

Ladybirds



Ladybirds are a kind of beetle. They have a hard shell which they can open up to let out their wings. Ladybirds' shells are normally red or orange with black spots. They have four wings altogether. Their bodies are quite big compared to their wings so they have to beat them very quickly to fly. In fact, they beat their wings over 85 times a second. That is faster than a hummingbird!

How Do Ladybirds Defend Themselves?

Ladybirds have a couple of tricks to keep them safe from predators. A predator is an animal that eats other animals. First of all, their bright colours let other animals know that they are not tasty and not worth eating. Other animals use bright colours to protect themselves such as bees, snakes and poison dart frogs. Ladybirds are also able to do something pretty amazing. They can bleed from their knees. This liquid smells horrible and is poisonous to any animals that eat it.

Did You Know?

Most people believe that you can tell a ladybird's age by how many spots it has. This isn't true. The number of spots actually tells you what kind of ladybird it is.

Top Ladybird Facts

- Ladybirds don't smell with their noses but with their feet.
- Their jaws don't chew up and down but side to side.
- When ladybirds get older, their spots and their colours start to fade.

Just as ladybirds are like bees and use colour to protect themselves, they are also like other animals too. When the weather starts to get cold, ladybirds find places to keep warm, like in old bark and leaves, and even inside people's houses. They also gather together in groups to keep warm. This means they hibernate, like bears, sleeping, waiting for the warm weather to come.

A Final Fact

In many countries around the world, it is believed to be bad luck to kill a ladybird so be careful where you are walking!

Questions About Ladybirds

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. How many wings does a ladybird have?

2. How quickly do ladybirds beat their wings?

3. What is a predator?

4. Name another animal that uses bright colours to defend itself.

5. What do ladybirds use to smell with?

6. What do ladybirds do when the weather gets cold?

7. Why do people believe you shouldn't kill ladybirds?

8. What is your favourite fact about ladybirds?

Questions About Ladybirds

Answers

1. How many wings does a ladybird have?

A ladybird has four wings.

2. How quickly do ladybirds beat their wings?

Ladybirds beat their wings 85 times each second.

3. What is a predator?

A predator is an animal who eats other animals.

4. Name another animal that uses bright colours to defend itself.

Children to select another animal from the text, bees, snakes, dart frogs.

5. What do ladybirds use to smell with?

Ladybirds smell with their feet.

6. What do ladybirds do when the weather gets cold?

Ladybirds find somewhere warm when the weather gets cold.

7. Why do people believe you shouldn't kill ladybirds?

People believe that killing ladybirds is bad luck.

8. What is your favourite fact about ladybirds?

Children to select a fact from the text.