# Surrey Docks Farm Natural History Survey March – June 2012

Four species of ladybird were identified during this survey, with Harlequins and their larvae being particularly numerous, 2-spots and 7-spots fairly common, and the occasional 14-spot found. The full life cycle of ladybirds can be observed at the farm, as also shown on the following pages.

# 2-SPOT LADYBIRD

Adalia 2-punctata

Several found on Elder in orchard in May (feeding on aphids) and elsewhere; second photo is on Black Horehound in June.

This species is easy to identify because of its small size and its typical form of 2 black spots on a red background, however it does have many other colour variations.



### 7-SPOT LADYBIRD

Coccinella 7-punctata

Found regularly, in particular around the 'Have a Go Horticulture' plant plots on the paddock edge. Several larvae also seen.





**14-SPOT LADYBIRD** *Propylea* **14**-*punctata* 

2 specimens of the variety with black spots on orange background found in riverside gardens in June. The second example, of the reverse colour pattern which is less common, was found in the Young Farmers' vegetable plot by the main gate, also in June.



This is a fairly small species, recognisable by its rectangular spots, which often merge together.

#### HARLEQUIN LADYBIRD

Harmonia axyridis

Found throughout farm, both adults and larvae, on a great variety of plants.

This is the invasive species of Asian ladybird, which is considered a threat to our native ladybirds.

It has over 100 different colour and pattern variations, so is mainly identifiable by its larger size and a number of typical colour and spot patterns, such as these illustrated.

Mating pairs photographed in mid-May.







## LADYBIRD LIFECYCLE:

Eggs on sycamore by forge:

- First photo taken on 31.03.12
- Second photo on 21.04.12, showing first larva just hatched!

(The white thing to the left is an empty aphid skin – giving an idea of the tiny scale – the larva is not visible to the naked eye except as a dark mark!)





One of many batches of eggs laid on the Elder in the orchard, ready to feast on the infestation of Elder Aphids once hatched. (Photographed on 14.04.12)

Note: the eggs are the orange things on the underside of the leaf – the grey mass on the stem is the aphids!



Newly-emerged larvae on Calendula leaves in planter along river path, seen in mid-June.

The white stuff is the remains of their egg cases.

(Species unidentified, but likely to be Harlequins, judging by their shape and spiny-ness)



Larva of a Harlequin Ladybird, eating aphids in Feverfew flowers; seen mid-June.



This one, inside a Dyers Camomile flower in the Dye Garden, is probably also a Harlequin Ladybird larva, but in a less developed form, without its full complement of orange spines as above.



Larva of a 7-spot Ladybird, seen on Elder in early June:



#### Pupae:

These examples were seen on the Gooseberry bush alongside the turkey enclosure; many more were seen in June on leaves, fence posts, tree trunks etc.

(Species unidentified, but due to their size are fairly likely to be Harlequins).



Ladybird newly-emerged from pupa – its wing cases are pearly yellow when it emerges (the colouring and spots develop over the following hours and days), and it spreads out its wings full-length to dry before ready to move away.

Judging by its small size, and presence on the Elder where adult 2-spots had been found, this is likely to be a 2-spot ladybird.

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