

Ladybirds



7-spot



Hieroglyphic



Cream-streaked



22-spot



2-spot



Water



Cream-spot



14-spot



11-spot



Pine



18-spot



Bryony



Adonis'



Kidney-spot



Eyed



24-spot



10-spot



Heather



Larch



5-spot



Striped



Orange



Ladybird facts

7-spot ladybird

This is the most common British ladybird despite a massive reduction in numbers since 1998. It eats aphids (greenfly, blackfly etc) and at 6-8mm long it is one of the largest British ladybirds.

2-spot ladybird

Of the most common British ladybirds, the 2-spot is especially common in urban areas. Typically it is red with two black spots, and is considerably smaller than the 7-spot. It is also very variable in pattern unlike the 7-spot, commonly black with four or six red patches.

11-spot ladybird

Not a common species, but seen regularly in the Thames Valley where it's abundance is due largely to the climate and weather. It prefers warm and moist places so its population does decrease after a hard winter. Usually this species has eleven quite large black spots on red elytra and always has black legs.

Adonis' ladybird

This ladybird is seen often in 'weedy' situations such as derelict sites and watersides where it may be present in quite large numbers. It prefers warm positions preferably with sand or gravel with sparse vegetation: it is very common near the Mediterranean. Normally it has six spots to the rear of the hind-body and has a longer scutellar marking (in the middle of the fore edge) than other species. Its legs are largely black but brown towards their ends.

10-spot ladybird

The 10-spot is a ladybird that does not have a consistent pattern – but it is consistent in other ways. They have a lot of white on their fore-bodies and have pale legs/undersides. 10 spots are common but they prefer trees to gardens, and are less likely to be seen in gardens than 2-spots or 7-spots.

Hieroglyphic ladybird

This species is relatively uncommon and is confined to Calluna heather but sometimes can be found away from heaths. Its name derives from the distinctive black mark at the front of the hindbody. In this individual illustrated the 'hieroglyphic' mark is joining up with the spots behind. This process can extend to produce individuals with virtually all-black elytra.

Water ladybird

The water ladybird feeds on aphids on rushes at watersides. It changes colour in the autumn from red to ochre.

Pine ladybird

The pine ladybird is another of the mainly black ladybirds which live on scale insects. Over the last decade or so it may have become the most numerous ladybird in Britain since it has adapted to preying on the large, invasive chestnut scale – often seen on urban lime and sycamore trees. Unlike most ladybirds, when attacked (by ants or by humans) it does not fly away but clamps down on to the surface of the tree, or whatever it is resting on.

Kidney-spot ladybird

The Kidney-spot ladybird is one of a group of ladybirds which prey on scale insects and thus are found mainly on trees. They are somewhat tortoise-shaped with a flange around the rim.

Heather ladybird

This is also a black animal, similar in shape to the pine and kidney-spot ladybirds. It has a narrow, linear red stripe running across each elytron which may be broken into two or three thin spots. In Britain it is only found on heather (Calluna) heath or on conifers nearby but will also eat scales on many other plants elsewhere in Europe.

Striped ladybird

Another tree-dwelling ladybird. This large (7-8mm) species is found only on Scots pine. It may have up to 15 stripes/spots.

Cream-streaked ladybird

Another large species (about 7mm) which lives on pine trees – but is more common than the striped ladybird. It is quite variable and may have no spots or up to sixteen (with four spots it may resemble a form of the 10-spot but the latter is much smaller).

Cream-spot ladybird

A relatively common species which has a distinctive chestnut brown background colour. The similar 18-spot ladybird has a star-shaped scutellar spot (on the midline at the front of the hindbody). This is an aphid-eater with an apparent attachment to ash trees in Surrey but it is also often found on umbellifers such as hemlock and cow parsley.

18-spot ladybird

The 18-spot ladybird is relatively uncommon being only found on conifers. It is rather a pleasant brown colour and identified by the star-shaped scutellar marking.

Eyed ladybird

The eyed is the largest British ladybird (around 8-9 mm) and is only found on pine trees where it eats adelgids (pine aphids). Its name comes from the yellow markings around its spots (although these are not always present...)

Larch ladybird

Another tree-dwelling species which, unusually, lives up to its name: it is most commonly found on larch (*Larix* spp) trees, and on other conifers. It is often completely unmarked but usually has stripes, at least along the mid-line. However, rarely individuals may have between 2-6 spots.

Orange ladybird

Like the 22-spot, this species is mycetophagous (fungus eating) and lives on the mildews of various trees. It was once an inhabitant of old, particularly oak, woodland. Formerly uncommon it was observed more frequently over the last decades of the 20th century when it was noted on conifers and sycamore. Amongst British ladybirds, the species is unusual insofar as it may overwinter as pupae. It can be confused with no species except immature cream-spots.

22-spot ladybird

This is the brightest of the yellow British ladybirds. It always has twenty-two spots. These may vary in size but only rarely join up (as in the individual illustrated). The 22-spot is unusual amongst ladybirds in that it eats fungi (mildew) on the soil surface or on low plants.

14-spot ladybird

The 14-spot (it may have fewer than 14 spots which are rather rectangular) is one of the three most common species in gardens (along with 2- and 7-spots) and, in the Midlands, may be the most common. It is one of three British yellow ladybirds.

Bryony ladybird

The bryony is the latest of large ladybirds to establish in Britain: being first found less than ten years ago in Molesey, Surrey from where it is spreading quite rapidly. It is a vegetarian and, so far, in Britain has only been found feeding on white bryony. In France it is known as the "melon beetle".

24-spot ladybird

The 24-spot ladybird is famous for having the longest proper name of all British ladybirds (*Subcoccinella vigintiquattuorpuntata*). It is vegetarian, living on grass and some weeds. The number of spots varies but it always has a red forebody and, unlike most ladybirds, it is hairy and thus appears dull.

5-spot ladybird

This species is (probably) not seen in south-east England. In Britain it is only found on the shingle edges of some Welsh and Scottish river estuaries; however, in Europe it is more widespread (this specimen from the Camargue).

