

Be a ladybird buddy

Try to:

- build your own Ladybird House. These houses shelter and protect ladybirds through the cooler months and provide a spot for them to lay eggs.
- water your plants to provide ladybirds with a drink. Try to water early in the morning or late in the evening to avoid losing water from the heat of the day.
- plant herbs that ladybirds love near plants affected by aphids.
- purchase ladybirds for your garden pests from www.ecoorganicarden.com.au.
- breed your own ladybirds! Find an aphid infested plant and break a portion off. Keep some ladybirds in a plastic container with a lid containing small air holes with the infected branch. Place a water soaked cotton ball in the container as a water supply. Make sure your ladybirds always have plenty of food and water.

Avoid:

- using insecticides in your garden.
- killing any ladybird, as this is said to bring sadness and misfortune.

Don't be surprised if:

- ladybirds release a yellow substance. This is called "reflex blood". It is very strong smelling and contains the toxins designed to deter predators.
- ladybirds are found in large group. To keep warm in the cooler months they huddle together in large groups and hibernate.

Find out more about your own backyard buddies

VISIT: www.backyardbuddies.net.au
www.facebook.com/backyardbuddies

CALL: 1300 361 967



Be a backyard buddy

Make your backyard ladybird friendly



Let ladybirds control your garden pests.

Ladybirds, also known as ladybeetles and ladybugs, are natural controllers of aphids, scale insects and mites which otherwise damage plants. You can be sure that if your garden has regular ladybird visitors it will receive a helping hand keeping healthy.

This is probably why nearly all cultures believe that ladybirds are lucky. Killing one is said to bring sadness and misfortune. The nursery rhyme "Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home" encourages children to catch the beetles and blow them on their way in return for a wish. It is thought this was a way of getting the children to disperse the beetles amongst the crops to destroy pests.

Ladybirds need your help

Ladybirds and their larvae gorge themselves on aphids. As long as you don't use chemical sprays, these predators will be there when you need them. Even using low toxic environmentally friendly insecticides, such as pyrethrum or garlic spray to kill aphids, can kill natural predators like ladybirds. If the majority of their food source is gone they won't visit your garden meaning you have to spray again year after year.

That's why the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife, local councils and other interested groups are running Backyard Buddies.

What is a backyard buddy?

Backyard buddies are the native animals that share our built-up areas, our beaches and waterways, our backyards and our parks. The ladybird is a backyard buddy.

Backyard buddies are also the local people who value the living things around them, like the ladybird, and are willing to protect and encourage them by doing a few simple things around their own homes.

So you can be a backyard buddy.

Be a backyard buddy

It's easy. All you have to do is care... and take a few simple steps.

Step one is to find out what ladybirds do and do not like.

Ladybirds love:

Aphids

– which they gorge on, even ladybird larvae can eat up to 350 aphids during the three weeks it takes to become a pupa.

Garden herbs

– such as coriander, dill and fennel.

Lots of water

– and often seek out places with water.

Bright colours

– and spots which they wear to keep predators away.

But they don't like:

Insecticides

– which can kill them. Even using low toxic insecticides to kill aphids can also kill ladybirds.

The cold weather

– when they remain in a dormant state. As the weather warms up the adults begin to get active and search for early aphids to eat.

Please turn over for some of the simple, practical things you can do to help encourage ladybirds in your backyard or neighbourhood.

Ladybird profile

There are over 500 species of ladybirds in Australia.

Their colour is a warning sign to predators like birds, wasps, spiders and dragonflies.

A female ladybird can lay up to 2,000 eggs in its life.

As ladybird age, the color of their spots fades.

As a defense mechanism they can exude unpleasant oils from joints in their legs.

A ladybird in flight beats its wings up to 85 times per second.

Ladybirds breathe through openings on the sides of their bodies.

In 1999, NASA sent ladybirds and aphids up in the space shuttle to test their movements in zero gravity.

