

Ladybug Facts



Coccinellidae septempunctata, popularly known as ladybugs or lady beetles, are colorful small beetles usually with black spots on their elytron (wing covers).

Etymology and Appearance

- ★ Ladybugs, also known as ladybird beetles or lady beetles, are part of the Coccinellidae family. The term *coccinellids* comes from the Latin word *coccineus* meaning "scarlet".
- ★ The origins of the name "ladybug" trace back to when European farmers would pray to Virgin Mary to prevent their crops from being destroyed by pests. Ladybugs then ate up the insects! They were called "Lady beetles" after Virgin Mary and have always been loved by farmers since.
- ★ They are commonly red or yellow with black spots, but there are also black and white ladybugs as well as orange and blue. The color of a ladybug fades with age. Their colored bodies serve as their protection from predators because it makes them look terrible to eat.

Ladybug Facts

- ★ Ladybugs can thrive in different habitats. They can live in suburban towns, forests, grasslands, and even in your house!
- ★ There are more than 5,000 species of ladybugs. The most popular is the seven-spotted black-and-red ladybug found in North America.
- ★ Some species have spots, stripes, or just be plain. Orange and blue ladybugs are more exotic.
- ★ Ladybugs smell with their antennae and feet.
- ★ The main predators of ladybugs are birds, frogs, wasps, dragonflies, and spiders.
- ★ Ladybugs eat aphids, white flies, scale insects, and spider mites. Farmers and gardeners love ladybugs because they eat pests - a lot of it! They can eat up to 50 aphids a day.



*Aphids are
plant-eating
pests*



- ★ Ladybugs also eat soft-bodied ladybugs in desperate times when there's no other food.
- ★ The ladybug life cycle is a quick one. It begins as an egg, then after four to ten days, it hatches into a larva. It becomes a pupae then an adult ladybug after seven to ten days. They can live up to two years.
- ★ As a defense mechanism, ladybugs will secrete oily foul-tasting fluid from their leg joints. This can be poisonous to some animals, but not to humans. Sometimes they play dead too.
- ★ Large populations of ladybugs hibernate during winter. They are more active when it's spring or fall.
- ★ In 1888, an Australian ladybug was imported in California for a pest control experiment. The experiment helped triple California's orange crop.

Ladybug Facts

- ★ The Asian ladybug (*Harmonia axyridis*), also known as harlequin ladybug, is the most common ladybug in North America. It is considered as a pest.
- ★ In the 1940s, the largest ladybug wash up on shore happened in Libya. Over 4.5 billion ladybugs were spread over 21 km of shoreline. The reason for ladybug wash ups is unknown but there are speculations that they either travel by water or get swept up by a windstorm.



Ladybug References in Pop Culture

- ★ In 1977, Eric Carle published a children's book entitled *The Grouchy Ladybug*. It's about an ill-mannered ladybug who thinks she's better than everybody. The story teaches about friendship, good manners, and different animals.
- ★ In 2017, a film entitled *Lady Bird* starring Saoirse Ronan and directed by Greta Gerwig released in U.S. cinemas. However, it is not said that the title was inspired by ladybugs.

Ladybug Facts

- ★ There is a Mother Goose rhyme written in the 18th century called “*Ladybird, ladybird*”.

"Ladybird, ladybird"

By Mother Goose

Ladybird, ladybird,
Fly away home,
Your house is on fire And your
children all gone; All except
one
And that's little Ann,
And she has crept under The
warming pan.

