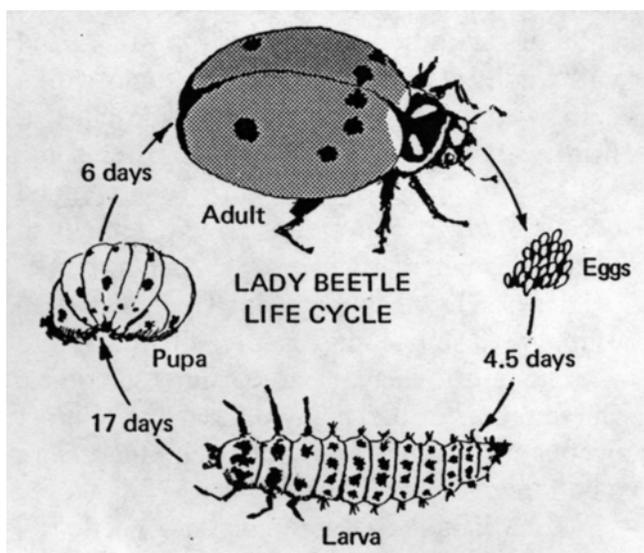


## Lady Beetles

By Arthur L. Antonelli, Extension Entomologist  
WSU Puyallup

Lady beetles are common to most everyone with their usually orange-red to yellow wing covers with black and sometimes white markings. One common species in Washington is *Hippodamia convergens*. It is easy to recognize by two small white converging marks on the black thorax just behind the head. Washington has several species of lady beetles, or lady-bird beetles. Adults average about 1/4 inch.



### Life Cycle

The eggs are yellowish orange and spindle-shaped. They are deposited in compact clusters of foliage or ground litter. Averages indicate that the female will lay 50 to 300 eggs in her lifetime. The larvae of most species are blue-black and orange and are alligator-shaped. They do not have large, sickle-shaped mandibles (jaws) as do the larvae of the green lacewing. The average life cycle from egg to adult is about 28 days. They overwinter as adults.

### Beneficial Effects

Many lady beetle adults and larvae are predaceous on aphids. Some consume anywhere from 7 to 15 aphids a day or more. In one month, one could consume nearly 450 aphids. Lady beetles and their larvae are used in biological and integrated control programs to help keep a check on aphid populations. When used along with other predaceous insects, they effectively reduce aphid populations.



Fig. 1. An adult (bottom) and larval (top) lady beetle.  
By R.D. Akre.



Fig. 2. The twice-stabbed lady beetle.  
By A.L. Antonelli.