

Harlequin Ladybird Pupa-
Harmonia axyridis

Nature As It Happens



September 30, 2018, 1:03 PM



Sept. 30, 1:06:12pm

I came upon this 'beetle' in the garden the other day and took its portrait. Google identified it as a Harlequin Ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis*) in the last of its five larva stages. While finding this unfamiliar bug was interesting, it is the next event that caught my attention: it *pupated* - from larva to pupa. The full cycle is illustrated on page 12. (The flying version of this insect is known as both *Ladybird* and *Ladybug*.)



"Harlequin ladybird pupae are 'exposed', meaning that the entire larval skin is shed during pupation, rather than the ladybird pupating within it or only half shedding it. The cast-off larval skin remains attached to the rear of the pupa, at the point where the pupa attaches to a substrate while it develops (3) (5)" <https://www.arkive.org/harlequin-ladybird/harmonia-axyridis/image-G142411.html>

The end game in this cyclic process is the Ladybird/bug on the left - photographed about a foot from the pupa above. The full story is here: <https://www.aboutanimals.com/insect/harlequin-ladybird/#Description>

For the blow-by-blow account, continue on Page 3.



The process began as a small white blob oozing out of its topside. The shots of the initial stages were blurred, but with further maneuvering, I got some good photss.

(The leaf, byw, is a *Brunnera Mac.* 'Sea Heart'.)

Time: 1:17:06 PM

(The green line is the same size and position in each photo and provides a framework by which to judge the size of the emerging larva.)

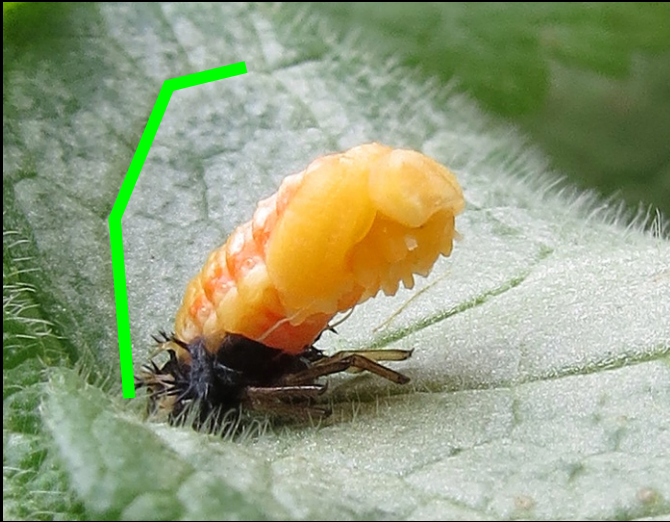


1:18:36 PM

In a brief spurt, the pupa's growth rate increased and began to slowly wobble up and down.



1:18:48 PM



1:18:52 PM



1:19:00 PM

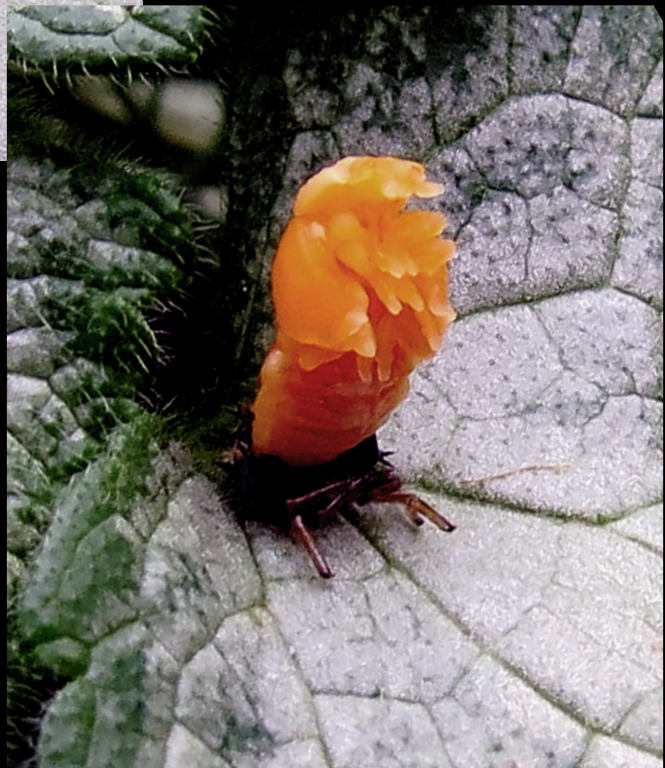


1:19:54 PM

1:20:26 PM
Down ...



1:23:18 PM
... down ...



1:26:28 PM
... up!



1:27:56 PM Down again ...



... up again 1:30:26 PM



2:04:48 PM



2:06:36 PM



2:07:30 PM



2:14:00 PM



2:55:46 PM



2:58:30 PM



3:06:02 PM



3:06:42 PM



3:16:32 PM



4:00:36 PM



6:00:58 PM

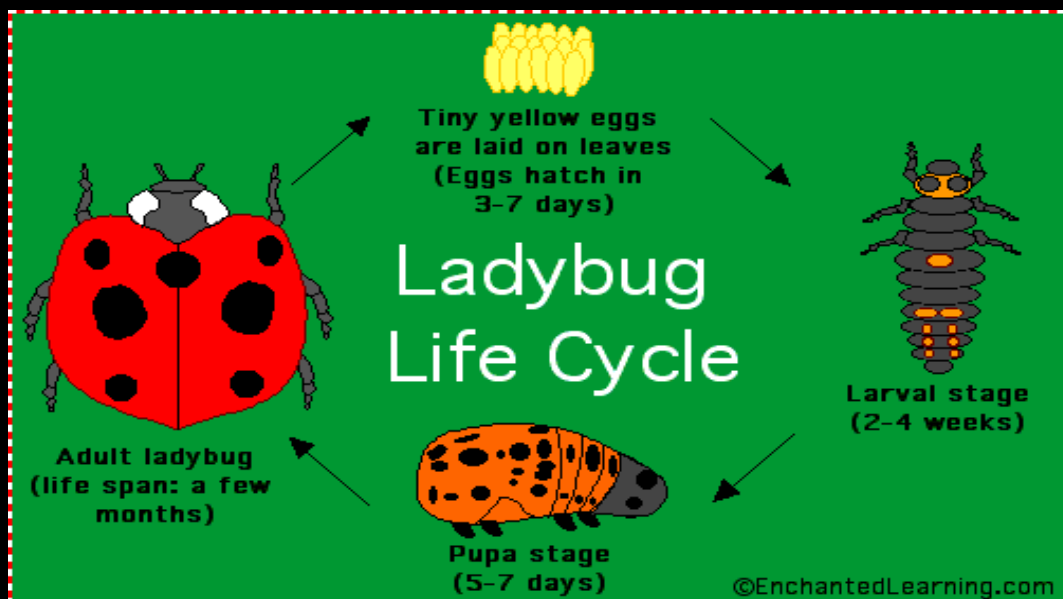


6:08:00 PM

As darkness fell, Jill came out with a lantern. While it was still there at 9:30 pm, by morning, the new pupa had set out in search of aphids. It has a voracious appetite consuming dozens of aphids per day.

Ladybug/bird life cycle:

1. During her life, she lays between 1,000 & 2,000 eggs.
2. Four to five days later, the eggs hatch into larvae.
3. A larvae takes ~21 days to develop, during which time, she sheds her skins four times.
4. Each pupal stage lasts about one week.



(http://www.greenville.k12.ny.us/elem/brady_s/ladybugs/lifecycle.htm)