

Squash Ladybug feeds on members of the squash family and can be a pest.

In all, the project has identified 127 species of ladybugs. At this time the LLP is tracking primarily five ladybugs. Three are native: the 2-Spotted Ladybug (*Adalia bipunctata*), 10-Spotted ladybug (*Coleomegilla maculata*), and the 9-Spotted Ladybug (*Coccinella novemnotata*). Two species are non-native: the Multicolored Asian Ladybug (*Harmonia axyridus*) which was introduced to eat aphids on crops in California. The second introduced species is the 7-Spotted Ladybug (*Coccinella septumpunctata*). These two introduced species comprise the top two photo submissions.

Before the project began, a publication in 1984 by Gordon mapped the range historical ranges of many ladybug species. These maps were based on an extensive literature search. These maps are used as a reference point as to the status of ladybug species today. From information gathered by the LLP submitters, the 2-Spotted Ladybug is doing well out west, but not so well in the east. The 9-Spotted Ladybug, or C-9 for short, was once considered abundant throughout North America, but now comprises less than 0.01% of the LLP collections. Its current habitat seems to be high, dry elevations out west. In 1984 the 7-Spotted Ladybug was known from New York and the St. Lawrence River Valley. Today it is found all over the U.S. and comprises 14% of the submissions.

The story of the introduced species is somewhat the opposite of C-9. The status of the Multicolored Asian Ladybug (*Harmonia axyridus*) was not known in 1984. Originally multiple introductions of this beetle in California failed. Then an introduction in the east took hold and now this beetle is probably one of the most common ladybugs in the U.S. This ladybug makes up 28% of all the submissions. The Multicolored Asian Ladybug, while a voracious eater of soybean aphids, has become a pest throughout much of its range. These beetles are known to release an aggregating pheromone which causes congregations by the hundreds in houses and buildings for the winter and its presence can be a nuisance. In addition, this ladybug has a preference for landing on vertical surfaces. In Canada *Harmonia axyridus* is a severe pest of the wine industry. Because these ladybugs are attracted to vertical surfaces, they are aggregate in large

numbers in grape vineyards which provide a vertical landing site. As a defense mechanism they then reflex bleed, releasing a bitter fluid which then covers and taints the grapes.

Information on the Lost Ladybug Project can be accessed through their website <http://www.lostladybug.org>. The website offers information on how to photograph, how to collect and how to identify ladybugs. The website is easy to use and has many projects for children. The site also provides current map ranges of ladybug species determined from submissions to the LLP database, as well as the earlier 1984 Gordon range maps for comparison. Identification field guides are also available. The LLP has its own 2-page field guide of 10 species. Two posters, S. Dakota with 79 species and Maine with 59 species, are available in PDF format. The site also provides a direct link to the Discover Life ID Nature Guide on ladybugs. This site is a pictorial key developed for the Lost Ladybug Project.

Anyone can add to the LLP database by clicking on the “Participate” button. Photos can be submitted to the LLP website and has an easy data form to fill out with all the information you can provide. So WGNSS members get out your cameras and add another subject to your picture gallery.



Dainty, delicate, little fairies

*Ted C. MacRae*¹

Ever since I saw Chris Grinter’s [beautiful photographs](#), I have wanted to see (and possibly photograph) the tiny little moths known as fairy moths (family Adelidae, formerly considered a subfamily of Incurvariidae). These dainty, delicate, little moths are characterized by their unusually long antennae—especially the males, which can have their antennae up to three times the length of the forewings. This past April I got my wish as my father and I hiked the Shut-ins Trail at [Sam A. Baker State Park](#) in Missouri’s southeastern Ozark Highlands.

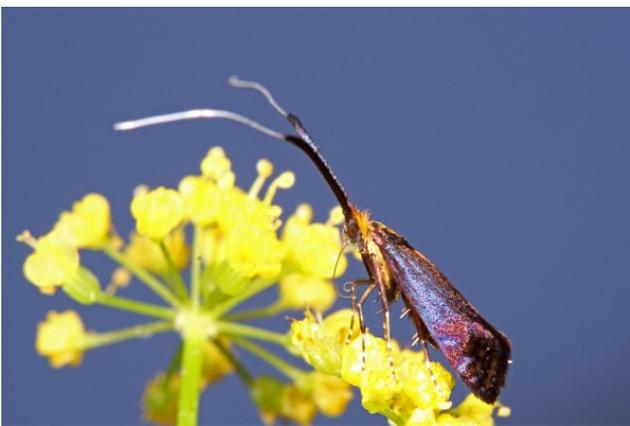
¹ Originally posted 9 December 2012 at *Beetles in the Bush* (<http://beetlesinthebush.wordpress.com>). All photos by the author.



Adela caeruleella, Wayne Co., Missouri.



Females have the antennae "only" twice as long as the forewings...



...and the basal half distinctly thickened.

Chris was fortunate to see a number of individuals representing at least two species, presumably all males (based on the extraordinary length of their antennae) that were engaged in some rather interesting territorial behaviors. I, on the other hand, saw only this single individual (presumably a female) who seemed content enough to calmly nectar the golden Alexander, *Zizia aurea* (Apiaceae), flowers on which I found it. This was

fine by me, as the dense woodland setting where I saw it wasn't very conducive to photographing the moth. I wanted a clean, bright background to highlight the moths dark metallic luster, so I snipped the flower (carefully!) on which the moth was nectaring and held it up to the small patch of bright blue sky visible from the trail to take these photos.

I presume this individual represents the species *Adela caeruleella* based on comparison with online photos. According to Powell (1969) this species is widespread across the eastern U.S. and has been recorded on flowers of American bitterweet, *Celastrus scandens* (Celastraceae). Microleps.org notes the species is most frequently found along deciduous forest trails and shows a preference for flowers of black snakeroot, *Sanicula marilandica* (Apiaceae). My late April observation is consistent with the April and May activity period noted by Powell (1969) and late May period for central Illinois noted by Microleps.org.

REFERENCE:

[Powell, J. A. 1969.](#) A synopsis of Nearctic adelid moths, with descriptions of new species (Incurvariidae). *Journal of the Lepidopterists' Society* 23:211–240.



Group Activity/Walk Schedules

BOTANY GROUP

Chair—George Van Brunt

- **Monday Botany Walks**, Leader—Fr. James Sullivan; now in his **46th year!** The WGNSS Botany Group visits many of the same locations as the Bird group: Busch Conservation Area, Shaw Nature Preserve, the Missouri Botanical Garden, Babler State Park and Cuivre River State Park. Learning plants will help you learn butterfly host plants. Sign up for WGNSS Botany Group emails from Jack Harris by contacting him at jahar@mac.com or (314) 368-0655 and receive an email no later than Sunday about the following Monday's trip.