!

For more on ladybugs, visit the National Wildlife Federation's Back Yard Wildlife Habitat Program: <http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/goodbugsbadbugs.cfm>. Click on the picture of ladybugs about half way down the screen.

Tip for Grown-ups:

When fighting spider mites or aphids, go for the least toxic ways. You can buy beneficial insects (enemies of pests) such as ladybugs. You can also use insecticidal soaps or wash aphids off plants with your garden hose.



16



Tips

For fighting aphids

- Pick off aphids from the underside of leaves, or spray them with water.
- Grow plants such as marigolds that attract aphids' natural enemies.
- Buy a bag of ladybugs from a garden nursery. Set them free in your yard.
- Many trees, shrubs, and flowers have resistance to aphids. Call your local agricultural extension service to identify resistant types for your yard.

- When it hatches, a ladybug larva will eat about 400 aphids. As an adult, it may eat up to 5,000 more aphids!
- Insect sprays are the ladybug's number one danger!

