

Beneficial Predators

Encourage these natural enemies by avoiding pesticides that kill them; choosing plants that provide them pollen, nectar, and shelter; and keeping ants out of pest-infested plants. Common predators that eat garden pests are pictured below with bars showing their length.



Convergent lady beetle adults and most reddish lady beetle species prefer aphids.



Convergent lady beetle larvae prefer aphids but sometimes eat whiteflies and other soft-bodied insects.



Lady beetle eggs are oblong, widest in their middle, usually yellowish or orange, and can be laid in groups or individually.



Syrphid fly larvae eat mostly aphids but also soft-bodied mealybugs, psyllids, and whiteflies.



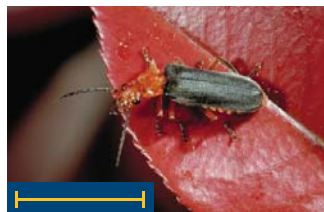
Green lacewing adults eat nectar and pollen. Some species also eat insects.



Green lacewing larvae feed on mites, eggs, and small insects, especially aphids.



Green lacewing eggs are laid on slender stalks in groups (as shown here) or individually, depending on the species.



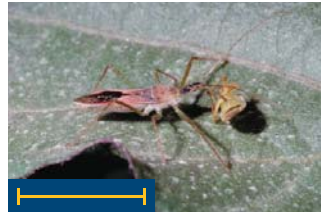
Soldier beetle adults eat mostly aphids. Their soil-dwelling larvae eat beetle and moth eggs and larvae.



Predaceous ground beetle adults stalk soil-dwelling insects, such as cutworms and root maggots.



Predaceous ground beetle larvae live on soil and in litter, feeding on almost any invertebrate.



Assassin bugs attack almost any insect.



Pirate bugs attack mites and any tiny insect, especially thrips.



Western predatory mites attack pest mites.



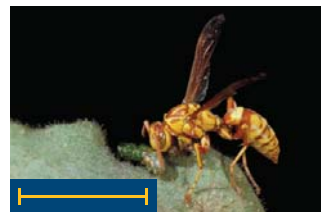
Sixspotted thrips attack mostly mites.



Spiders, including this crab spider, attack all types of insects.



Praying mantids don't control pests, because they eat both beneficials and pests.



Adults of predatory wasps, such as this paper wasp, prey on caterpillars and other insects.



Syrphid fly (flower fly, hover fly) adults eat pollen and nectar and resemble honey bees and wasps.

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Pesticides affect natural enemies, rivers, and oceans!