

Beneficial Insects



Spiders

Common and Scientific Names

- Common name: Spider
- Scientific name: Arachnids

Description

Spiders have only two body regions (cephalothorax and abdomen) rather than three. Spiders have eight walking limbs rather than six and never develop wings, unlike many insects.

Life Cycle

Spiders reproduce by laying eggs in a silken egg sac which is either carried around by the female or hidden in a web. These egg sacs can contain several hundred eggs. The eggs hatch in about two to three weeks after they are deposited.

In the span of roughly one year many spiders mature to adulthood. Male and female spiders live separately and only come together to mate. Female spiders are usually larger and bear different color markings than males.

Habitat and Preferred Plants

Spiders can be typically divided into two categories. "Web-building" spiders spin webs to capture prey, while "wandering" spiders do not construct webs to capture prey. They either actively pursue prey or they wait for prey to wander or fly within their reach

Spiders usually capture prey smaller than themselves, with average prey sizing also increasing as the spider size increases, following a molt.

Trash, lumber piles, bricks, weeds, and outside structures are all natural habitats for spiders.

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How They Benefit the Environment

Spiders are opportunists, feeding entirely on living insects or other animals. They are highly adapted to capture and subdue living prey, which makes them beneficial to many home and garden environments.

What We Can Do to Support Them and Increase Their Numbers

Spiders, like many other animals, have been affected by deforestation, agriculture, grazing, and urbanization.

As spiders are beneficial and an integral component of the ecosystem, eliminating spiders in the lawn, landscape and garden is not recommended.

Source:

- <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf%5CMG%5CMG20600.pdf>
- <http://web.pdx.edu/~smasta/MastaSpidersYard.html>
- <http://treefruit.wsu.edu/crop-protection/opm/spiders/>
- <https://extension.umn.edu/insect-relatives/spiders#dealing-with-spiders-outdoors-54961>