

## Quiz from our Master Gardener Insect and Pest Team

Which one of these bugs would you not want to include in your Integrated Pest Management program?

A.



B.



C.



### A. Lady beetle adult.

In North America these insects of the family Coccinellidae are commonly referred to as ladybugs, but in other areas of the world they are commonly called ladybird beetles. Entomologists in the United States widely prefer the names **ladybird beetles** or **lady beetles** as these insects are not true bugs. True bugs belong to the order *Hemiptera*, which is a large group of insects with specialized sucking mouthparts. There are at least 6000 species of Coccinellids found worldwide, most of which are beneficial in that they feed on aphids and scales that are damaging to plants.

### B. Harlequin Bug (*Murgantia histrionica*)

**If you picked this Harlequin bug (a true bug), you are correct!**

This bug is one insect that is not suitable for use in an integrated pest management program as it has sucking mouth parts that damage plants. Harlequin bugs are attractive shield-shaped insects in the stink bug family and are black with bright red, yellow, or orange markings. Adult bugs are 3/8 inch long. Harlequin bugs suck fluids from plant tissue. They leave yellow or white blotches on areas of leaves where they have been feeding; heavy infestations can cause plants to wilt, turn brown, and die. Harlequin bugs lay drum-shaped eggs with circular "lids" in clusters on leaves. The nymphs are nearly round and often brightly colored, passing through four or five molts, before developing wings and adult coloration. Adults overwinter on the

ground under leaves and become active in March or April.

Source:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/VEGES/PESTS/harlequinbug.html>

C. Ash lady beetle (*Olla v-nigrum*)

The Ash lady beetle is in the Coccinellidae family, and is not as brightly colored as the common lady beetles. Most brightly colored insects taste bad to predators and if attacked automatically exude a toxin through their joints, making them unpalatable to predators. Larvae and adults feed primarily on aphids, but they will also feed on scales, insect eggs and other soft-bodied insects and mites. Adults occasionally feed on nectar, pollen and honeydew from aphids. With rare exception, lady beetles are beneficial insects that are ideal for an integrated pest management program for the home garden.



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