

# **LADYBUG FACTS FOR KIDS**

Have you ever seen a ladybug or kept one as a pet? I know I have! But if you haven't, that's okay too. I'm sure you've seen pictures of ladybugs or ladybug videos that have made you just as enticed to learn all about these amazing creatures. Ladybugs are incredible and not to mention super cute insects. They can be found in garden areas, the tropics, and really anywhere else in the world!

## **LADYBUGS SIZE AND SHAPE**

Ladybugs have short legs, long antennae, and a beautiful spotted body. Their spots are usually red or black and their bodies can be red, orange, or yellow although sometimes ladybugs can be blue. That's right! Have you ever heard of blue ladybugs? Blue and bright colored ladybugs often indicate that they are poisonous, so watch out!

Ladybugs can actually release a foul-smelling liquid from their bodies to scare away predators when they get too close. Can you think of any ladybug predators? Frogs, birds, and dragonflies are three of the more common predators although ladybugs can be threatened by almost any creature larger than them.

But, why? Who would want to hurt an adorable ladybug? Ladybugs are beneficial to us and the environment too since they eat tiny insects, such as aphids.

Aphids eat plants and are especially prevalent in gardens, so without ladybugs, we would see a lot more damaged plants.

## **WHAT ARE LADYBUGS?**

Ladybugs are small, round, and red with black spots on their wings. They are a type of beetle and there are about 5,000 different species of ladybugs in the world.

Some of the different kinds of ladybugs include the harlequin ladybug and seven-spot ladybugs.

## **WHERE CAN YOU FIND LADYBUGS?**

Did you know that ladybugs can be found anywhere in the world? They are most common in the tropics, but no matter where you are in the world keep an eye out and be sure to use these fun facts to help you identify them!

## **LADYBUG FACTS FOR KIDS – APPEARANCE**

The spots on ladybugs can also be of different colors. Some ladybugs have red spots and other ladybugs have black dots or spots. Some ladybug species even have stripes.

The three main body parts of ladybugs include the head, thorax, and abdomen. Ladybugs usually have a black head and a black abdomen.

The abdomen is the under body and the thorax is the colorful part of the ladybug that you see.

## **LADYBUG FACTS FOR KIDS – CHARACTERISTICS**

Ladybugs have compound eyes, meaning they can see in multiple directions at once! How cool is that?

An adult ladybug once it has grown to full size can range in length from 8 mm to 10 mm. Young ladybugs can be as small as 1 mm long. That is probably too tiny for you to even see!

Ladybugs have hidden wings underneath their colorful bodies. This allows them to fly, but did you know ladybugs can swim too?

Ladybugs can stay afloat in water and will often use their six legs to swim about.

## **WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE LADYBUGS?**

The most common ladybug in North America is the Two-Spotted Ladybug. In Europe, the most common ladybug is the seven-spotted ladybug, which is also known as *Coccinellidae Septempunctata*. Try saying that three times fast!

## **LADYBUG FACTS FOR KIDS – DIET**

Ladybugs eat spider mites, white flies, fruit flies, and other tiny insects, such as aphids. Aphid populations are plant and garden pests. They live in aphid colonies and damage plants. No one wants that! Thanks to ladybugs, who eat these small insects, our gardens can remain healthy.

## **POTENTIAL PREDATORS OF LADYBUGS**

Some predators of ladybugs include frogs, birds, humans, and dragonflies.

When ladybugs feel threatened they release a foul-smelling liquid from their bodies to scare away enemies. Ew!

