



Life



Drylands

Restoration of dry-acidic Continental grasslands and heathlands in Natura2000 sites in Piemonte and Lombardia.

Eresus kollari

HABITAT 2330

THE LADYBIRD SPIDER

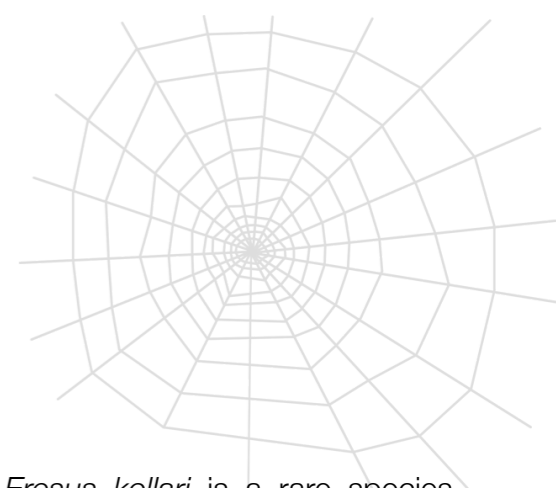
NAME: *Eresus kollari* Rossi 1846

Common name: ladybird spider

Habitat | The ladybird spider has been observed in **Habitat 2330 *Corynephorus grasslands***, but is likely also present in the other habitats covered by the project.

Location | *Eresus kollari* seems to be widespread in arid environments from the Mediterranean belt to the mountainous regions throughout Italy, but it is difficult to observe due to its elusive habits.

Recognition | The smaller male (8-11 mm) has a black cephalothorax and a bright red abdomen with four large round black spots. Its two pairs of front legs are black and the two rear pairs are red with white bands at the joints. The female is twice as large (15-20 mm), and is completely black with a yellow spot on the front part of the head. It is a stout-looking spider, with a rounded abdomen and thick, very hairy legs.



Important facts | *Eresus kollari* is a rare species, considered to be in decline, and it is particularly protected in Central Europe. In Great Britain, the genus/species has been reintroduced into some moorlands, where it has adapted successfully.

Interesting facts | The spider web is positioned very close to the ground and is quite complex: it consists of a part that captures prey and another that reaches down into the underground burrow. The web is very sturdy and can capture even relatively large prey, such as Carabid Beetles.

Unlike the black widow spider, the female ladybird spider does not eat the male after mating; instead, the two may share the burrow for some time after fertilization has occurred.

After the eggs hatch, the female nourishes the young until, upon her death at the end of her life cycle, she becomes food for them herself. When he feels threatened by a potential predator, the male raises his abdomen and shakes it to show its vibrant colouring.

> **Intervention Sites:** It has not yet been observed in Life Drylands intervention sites, but it is likely to be present in at least some of those located in the Ticino Valley.

> **Type of Intervention:** Life Drylands interventions aimed at improving Habitat 2330 and the project habitats will certainly be beneficial for this species.

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