

## Ladybug Represented on the Playground Slide at a Park in Kishiwada City, Osaka Prefecture

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In the field of cultural entomology, an intriguing question is which and how insects are represented on cultural objects (TAKADA, 2013 a). However, the representation of insects on cultural objects has not been sufficiently explored because cultural entomology has been established as a field by HOGUE (1980) only for approximately 35 years, and thus, numerous fundamental and relevant questions on cultural entomology still remain unanswered.

Ladybugs are quite popular insects (ADAMS, 1992; TAKADA, 2010), and thus expected to be represented on various cultural objects. In fact, SAKURATANI and SHIYAKE (2007) found various ladybug products that were represented by approximately 160 items. In addition, it was reported that ladybug images are used as chocolate designs (TAKADA, 2013 b) and urinal targets in men's restrooms (TAKADA, 2014). However, the basic question of which type of cultural objects ladybugs are represented on has not been sufficiently investigated. To answer this question, we need to record previously undescribed examples of the representation of ladybugs on any type of cultural objects. In particular, compared with ladybug goods, which seem to have been well investigated as cultural objects because they can be collected as samples, facilities represented by ladybugs on them have not been relatively investigated. Perhaps representations of ladybugs are found within the unexpected and unpredictable range of cultural objects. In this regard, it will be better to consider the reasons ladybugs are represented on cultural objects in order to understand the role of ladybug images in human society.

On December 20, 2014, I found a ladybug image appearing on the roof of the playground slide at Noda Park, which is located near JR Kishiwada Station of West Japan Railway Co. in Kishiwada City, Osaka Prefecture. It is possible that this is the first record of the representation of a ladybug on playground equipment as a research result on cultural entomology in an academic journal. The ladybug image captures the distinctive and immediately obvious features of the seven-spotted ladybug, *Coccinella septempunctata* LINNAEUS, 1758, although their elytra have six black spots. Possibly, the seven-spotted ladybug is used as the motif because they can be found around human habitation and are easily visible due to their vivid coloration, and thus become a well-known ladybug species for the Japanese general public.

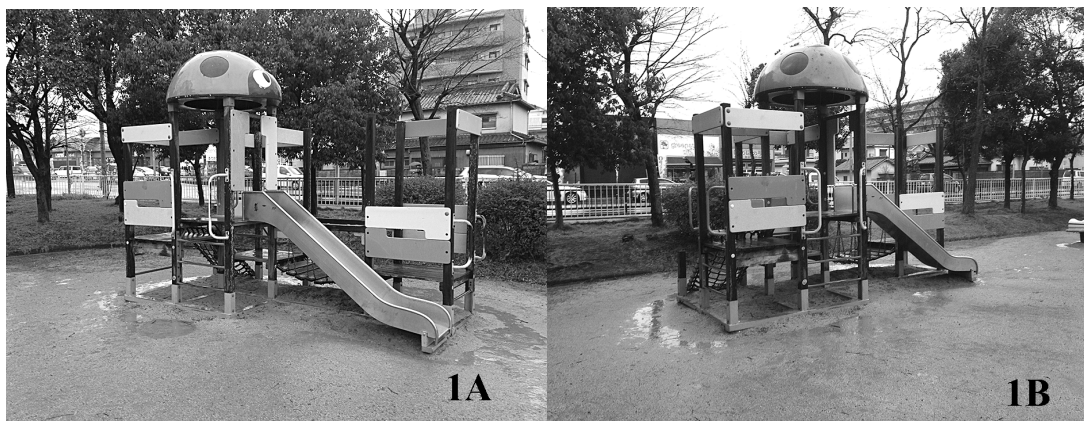


Fig. 1. Ladybug represented on the playground slide at Noda Park in Kishiwada City, Osaka Prefecture. — A, A three-quarter view; B, the view from behind.

The ladybug image on the roof of the playground slide will be used because of the cute representation of the ladybug derived from its biological traits, such as a semi-spherical body, simple coloration, unthreatening characteristics, and calm behavior (SAKURATANI & SHIYAKE, 2007; TAKADA, 2013 b). That is, this ladybug image utilizes high esthetic and less negativistic values of ladybugs. In addition, the personified eyes of the ladybug increase its cuteness and make the image more familiar to park users.

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