

Beetles Abound in Winter

Nestled beneath leaves, gathered on signs, and clinging to fence posts, lady beetles cluster here by the thousands each winter. Commonly known as ladybugs, these insects are actually beetles. They feed on aphids during spring and summer. In fall, they catch prevailing winds and are carried aloft until they arrive at ancestral hibernation grounds.

Here in Redwood, they wait out the winter, often along the creeks. They are likely attracted to the area by chemicals in the air, or from pheromones, or scent markers, left behind in their footprints. Spring brings warmer weather and longer daylight hours. The beetles then become more active, moving about and mating before they disperse.



By Janet Norris, c.2017

Look for these clusters of lady beetles, called winter aggregations, November through February. No collecting is allowed in the East Bay Regional Park District.



By Connie, c.2014

The gardener's friend, these beneficial beetles primarily eat aphids. When food is scarce they will also eat pollen. For a healthy habitat, please keep your garden



By Debbie Gray, c.2016

Eggs are laid on the underside of leaves, near large populations of aphids, so the young will have something to eat when they hatch.



By Ken Kenner, c.2016

Looking like tiny alligators, lady beetle larvae will molt four times before becoming adults.

