



A29 Ladybird house



Most ladybirds and their young (larvae) are carnivorous, feeding on and helping to control large numbers of insect pests, particularly aphids. Follow the instructions on the next page to make a house that will protect them from the cold, rain and wind of the winter months, ready to help you out in the garden come the spring.

Resources

- Plastic containers with lids (the sort that summer fruit comes in)
- Straw
- Straws/narrow tubes
- Scissors

Activity

- 1 Follow the instructions on the next page, adapting to the materials available.
- 2 Discuss the importance of providing habitats for ladybirds and how they help organic gardeners.

Extended activity

- 1 Research the life cycle of a ladybird and preferred natural habitats at each stage. Make posters and present your findings to the school, parents and members of the community at your garden events (see A2).
- 2 What other beneficial insects are important to organic gardeners?
- 3 Monitor the use of the ladybird house. Did you locate it correctly? What areas attracted most ladybirds?

Top tip



Helping hand

Insects, like many creatures, need shelter and protection in the colder winter months.

A pile of logs, long grass and a hibernation house will ensure a greater survival rate for ladybirds and other native residents.



Health & Safety

When using scissors younger children will require adult help.

See also Health and Safety Guidelines (Section B3.3)

Further information

- A2 Organising a gardening day
- A28 Friend and foe game
- A30 Apple bird feeder
- A31 Lacewing hotel
- B5.11 Attracting wildlife
- B5.10 Controlling pests and diseases

Instructions for building a ladybird house

- 1 Check that there are small holes in the bottom and top of the plastic container. If not, use sharp scissors to make a hole to put a straw in at the later stages.

Take a small handful of straw and put it in the deeper part of the container.



- 2 Add more straw so that it will be warm and cosy but not so much that you cannot close the lid.



- 3 Put the lid on and press firmly together to secure a tight fit.

Now push the straws through the holes in the lid to the bottom of the container. Depending on the depth of the container, the straws may need cutting so about 3-4cm is sticking out from the lid.



- 4 Find a shrub in your garden and put the container at the bottom. Turn the container on its side to allow insects to crawl in through the hollow straws/tubes.

Hopefully a number of creatures will keep safe and survive until warmer days arrive.

