

## NATURE STUDY OF ANIMALS.

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The Ladybird Beetle is an insect that winters in the adult form. It is about a quarter of an inch long, almost hemispherical in form, with the elytra or outer shell-wings usually reddish in color and marked with two or more well defined black spots, the number varying with the species.



Fig. 1. The Nine-spotted Ladybird Beetle—adult and larva.

These little insects have a wonderful history and are among out foremost insect friends. All during the summer, both as larvae and as adults they devour great numbers of aphids, plant lice, and in this way help in no small degree to make the life of plants, and consequently that of animals also, possible upon the earth. These insects are, moreover, friendly little fellows and if the chance offers will gladly spend the winter in crevices about our dwellings; and, like all true friends, prefer the inside of the house. The writer has shared his study with them for the last three or four years, and he assures the reader that they are never in the way, for their chief resorts are around window and door casings, and back of pictures, etc.

It is pleasant to have them visit you on cold winter evenings. When the room grows warm and the fire in the grate is glowing its best, a sharp snap on the open book before you brings you face to face with biology. You look eagerly at the wonderful little "bug." There he is, there is no mistaking him, just a plain friendly Ladybird Beetle but with such a queer look, for the under flying wings are stretched out behind in a manner one seldom sees. He starts off at a gentle trot across the page, but after three or four steps with a quick jerk of the outer wings he tucks the flying ones in out of sight, never slowing his pace in the least, and looks quite himself again. You watch him for a minute, he

reaches the edge of the paper, and turns first to the right and then to the left—his path seems blocked—and with a flash he spreads his wings and is away again.

## WARMTH OF FRIENDSHIP.

The visit lasted only a moment but it brought to your heart the warmth of friendship, and as you think over the life history of this little creature and settle back to your book again you have a comfortable feeling of partnership with him—you are co-workers together to make this world a better place to live in. And as you ponder over the "why" of his visit you stumble on many lessons. "He was not sleeping at all," you say to yourself, "only waiting for the warmth of spring and the joy of active life; he seems to feel he has an active part to play in the great world of work and that he must be at it at once. The great biological principle of activity possesses that little insect as it should possess the highest of all living creatures—man." But enough, that tiny creature has already done a day's work—life's tasks are lighter.

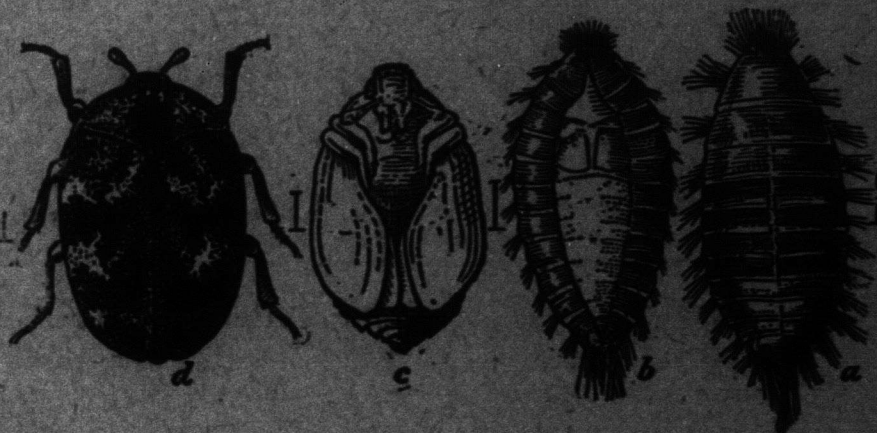


Fig. 2 The Carpet Beetle or Buffalo "Bug." a, larva; b, pupa in larva skin; c, pupa from below; d, adult.

Think what you would have missed if you had mistaken this little beetle for one of about the same size and shape but of a somewhat different marking, the adult of the Buffalo "Bug" or Carpet-Beetle, and crushed him without noting any distinction. A beetle is a "bug," and all bugs are alike to many people. It takes but little time to distinguish the friend from the foe, and we more than owe the beneficial ones the effort. We make no plea for the Carpet-Beetle because he is so well connected and of such comely form; he is destructive, and in our way of looking at things is ever regarded as an outlaw, and should be taken at sight, dead or alive.