

# MAGIC MAILBOX

**Ever wonder if all ladybugs are red and have spots?** Ladybugs are most often red with black spots, but some are yellow with black spots, and some are black with red spots. The number of spots a ladybug has depends on its species. (There are more than 3000 species of ladybugs!) Some ladybugs have as many as 20 spots while others have no spots at all. It is not true, however, that the number of spots on a ladybug can tell you how old it is. **Ever wonder how we know a ladybug is a beetle?** A beetle has a strong, hard “shell” on its back to protect its wings and body. When a beetle flies, this protective shell splits apart and reveals the wings underneath. Like all insects, beetles also have an exoskeleton, but theirs is especially strong. **Ever wonder how ladybugs are born?** Ladybugs come from eggs. When the eggs hatch, larvae emerge. These larvae then go through a change (“metamorphosis”) into pupae and eventually into adult ladybugs. **Ever wonder how lady bugs help us?** Ladybugs live in many places, including forests, fields, gardens – even your house! They help us by eating bugs, like aphids, mealybugs and mites, that hurt our plants and bother us.

Postcard Picture: Print this page, cut out the picture and tape it to your little scientist’s postcard.

