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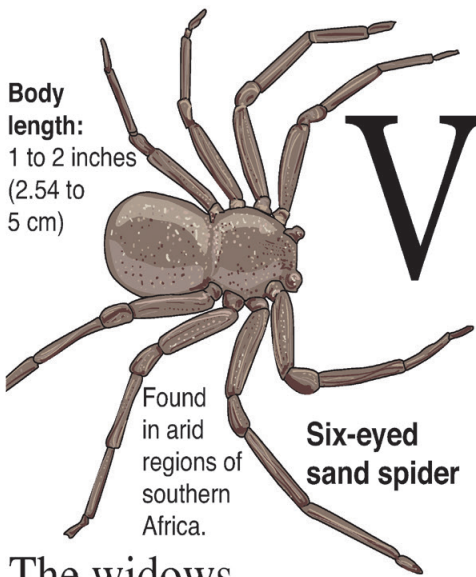


WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

VENOMOUS SPIDERS

Body length:
1 to 2 inches
(2.54 to 5 cm)



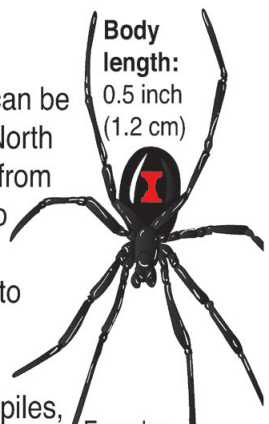
Found in arid regions of southern Africa.
Six-eyed sand spider

The widows

There are several species of widow spider. The black widow is the most famous and the most dangerous. The bite of a female black widow is thought to be 15 times more potent than that of a rattlesnake.

Black widows can be found in North America, from Canada to Mexico. They like to shelter in crevices and woodpiles, under stones and in some buildings.

Body length:
0.5 inch
(1.2 cm)

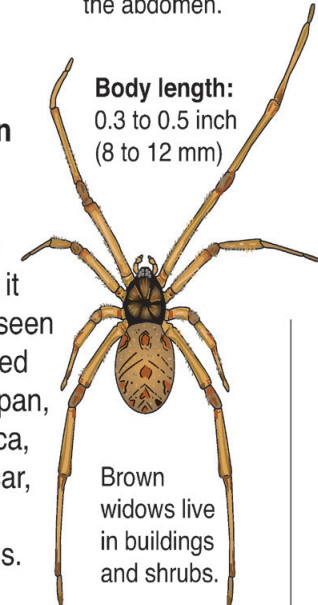


Females have a yellow or red spot on the underside of the abdomen.

The brown widow

probably evolved in Africa, but it has been seen in the United States, Japan, South Africa, Madagascar, Australia and Cyprus.

Body length:
0.3 to 0.5 inch
(8 to 12 mm)



Brown widows live in buildings and shrubs.

Red widow spiders

are found in the sandy scrublands of central and south Florida. The female is considerably larger than other widow spiders, and her bite is venomous. Although not aggressive, this spider should be approached with caution. Her bite causes symptoms similar to that of the black widow spider (pain, nausea, cramping, etc.).

Body length:
1.5 to 2 inches
(3.8 to 5 cm)



Many red widows have a red mark on the underside of the abdomen, which may be hourglass-shaped, triangle-shaped or indistinct.

Did you know?

Spiders should not be called **poisonous** unless you get sick from eating them. The correct term for a spider bite is **venomous**, not poisonous.

In almost all spider species, the female is larger than the male.

All spiders have fangs, and most have some venom in them. Spider venom is intended to paralyze or kill prey, but very few spiders have enough venom or strong enough venom to hurt people.

Nearly 99% of spiders are harmless to people; however, some bites can produce skin lesions or cause allergic reactions that result in death.

Contrary to popular belief, tarantulas do have small poison glands, and their bite is as painful as a hornet or bee sting.

In Cambodia, fried tarantulas are a delicacy.

All spiders produce silk, but not all spiders spin webs.

Spiders can't chew solid food. They inject their prey with venom, which turns the insides of their prey into liquid so the spider can suck it up. (Many fly species also liquefy their lunch.)

