Dylan and Jaime just moved to New York from South Dakota. Their parents wanted them to find out more about New York State symbols. The governor said, “Dylan and Jaime, you might meet some new friends if you learn about New York State symbols.”

Dylan and Jaime visited the governor of New York. He told the children that the state tree is Blue. I am a sugar maple and the state of New York has named me its state tree.”

“Hello! My name is Woody. I am a sugar maple and I am New York’s state tree.”

“Hello children! My name comes our state flower.”

Hello! My name is Rose. She is New York’s state flower.”

The next day Dylan and Jaime started their search for ladybugs in a garden.

“Hi, everyone! Nice to meet you all. Where is Cindy?”

“Cindy used to be seen all over the United States and Canada, but now we don’t see her very often. Would you like to help me look for her?”

“No, I am Steve, one of Cindy’s cousins. I am a sevenspotted ladybug. I have seven spots on my outer wings not nine like Cindy has.”

“Okay, but can we take your picture before we go?”

“Okay Mac we will.”

After Dylan and Jaime took Steve’s picture, they began walking. On their way home they asked every girl and boy they meet to help find Cindy, the ninespotted ladybug.

“Hello children! My name is Mac. I am a pink spotted ladybug. I can tell you about my very different color than Cindy.”

The Lost Ladybug Project gives kids (and adults) a chance to be real citizen scientists. The project will continue for years to come. Collections from the same locations over the years tells us how common those ladybug species are in your area and how rare other species are.

After Dylan and Jaime took Mac’s picture they began walking. The children were happy they asked every girl and boy they meet to help find Cindy, the ninespotted ladybug.

“Hello! My name is Steve. I am a sugar maple and I am New York’s state tree.”

“The next day Dylan and Jaime started their search for ladybugs in a farmer’s field, and they found one.”

After Dylan and Jaime took Mac’s picture they began walking. On their way home they asked every girl and boy they meet to help find Cindy, the ninespotted ladybug.

“Cindy is reddish orange with nine black spots on her outer wings. She has four black spots on each of her wings with a split spot in the middle. She also has a white fringed neck.”

“Sure! Can you take my picture before we go?”

“Sure you can take my picture before we go! We want to take pictures of all ladybugs we find.”

“Are you Cindy?”

“Are you Cindy?”

“Are you Cindy?”

“All across North America certain species of native ladybugs, including the New York ninespotted, have become extremely rare. This rapid decline is of great concern. If we can find where the rare ninespotted, the two-spotted, and the transverse ladybugs still live we may learn why this has happened and still be able to save them.”

The Lost Ladybug Project was set in motion at a small number of schools in New York State in 2004. One of the first major discoveries came in 2006 when Jilene (age 11) and Jonathan (age 10) Penhale found a rare ninespotted ladybug near their Virginia home. This was the first ninespotted ladybug seen in the eastern U.S. in 14 years. Their finding confirmed that the species was not extinct and that with enough people working together we could find this rare ladybug.

With recent funding from the National Science Foundation the Lost Ladybug Project has expanded and now anyone can participate. From our website (www.lostladybug.org) you can find educational materials ranging from poetry, games, and stories, to data surfing and mapping. Parents and youth leaders will find this a fun way to convey concepts of biodiversity and conservation.

Harry!

There may be a rare ladybug in your back yard right now.

Find them! Photograph them! Send us the ladybugs have gone and why they have gone. At www.lostladybug.org and reports of the latest finds go to: www.lostladybug.org

Find ‘em, Photograph ‘em, Send ‘em! For tips on successful ladybug searches and reports of the latest finds go to www.lostladybug.org.