## **MORE INTERESTING LADYBUG FACTS FOR KIDS**

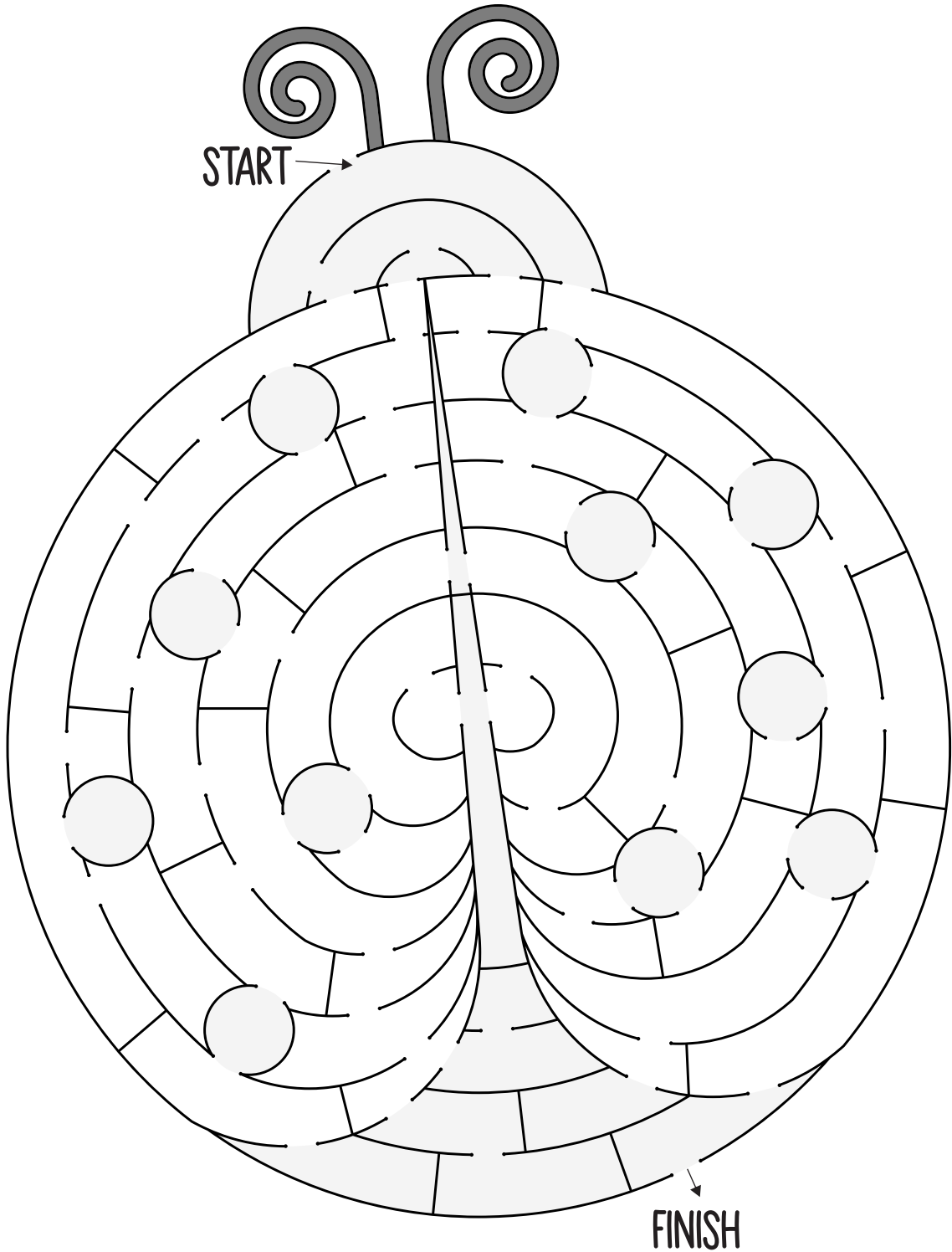
Ladybugs hibernate in the winter. They find a warm place to sleep, like in the cracks of a building or under leaves on the ground. Do you know any other animals that hibernate?

Ladybugs are one of the few insects that can be kept as pets. Some people keep ladybugs in jars or terrariums in their homes. Have you ever kept a ladybug as a pet?

## **LADYBUGS AS HELPFUL CREATURES**

Ladybugs are very helpful creatures! They play an important role in keeping gardens healthy by eating aphids and other plant pests. Ladybugs also have a pretty cool defense mechanism – they can release a bad smell from their bodies to scare away enemies. And if that wasn't cool enough, ladybugs can fly and swim – pretty impressive for such a small creature! So next time you see a ladybug, be sure to give her a little appreciation for all she does.

# LADYBUG MAZE



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