

## Activity 2.8 Ladybug Release: Pests and Guests

**Overview:** In this lesson, students will learn about the role bugs play in the garden and in the wild. Students will learn and share facts about common garden bugs. In the activity, students will be responsible for releasing hundreds, even thousands of ladybugs.

### Lesson Background:

Ladybugs play an important role in the health of our gardens and wildlife. Farmers and gardeners use ladybugs in gardens and greenhouses to control aphid populations, but they can also eat mealybugs, whiteflies, scale and mites.

- Ladybugs can eat up to 2000 aphids in a lifetime (about a year).
- Ladybugs have many protective traits to warn off potential predators such as a hard shell, bright colors, a stinky smell and they can even play dead.
- They chew their food from side to side.
- For a list of more cool ladybug facts visit <http://everything-ladybug.com/ladybug-facts.html>

### Grade Levels:

Kindergarten – 2 (but can go beyond)

### Core Subjects: Science

### Materials:

Ladybugs  
Ladybug Poems  
Ladybug Facts  
Water for Lady Bug Release  
Magnify Glass  
Optional:  
Aphids to demonstrate  
Green Lacewing Larvae  
Praying Mantis

### Instructions:

1. Discuss the possible bugs we have in our gardens: grasshoppers, ladybugs (ladybeetles), pillbugs (sowbugs).
2. Divide the class into 2 groups: one group to read [ladybug facts](#) and one smaller group to read or share [ladybug poems](#).
3. Hand out a ladybug fact to each student or pass around a fact sheet, so each student can share one fact. Have the students read the facts out loud to the group.
4. Assign a poem to the other students and let them play the role of different ladybugs. 5-7 students can read the poem.

### Releasing the Ladybugs:

1. After following the instructions received with your ladybug order, bring the ladybugs out of the fridge to begin to wake them up.
2. In advance, either water the area of the garden (overhead or hand water) where the bugs will be released. Students can also be given squirt bottles with water to spray where the bugs land or where they will be released.

3. Share safety instructions with the kids such as: watching wear you step once the bugs are released, gently release the ladybugs, don't shake in the air.
4. Next collect and release the bugs. Students can put one arm into the ladybug bag and let the bugs crawl up their arm. Next students can move to a plant in the garden and gently move the bugs onto the plants.

Poem:

***Five Little Ladybugs***

*Five little ladybugs climbing on some plants,*

*Eating the aphids, but not the ants.*

*The first one said, "Save some aphids for me."*

*The second one said, "They're as tasty as can be."*

*The third one said, "Oh they're almost gone."*

*The fourth one said, "Then we'd better move on."*

*The fifth one said, "Come on, let's fly!"*

*So they opened up their wings and they flew through the sky.*