

Insect Fact Sheet

The Harlequin Ladybird



The Harlequin Ladybird first appeared in the UK in 2004 and has since spread at an incredible rate, so that it has now reached as far north as Scotland.

The Harlequin Ladybird is originally of Asian origin and was introduced into North America as a natural pest control in 1988, where it is now the most widespread ladybird. One of the early concerns of the Harlequin's arrival in the UK, was that our resident Ladybirds would be affected.

Having a bad reputation as a ladybird with a voracious diet, has seen the Harlequin have a great deal of adverse publicity, with campaigns encouraging its destruction.

Harlequin Ladybirds and their larvae, have a strong preference for foraging on both Lime and Sycamore, two trees especially common in street planting schemes. Numbers of both adults and larvae peak late in the Summer and early Autumn, when large groups can appear on walls and railings in towns and cities.

In urban locations, over-wintering often occurs in buildings and houses if there is access, but in the countryside, they pass the Winter under loose bark.

Whether the Harlequin does actually pose a real threat to our other ladybirds remains to be seen, but despite much controversy, this beetle of many known colour forms and number of spots, is certainly here to stay.

Life cycle stages

Eggs



Larva



Pupa

