

As the Garden Grows

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Lady Beetles

(Article written by Carolyn Parratt)

Have you ever wondered how many “ladybug” or “ladybird” beetles there are? Well it’s that time of year again, so start counting. Lady beetles are classified as beetles in the Order Coleoptera which is the largest and most diverse group of insects. They are in the Family Coccinellidae with 480 plus species in North America. Beetles have chewing mouthparts thus allowing for a varied diet. Their activities range from eating plant material, pollinating flowers to preying on pest insects. Ladybug beetles seek out aphids and scale insects therefore they are considered beneficial insects. Lady beetles in the United States are naturally occurring and introduced species. Introduced Lady beetles species are/were used for biological control of a pest insect or are/were accidentally brought to the United States.



Fig.1

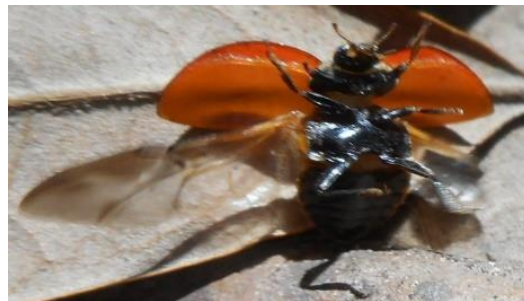


Fig.2

Lady beetles have two pair of wings forming a straight line down their back (Fig.1). The forewings or elytra are used for protection of the membranous hindwings or flight wings (Fig. 2). Lady beetles come in color combinations, supporting multiple spots, stripes to no spots (*Cycloneda sanguinea*)

(Fig. 3). A non-native Seven-spotted (*Coccinella septempunctata*) Lady beetle has 6 spots on the elytra (3 spots on each wing cover) and one spot in the middle (Fig. 4).



Fig.3



Fig.4



Texas has three beneficial species of twice-stabbed lady beetles. *Olla v-nigrum* is one tiny lady beetle that fed on scale insects. The body of *Olla v-nigrum* is black with two irregular shaped red dots on the elytra (one red dot per wing cover) and a white line on its pronotum (face shield) (Fig.5). Its larvae are long and “thorny” in appearance.

Fig.5

Non-native Multicolored Asian lady beetles (MALB), *Harmonia axyridis*, tend to have an oval body shape and are usually slightly larger than native lady beetles (Fig.6). The color of Asian lady beetles may vary from yellow, orange to red. They may have no spots or as many as 19 spots. They have a black “M” or “W” shaped pattern on their pronotum (face shield) with more white or cream color present than native lady beetles (Fig.7)



Fig.6

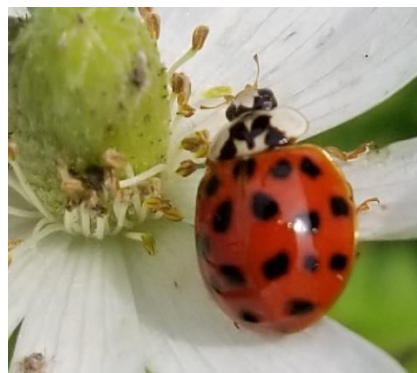


Fig.7

Lady beetle females lay a cluster of oval shaped yellow eggs on the under side of a leaf or near the larvae food source (Fig.8). Larvae are extremely hungry and begin eating aphids or scale insects immediately after hatching (Fig.9).



Fig.8



Fig.9

Depending on the species of lady beetle, the larvae will vary with each species but not within that species. For example, the larvae of the species *Hyperaspis* and *Scymnus* look more like mealybugs than other species of lady beetle larvae (Fig.10). These larvae are covered in a stringy wax-like substance that's used as a disguise and aids in repelling ants and other predators. Do not kill them as they are beneficial!! If touched, these larvae will move rather quickly whereas mealybugs will not move or move very slowly.



Fig.10

The pupae look like wrinkled adult lady beetles (Fig.11 & 12). Lady beetles take 2 to 3 weeks to develop from egg, larva, pupae to adult. A ladybug beetle may live from one to two years.



Fig.11



Fig.12

Enjoy all your tiny colorful **beneficial** lady beetle insects (Figs.13,14 & 15). Remember they are as susceptible to insecticides as are the pest insects!



