

GROWING UP LADYBUG

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SPRING IS HERE. TIME TO GET UP!

Aa-aah! I simply have to stretch. After sleeping all winter long, I feel soooo stiff! Fortunately, spring is here. Why lie around and dream when you can jump out of bed? Hi, I'm Mariella, and we are all seven-spot ladybugs. I'm so excited for you to get to know us. Come on!

Zzzzzzzz...

Oh!
Is it time to
get up?



ABOUT LADYBUGS

As I was explaining, we ladybugs live all over the world, except perhaps in the polar regions. You probably know why we sleep in winter. After all, what would we do in the snow? We spend a lot of our time alone, but gather together to hibernate under stones, or in crevices. A bunch of us together is called a loveliness—how perfect is that?

Now take a good look at me.

head, eyes, feelers

Ladybug females are a little bigger than ladybug males.

seven spots on the elytra

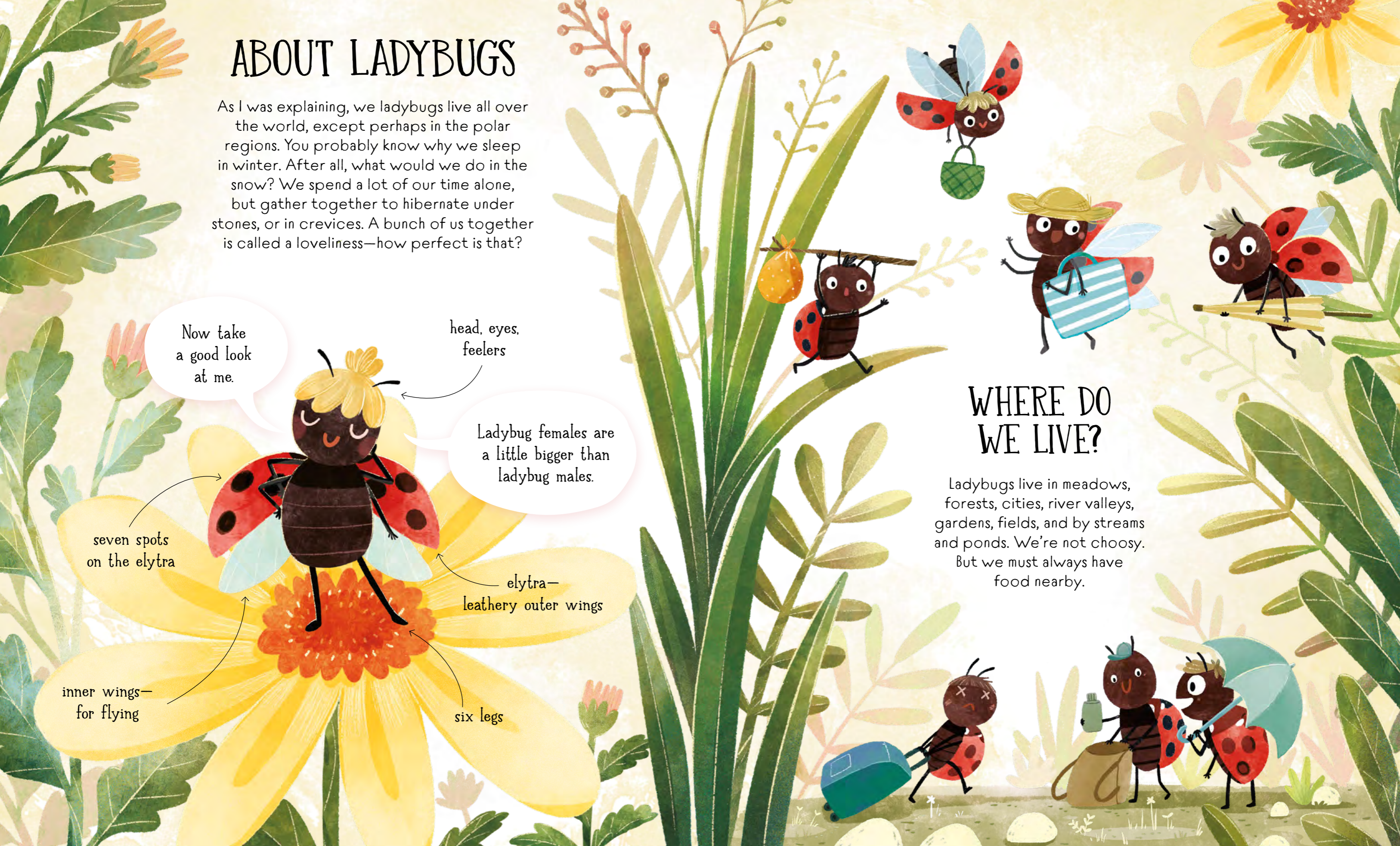
elytra—leathery outer wings

inner wings—for flying

six legs

WHERE DO WE LIVE?

ladybugs live in meadows, forests, cities, river valleys, gardens, fields, and by streams and ponds. We're not choosy. But we must always have food nearby.



SEVEN SPOTS OR MORE?

Did you know that there are lots of ladybugs in the world? People in the know put the number of species at 5,000. Not all have seven dots like me, of course. Just look at some of my cousins! Nothing like me, are they? But one thing is for sure—we all look very stylish!

EYED LADYBUG

I think big: I can have more than twenty spots. I live in coniferous trees. It can be hard to see me high up in the pine tree branches.

CREAM-SPOT LADYBUG

What's the big thing about black spots? I much prefer white ones.

MULTICOLORED ASIAN LADYBUG

There's nothing like variety! The more traditional among us have red elytra and black spots. The more daring favor black elytra and red spots. Both looks are great!



22-SPOT LADYBUG

Why is red so common when a bug feels better in yellow? My favorite food is all fungus that harms plants.

TWO-SPOTTED LADYBUG