Body length:
0.12 to 0.4 inches
(3 to 16 mm)

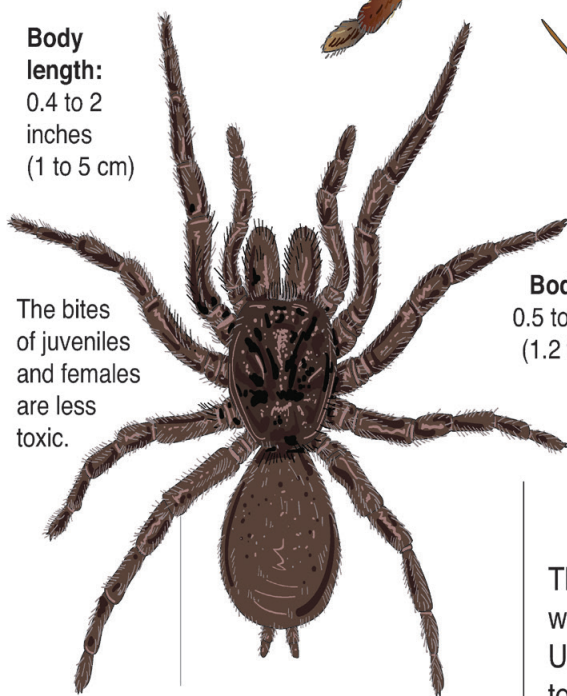


This spider has a distinct red stripe or hourglass-shaped mark on its back.

The **redback**, another cousin of the black widow, is native to Australia, but can now be found in New Zealand, Belgium and Japan via grape exports. (The spider often builds nests and webs on grape leaves and inside bunches.)

One of the world's most venomous spiders, the **Brazilian wandering spider**, is also called the armed spider or banana spider. There are nine species of wandering spider, all native to South America. These spiders have an intimidating defense posture, in which they raise their front legs straight up into the air.

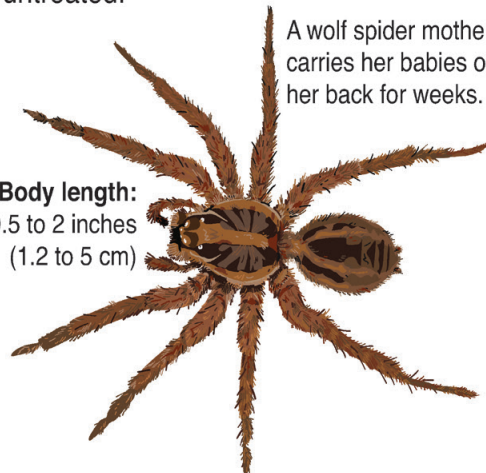
Body length:
0.4 to 2 inches
(1 to 5 cm)



The bites of juveniles and females are less toxic.

The **Sydney funnel-web spider** is native to eastern Australia. This fearsome spider has one of the most toxic types of venom of any spider. Its bite may cause serious illness or death if left untreated.

Body length:
0.5 to 2 inches
(1.2 to 5 cm)



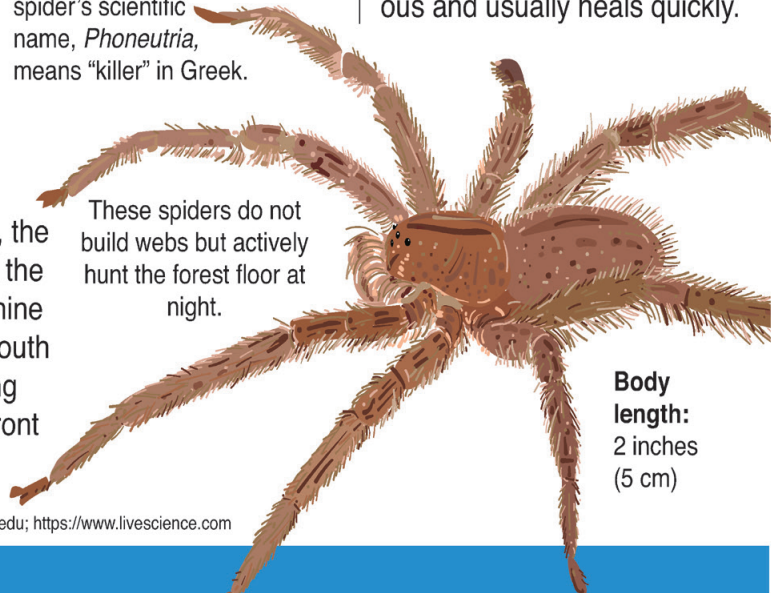
A wolf spider mother carries her babies on her back for weeks.

