

Ladybirds

The majority of Australia's 500 species of ladybirds are great garden helpers. They prey on sap-sucking garden pests including aphids, scale insects and mites. Planting herbs like coriander, fennel and dill will help to attract ladybirds.

There are four common species of ladybirds



transverse ladybird



common spotted ladybird



variable ladybird



minute two-spotted ladybird .

In spring, female ladybirds lay clusters up between 20 and 50 eggs. These yellow or orange eggs can be found attached to the underside of leaves. When the eggs hatch, the larvae begin feeding on the eggs of the mealybugs, aphids and other insects. One ladybird larva can eat up to 350 aphids during the three weeks it takes to become a pupa.

The ladybird larvae are bizarre looking earwig-like creatures, which are sometimes mistaken for pests themselves. The larva pupates for about 7-10 days, after which the adult appears.



Common bad ladybird is the 28 spotted ladybird They have 13 spots on each elytra (wing shield) and two more on its pronotum (bit behind it's head). The easiest way to recognise them is to watch it as it eats leaves. It leaves a characteristic windowing or skeletonised leaf damage. They are particularly fond of plants in the Cucurbitaceae and Solanaceae families, including zucchini, pumpkin, cucumbers, melons, potato, and tomato



Larvae of 28 spotted ladybird



This is a beneficial fungus eating ladybird and its larvae which feed on the fungus of the zucchini and pumpkin leaves