

Why distinguish between the native and Asian Lady beetles?

Native Convergent Ladybugs:

- They are useful to the garden as they eat aphids, that destroy fruit and ornamental plants
- They are a natural, biological control of pests
- There is a fear that the invasive species will overtake the native ladybugs

Asian Multicolored Lady Beetles:

- They are considered an invasive species that are displacing the native ladybug species
- They can damage fruit and ornamental plants
- They become a nuisance for clustering indoors in the winter
- They can bite; however, they have no stinger or venom. The bite is described as a pinprick that stings
- They can cause allergies in some people ranging from eye irritation to asthma
- Emits a pungent odor as well as a yellowish staining fluid to deter predators that can be a nuisance during their indoor wintering

Fun facts:

- Across the world, ladybugs, also known as “lady birds”, were given a name associated with Virgin Mary, such as in Britain: “Our Lady’s Bird”
- One female can lay 1,000 eggs in her lifetime



Identifying the “good” Ladybugs from the “bad” Lady beetles



Louisiana Master Naturalists
of Greater Baton Rouge

Project of Melanie Newkome as part the of
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Distinction and description of the Convergent Ladybug (*Hippodamia convergens*)

- All are red-orange with black spots
- Some have all 13 black spots on the elytra (wing coverings), while some have fewer
- They have white lines surrounding the prothorax “shoulder plate” that converge behind the head. The white dashes mark the top of the prothorax—one on the right and one on the left
- It is not uncommon for them to cluster together throughout their life stages on the ground or near each other
- Adults are active from spring through summer
- They adapt their life cycles based upon the abundance or lack of food sources
- They are found in agricultural areas, gardens, meadows, lakeshores and parks



Distinction and description of the Asian Multicolored Lady Beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*)

- They have two large oval white markings
- Main identifier is the black “M” or “W” (depending on angle) shaped marking on the whitish area behind the head
- A useful marker is any white coloring on the head and pronotum and “neck area”. White sides or entirely white pronotum distinguish them
- They have shiny rounded bodies, colored red, orange, brown or tan with a variety of black spots on them, thus the name “multicolored”
- They seek an indoor environment in clusters, such as houses and offices, over the winter, which enhances their survival
- They originated in Asia and were first found in Louisiana in 1988, possibly arriving in a shipping container
- They were used to control insect populations for agricultural crops and reduced the need for pesticides beginning in the 1970s
- It is now considered an invasive beetle

Promoting native (Convergent) Ladybugs

- Create a habitat of pollen and nectar sources, such as flowers and herbs such as cilantro, dill, fennel, caraway, angelica, scented geraniums, coreopsis and cosmos. Ladybugs like to live in well-watered gardens. Rose bushes are popular with aphids
- Do not purchase ladybugs for placement in your garden as they may be harvested in the wild for sale and may contain the Asian variety



Eradicating the invasive (Asian Multicolored) Lady Beetles

- Remove them from indoors by vacuuming them up and throwing away the bag
- Sealing the openings or applying lemon scent where they enter the home, such as window frames and other possible entrances
- Insecticides
- Light traps