Less is more, I tell myself. I choose simplicity. Two spots are enough for me. I'm just as useful as a ladybug with lots of spots.



TEN-SPOTTED LADYBUG

We may be called ten-spotted ladybugs, but the number of our spots varies. Some of us have fifteen, some none at all. You'll find us most often on our favorite yellow flowers.



LADYBUG COURTSHIP

It's spring, the sun is shining, the flowers are blooming and fragrant, and there are plenty of aphids for me to eat. What more could I wish for? Well, I'd like to have little ladybugs. I'm old enough. I've lived through one whole winter. It's time to find a mate.

I enjoyed talking to John.

Then John asked me to marry him.

It started with a flower.

The wedding came soon after.



HAPPY MOM

I'm a mom! The proud mom of lots of little ladybugs! Aren't they cute? I know they don't look much like me. In fact, you could compare them to dragons from a fairy tale. But believe it or not, I used to look like that, too. I really did!





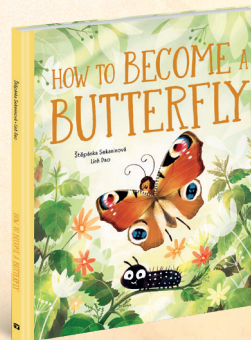
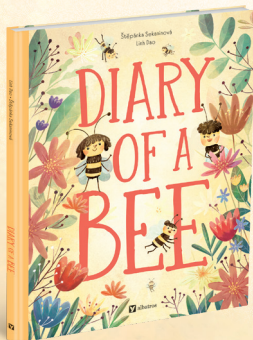
GOOD NIGHT!

Shhhhh! The new ladybugs, whose birth and growth you have witnessed, are getting ready for bed, shaking out blankets and turning off lights. They drop off to sleep one by one. Outside snow is falling. Spring seems far away. The little spotted beetles dream about the meadow, tasty aphids, the forest, fields, gardens in bloom, the big, wide world, and the sun's first warm rays. We will leave them to it. Good night, everyone!



Discover the fascinating world of ladybugs with Mariella, as your guide to their spotty lives. Did you know that these cute, little bugs are fierce and voracious hunters? Aphids, beware! Ladybugs can eat up to 50 aphids per day! Mariella will reveal ladybug secrets to avoid predators, introduce you to her family, and provide a close-up look at how tiny eggs and larvae that look like fairy-tale dragons turn into the ladybugs we know and love. With adorable, humor-filled illustrations, this book will answer all your questions about ladybugs and more. Hurry inside or they might fly away!

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