

Ladybugs

Hippodamia convergens

A Garden Guide

Native to North America, these ladybugs are voracious eaters of aphids (*Aphidoidea*) - common garden and farm pests. Aphids prefer to eat fresh and tender growth on plants and are serious pests on both food and fiber crops. Aphids weaken plants by sucking sap, and can spread numerous diseases and viruses. They can also spread very rapidly. Aphids can be difficult to control, but bringing in natural allies, such as ladybugs, can be a fun, educational, and ecologically mindful form of pest management.



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Do not use pesticides, even organic ones, when you have ladybugs in your garden, greenhouse, solarium, row tunnel, or wherever you have released them. Ladybugs can be hurt by any broad spectrum oils or sprays used to combat pests.

Releasing them in an enclosed space, such as a greenhouse or row tunnel, can help them stay in the vicinity. Using bugs to fight other bugs is a delicate dance, if all the aphids are eaten the ladybugs will try to fly away in search of more food.

How to use your Ladybugs:

- 1) Water your garden and plants beforehand.
- 2) Release the ladybugs in the evening, after the sun has gone down. Ladybugs do not fly away at night. They will, however, fly away in the daytime. Resist the urge to release them in the daytime.
- 3) Release the ladybugs at the base of plants infested with aphids. The ladybugs will crawl up and feast upon the aphids.
- 4) Release $\frac{1}{3}$ of the ladybugs the first evening, wait two nights and release another $\frac{1}{3}$, wait two nights and release the last $\frac{1}{3}$. Version 1.0, Apr 22