There about 125 species of **wolf spider** in North America and many more around the world. A wolf spider bite may be painful, but unless you are allergic, the discomfort doesn't last long.

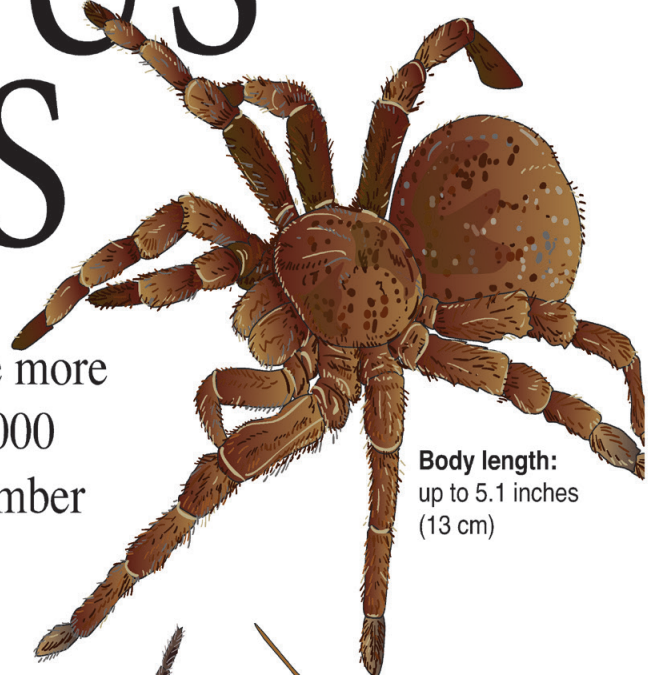
The wandering spider's scientific name, *Phoneutria*, means "killer" in Greek.

These spiders do not build webs but actively hunt the forest floor at night.

Body length:
2 inches
(5 cm)



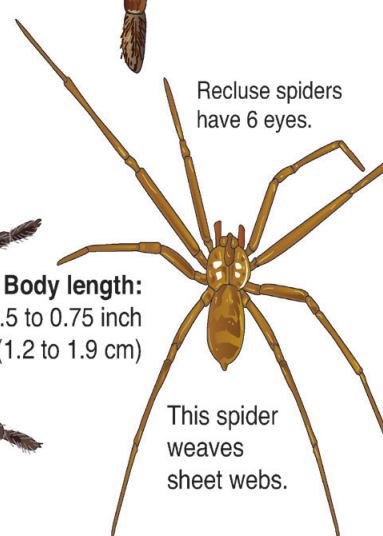
The **goliath bird-eating tarantula** is the largest tarantula in the world. Native to the rainforest regions of northern South America, it rubs its hairy legs together to create a loud hissing noise.



Body length:
up to 5.1 inches
(13 cm)

Recluse spiders have 6 eyes.

Body length:
0.5 to 0.75 inch
(1.2 to 1.9 cm)

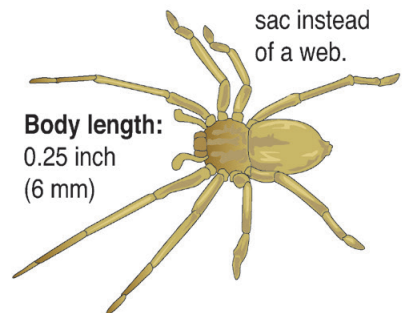


This spider weaves sheet webs.

The **brown recluse** prefers warmer climates across the United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. This highly venomous spider lives in the darkest, tightest spaces it can find. It is not an aggressive spider and bites people only when threatened or accidentally touched.

This spider makes a silk sac instead of a web.

Body length:
0.25 inch
(6 mm)



Yellow sac spiders are quite common and can be found throughout North America. These nocturnal arachnids prefer to live outdoors in summer, but as winter approaches, they will often move into people's homes. The bite of this spider may be painful but is rarely serious and usually heals quickly.

SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://www.britannica.com>; <https://www.wikipedia.org>; <https://www.outdoorlife.com>; <https://nationalzoo.si.edu>; <https://www.livescience.com>

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