Fig.13



Fig.14



Fig.15

All Photos taken by Carolyn Parratt

References:

Vafaie, Erfan. *Lady beetle*, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. 2018

Parratt, Carolyn. *Beneficial & Pest Insects*, MGS-PHDEducator Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. 2018

First Graders Harvest at the Children's Garden

April 23, 2019





The Gonzales Elementary Orchard Update



Jan Fiebig has scheduled a workday for **Wednesday, May 22 starting at 9:00** am at the Gonzales Elementary Orchard (the area south of PACE). The remaining black walnut trees on the back deck need to be moved and drip irrigation completed. Please contact Jan if you can help out. Dwaine Siptak has done an outstanding job of keeping them watered. Thank you Dwaine.

TXMG 41st Conference: Victoria

Carolyn Parratt, Barbara Scott and Laura Boatman attended the TXMG 41st State conference in Victoria, Texas on April 26-27. Carolyn reported that “it was a very nice conference. The guest speakers were informative, funny, or serious according to the topic of their talk. Topics included Texas Style Gardening, Heirloom Bulbs, Succulents, Landscaping with Native Plants and Edible Wild Foods. Serious talks included the recovery of Bastrop State Park Complex after the 2011 fire and the current studies of Rose Rosette Disease. Lastly, the publisher of *Texas Gardener Magazine* spoke with much enthusiasm and support for Texas Master Gardeners.”

Laura gave us some information about a new logo for Texas Master Gardeners. More detailed information is on the website at www.TXMG.org. We will have two years to implement the changes where the current logo is in use (letterheads, signs, websites, etc.)



Presentation at the conference highlighting MG's working in their communities.

June Summer Social



Our annual Summer Social will be on **Thursday, June 6, 2019**. Lunch will be served at noon. Bring your spouse; come early or stay late to visit. Also bring door prizes. The meat will be provided by Baker Boys Bar B Q. Please bring sides and desserts to share with everyone.

Area Events

Saturday, May 25 – 9am to 5pm. 22nd Annual San Antonio Festival of Flowers. Austin Highway Event Center, 1948 Austin Hwy, SA. 210-380-3532. Find more information about this year's Festival of Flowers on the website at SAFestivalofFlowers.com, or call (210) 380-3532. The event is a "Day of Gardening Know-How" with seminars, exhibits, displays and a variety of vendors selling plants, landscaping products, garden art, artisan foods and more. Ask an expert at any booth about roses, daylilies, native plants, organic products, floral design and more.

Check out www.txmg.org for events around the state

New Braunfels area: <http://txmg.org/comal/events>

Austin Area: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/>

San Antonio, Texas- <http://www.bexarcountymastergardeners.org>

Recipes we Like

(Submitted by Fran Saliger)

Cherry Cheesecake Lush Dessert

Servings 12

Ingredients

- 1 c. vanilla wafer crumbs
- 1 c. finely chopped pecans
- 1 stick butter melted
- 8 oz. cream cheese softened
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 16 oz. whipped topping divided
- 2 small boxes cheesecake flavored pudding
- 3 c. milk
- 1 can Lucky Leaf Cherry Pie Filling
- 1/2 c. chopped pecans

Instructions

1. In a medium mixing bowl, combine vanilla wafer crumbs, finely chopped pecans, and melted butter.
2. Press into a 9x13 inch baking pan; bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and cool.
3. In a separate mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, powdered sugar, and 1 1/2 c. whipped topping.
4. Mix until smooth; spread evenly over cooled crust.
5. Combine cheesecake pudding mix, milk, and 1 c. whipped topping and mix until smooth.
6. Spread evenly over cream cheese layer in pan.
7. Top with 1 can Lucky Leaf Cherry Pie Filling, remaining whipped topping, and 1/2 c. chopped pecans.

NOTE: I use 2 cans of cherry pie filling.



**CHERRY CHEESECAKE
...LUSH...**



WEBSITE INFORMATION

If you schedule an event, inform Jo Swiger, website administrator, so that she can add it to the calendar on the website. Keep up to date on events by checking the website regularly.

www.gonzalesmastergardeners.org

DATES TO REMEMBER: (Check elsewhere in newsletter for details)

**Unless otherwise noted, all meetings/classes are at
623 N. Fair Street (Plantatarium: A Center for Exploration-aka PACE)**

12 	13 Workday at GH/PACE 9:00 am	14 MG Class Graduation	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Walnut Tree Workday 9:00 am	23	24	25
26	27 	28	29	30 Board Mtg	31 Volunteer hours due	JUNE 1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Board Mtg	28	29
30 Volunteer hours due	JULY 1	2	3	4 	5	6



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