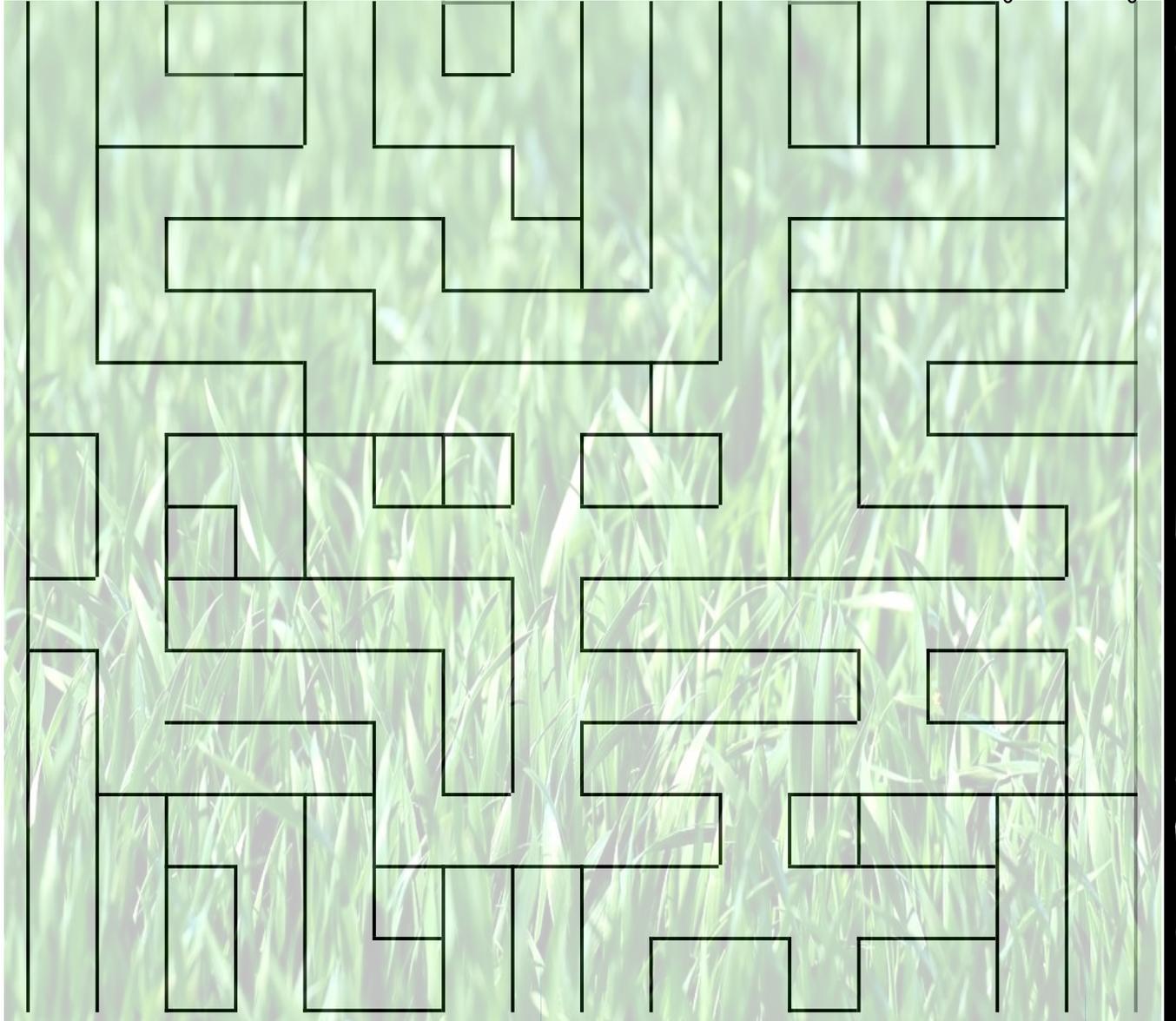
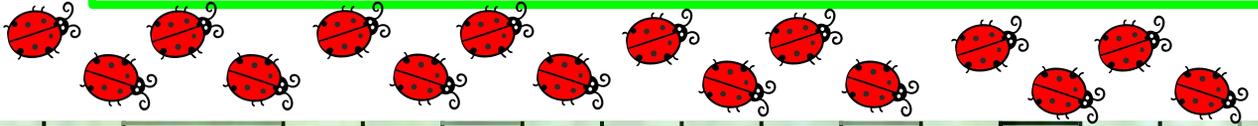
- ★ Former first Lady Claudia Johnson, former president Lyndon B. Johnson's wife, is better known by her nickname “Lady Bird” Johnson. She got this nickname as a kid when a nursemaid described her “*She's as purty as a ladybird.*”

Name: _____

Lost Ladybugs



Help the ladybugs get to the grassy field! Draw a line on the correct path from top to bottom.

