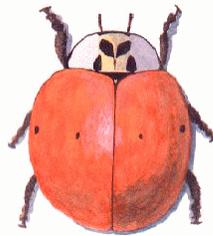


Are you a nine-spotted ladybug?



No! My name is *Harmonia axyridis*, the multi-colored Asian ladybug. As you guessed from my name I come in different patterns and I was introduced from Asia. I have either too many spots or two few. I'm probably the most common lady beetle you will find - sometimes inside houses!

Sorry - not me. My name is *Coleomegilla maculata* and I am native to the US but I'm not a nine-spotted. I am too long and thin and my pronotum is black with red edges - not white.



Checkers anyone? I have 14 spots and I'm from Europe. My spots are more like squares so although my official name is *Propylea quatuordecimpunctata* most folks call me the checker spot ladybug.



'Not spots' My distinguishing feature is not a spot at all but the two paired marks that look like parenthesis. I'm called *Hippodamia parenthesis* or the parenthesis ladybug and I am a native.



Not a nine-spot. I am a native with similar features but the wrong number of spots. Also, I take my name, *Hippodamia convergens*, from the two converging white lines on my pronotum.



Close - but no. I am the seven-spotted ladybug, *Coccinella septempunctata*, a close cousin of the nine-spotted introduced from Europe. I have seven spots instead of nine.



Almost! I'm the two-spotted lady beetle, *Adalia bipunctata*. I don't think you will confuse me with a nine-spot but I am also a rare native. If you see me please shoot me and send in my image.



Yes!! You found me - congratulations! I have 4 spots on each elytra and one split in the middle to make 9. My pronotum is black with pale white marks on front. So, I am *Coccinella novemnotata*, the nine-spotted ladybug. Please "shoot" me immediately

Looking for lost ladybugs

New York's Honored State Insect

The nine-spotted lady beetle, *Coccinella novemnotata* (C-9), was once the most commonly collected member of the family Coccinellidae (also known as ladybugs or ladybird beetles) in the United States. This native predator was once so common in New York and so respected for the great job it does controlling pests that it was proposed as the state insect by a fourth grade student in 1985. Unfortunately, by the time C-9 was honored in 1989 it had already begun a precipitous decline in numbers. There have been no confirmed collections of this beetle in the Northeast since 1992 and collections throughout the U.S. have been very sporadic. Less than 10 individuals are known to have been collected anywhere in the U.S. this century!

A Connecticut Yankee in Latvian Hearts

What do Latvia and Connecticut have in common? They both chose the two-spotted lady beetle, *Adalia bipunctata*, as their official symbol. This beetle is native to North America and Europe where it has been one of the most easily recognized and abundant lady beetles. Lady beetles as a group were given their name because farmers believed they were sent to deliver them from the ravages of pests by the Virgin Mary. The "Beetles of Our Lady" became "Lady Beetles". In Latvia what we call the two-spotted ladybug is called 'marite' after the Latvian goddess Mara, who embodies earth's power. Although this beetle is still occasionally collected in the Northeast it is rapidly declining and we fear it may soon be gone from large portions of its former range.

Unanswered Questions

What happened to these key components of our local ecosystems? Were they displaced by other lady beetles introduced to control pests? How will the loss of these native predators that were adapted to local conditions affect the control of pests? Can we reestablish these predators (like the wolves of Yellowstone)? What can we learn from the demise of the nine-spotted and the two-spotted lady beetles that will help us to prevent the loss of other species?

What Can I Do To Help? - Find 'em and Shoot 'em

To be able to help these and other lady beetle species scientists need to have detailed information on which species are still out there and how many individuals are around. Entomologists at Cornell can identify the different species but there are too few of us to sample in enough places to find the really rare ones. We need you to be our legs, hands and eyes. If you could look for these rare lady beetles and send us pictures of them on Email we can start to gather the information we need. The best time to look will be between May and October and the best places will be on or around lush plant growth (especially if there are aphids). Heres how the program will work:

1. Go out and look for lady beetles.
2. If you find a rare species - shoot it! (see guide for photo tips).
3. Send the digital image to Ladybeetle@ento.cornell.edu

How to Shoot a Ladybeetle

1. Chill out! Your lady beetle will be too active to get a good image unless you slow it down a little. You can do this in a freezer at home or in a cooler in the field. Lady beetles can be chilled in a freezer safely for 5 minutes (over six may kill them) and this will quiet them for 2-4 minutes. Coolers are not as cold as freezers so it will take 30+ minutes to get 1-6 minutes of quiet time. They will survive for days in a chilled cooler.
2. Shoot your lady beetle. Place your chilled out beetle on a gray background and take the largest shot you can while maintaining focus. Glare or reflection off the beetle is often more of a problem than not having enough light. Shield the beetle from bright light and use the flash only if there is very little light.