

**A field key to the larvae of four spp. of
genus *Harmonia* Mulsant
(Coleoptera : Coccinellidae)**

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ABSTRACT : A field key to the larvae of four spp. of genus *Harmonia* Mulsant has been prepared on the basis of dorso-lateral projections of abdomen and variations in colour. It includes *H. sedecimnotata* (Fabricius), *H. eucharis* (Mulsant), *H. dimidiata* (Fabricius) and *H. quadripunctata* Pontoppidan.

A considerable importance is attached to the field keys which provide a handy tool for the field workers. The coccinellids are of great economic value and a quick identification of both the adults as well as larvae is the basic need in this case too. The adults of Coccinellidae show colour aberrations. However, the colour patterns in larvae are quite stable. Moreover, the larvae of predaceous spp. are conspicuously coloured in red, orange, white, brown, etc. Further, the abdomen of larvae bear six longitudinal rows of setose projections dorsally, which are recognised as dorsal (d), dorso-lateral (dl), and lateral (l) starting from the mid-dorsal line towards the lateral side. In addition, the segments are represented in Roman numbers so that 'dl' I refers to dorso-lateral projection of first abdominal segment.

Read (1965) and Maria (1974) have studied Coccinellidae in detail. Read (1965) has given field keys for aphidophagous larvae of three coccinellid spp. and used the colour of abdominal setose projections of the larvae as diagnostic characters. The present work deals with three Indian spp. of genus *Harmonia*, i.e., *H. sedecimnotata* (Fabricius), *H. eucharis* (Mulsant) and *H. dimidiata* (Fabricius), and the fourth species, viz., *H. quadripunctata* Pontoppidan (taken from the descriptions of Strouhal, 1927) has been mainly included to highlight the generic characters. All the descriptions pertain to the mature fourth instar larvae.

Larva of genus Harmonia

Diagnosis : "Larva brightly coloured, ground colour of dorsum yellowish-brown to blackish-brown with interspersed dirty-white, yellow or orange areas. Sclerotised thoracic dorsal plates well developed. Abdomen with six longitudinal rows of setose projections; dorsal projections three branched at tips, dorso-lateral ones three or two branched and lateral ones unbranched."