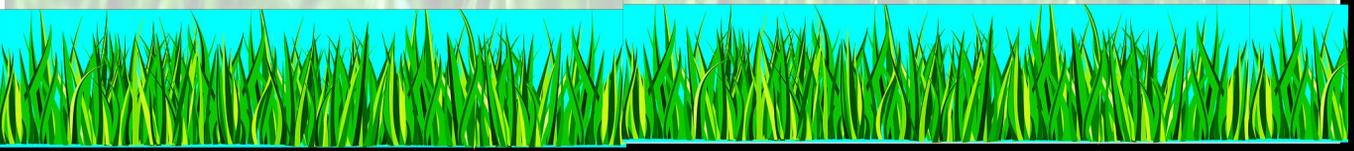
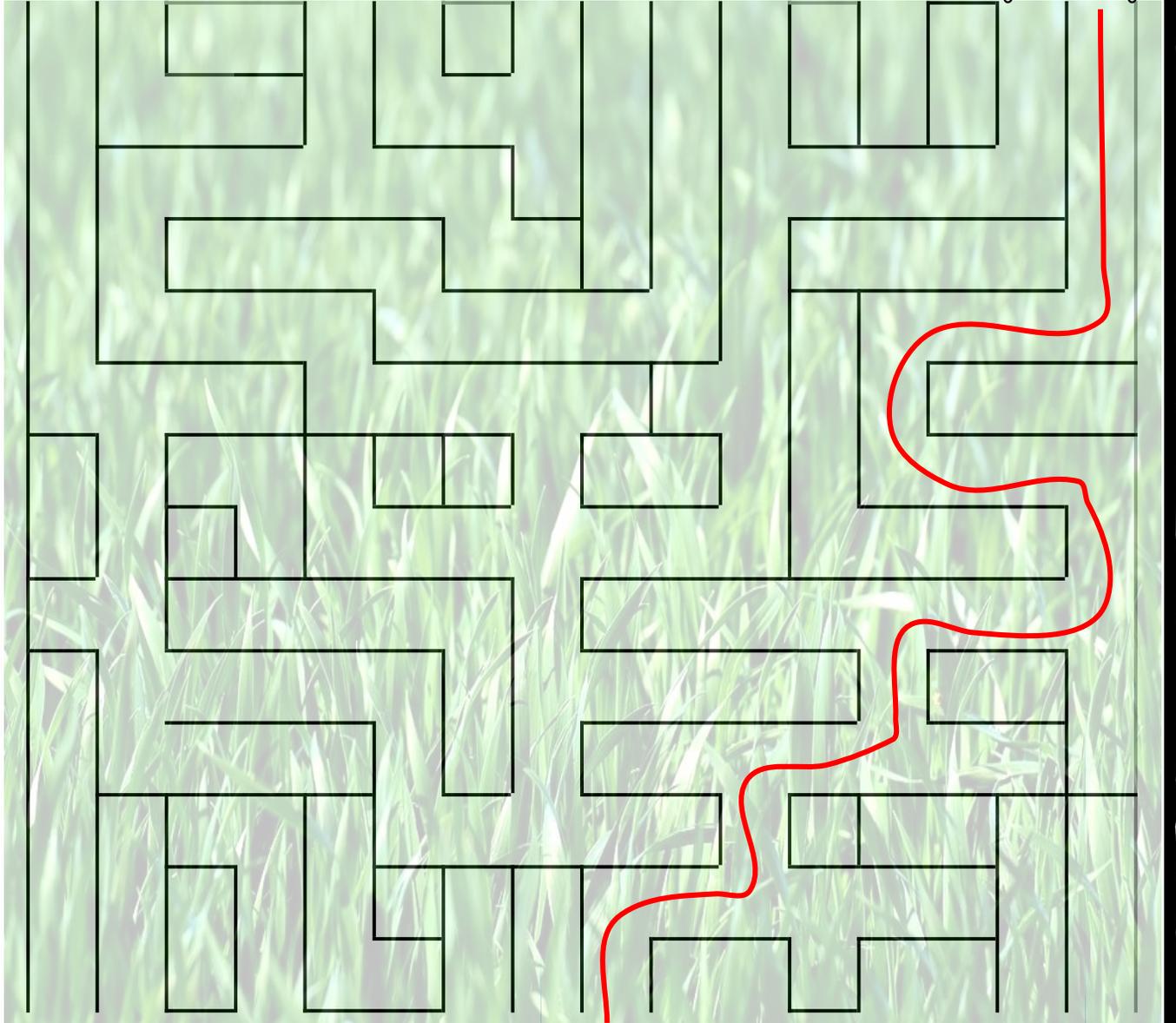
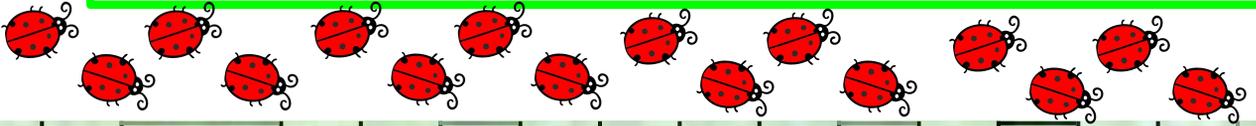


Name: _____

Lost ladybugs



ANSWER KEY



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