

COCCINELLID BEETLES ON THE EAST COAST

G. D. HEATHCOTE

ON the shingle beach between Snettisham and Heacham, Norfolk, on 10th September, 1971, very large numbers of ladybirds were seen. They had settled especially in cracks in the wooden groynes and on the taller plants (such as seeding wild beet plants) above the high-tide mark. There was no line of dead bodies at high water and most of the beetles appeared to be healthy; it was a hot day and many flew.

Five samples, each of 100 beetles were checked *in situ*:—

						Total	
<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>	72	77	80	81	71	381 = 76.2%
<i>C. 11-punctata</i>	21	20	16	18	25	100 = 20.0%
<i>Harmonia 4-punctata</i>	5	2	4	1	3	15 = 3.0%
<i>Propylea 14-punctata</i>	1	1	0	0	1	3 = 0.6%
<i>Adalia 10-punctata</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1 = 0.2%

Although several thousand ladybirds were examined, only one other specimen of *A. 10-punctata* was seen on the beach, and no *A. 2-punctata*. The identification of the specimens was checked by R. D. Pope of the British Museum. Some specimens of *H. 4-punctata*, a very variable species, have been retained for the British Museum collection.

The food, if any, of these beetles was not discovered. Many were on blackberry bushes (e.g., a group of three fruits was covered by ten *C. 7-punctata*, two *C. 11-punctata* and one *H. 4-punctata*). Mr. Pope has suggested that they might possibly be eating the larvae of raspberry beetles; the fruit appeared to be undamaged.

Dr. G. D. Heathcote, F.R.E.S., Broom's Barn Experimental Station, Higham, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.