

GOOD BUGS – BAD BUGS

Ladybird beetles, aka ladybugs, are beneficial garden insects that feed on aphids, mealy bugs, scale insects and spider mites. One ladybug can eat up to 2,400 aphids during its lifespan.



When you spot a hornworm or caterpillar with parasitic wasp cocoons attached to it, don't kill it! Allow it to eat unwanted tomatoes until the wasps hatch, and you'll have a free army of natural predators for your garden.



Beneficial insects are actually good to have in your vegetable garden. They help to manage bad bug populations by various methods. Some lay their eggs in caterpillars (see above where the tomato horn worm became the nursery for a wasp's offspring) or they feed on other bugs. Attract them with moisture and an alternate food source to tide them over when the bad bug population is low by planting different nectar producing flowers for carbohydrates and pollen producing flowers for protein, the more diverse the better. Provide a shelter for them from the elements and a place to overwinter. Plants to attract a variety of beneficial insects are any with umbels like dill, cilantro, carrots, yarrow, or Queen Ann's lace, plus bachelor's buttons, cosmos, marigolds, zinnias, nasturtiums, sweet alyssum, calendula, goldenrod, lavender, purple coneflower, butterfly weed, tansy, peonies and hyssop amongst others.

Information and photos taken and compiled from;

Dave Owens (the Garden Guy) book "Southwest Bug Guide"

Horticulture Magazine, Insect ID / Hobby Farms magazine

Gardens Alive catalogs

The most common good bugs are:

Centipedes: feeds on insects, larvae, mites in soil

Lady beetles: feeds on small soft-bodied insects such as aphids and mites, the larvae also insect eggs

Praying mantids: any species of insects, including their own

Lacewings: eat mites, aphids, thrips, and soft scales.

Parasitic wasps: lay eggs on caterpillars, beetles, flies and aphids.

Spiders (not a bug but beneficial): they eat roughly 2000 insects per year

Ground beetles: feed on slugs & snails, cabbage root maggots and other pests while in a ground-dwelling stage

Trachinid flies: lay eggs on larvae or on leaves that caterpillars, cabbage loopers and squash bugs eat, causing them to digest the eggs. The maggots kill the host from within.

Predaceous stinkbugs: feed on more than 100 kinds of insects (they have what looks like shoulder behind their heads, other stinkbugs are pests)



Centipede



Ladybug



Praying Mantid



Paper Wasp



Braconid Wasp



Lacewing



Black Widow Spider



Brown Recluse Spider



Cellar Spider



Ground Beetle



Tachinid Fly



Predaceous Stink Bug



Big-Eyed Bug



Black Dump Fly



Bumble Bee



Brochymena



Carpenter Ant



Carpenter Bee



Cicada Killer Wasp



Cottonwood Borer



Crane Fly



Daddy Longlegs



Damsel Bug



Doodle Bug



Dragonfly



Dung Beetle



Earwig



Fly Parasite



Harvester Ant



Honey Bee



Hover Fly



Ichneumon Wasp



Longlegged Fly



Mealybug Destroyer



Millipede



Minute Pirate Bug



Mud Dauber



Pillbug



Potter Wasp



Predatory Mite



Rhinoceros Beetle



Robber Fly



Rove Beetle



Soldier Beetle



Soldier Fly



Spined Soldier Bug



Tarantula



Tarantula Hawk



Tiger Beetle



Trichogramma Wasp



Velvet Mite



Wheel Bug



Whitefly Parasite



Wolf Spider



Yellowjacket