

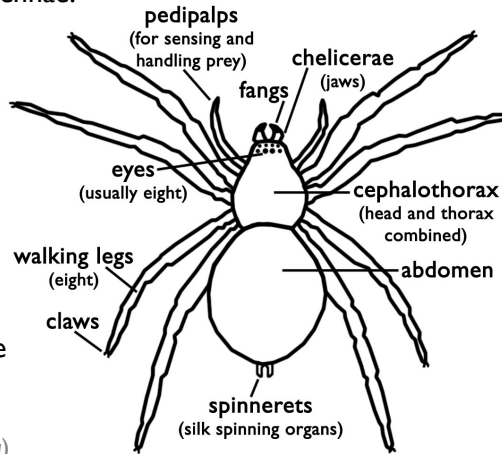
ARACHNOLOGY: *Field and Forest* Study of Central Florida Spiders

SPIDERS: A Class apart from Insects

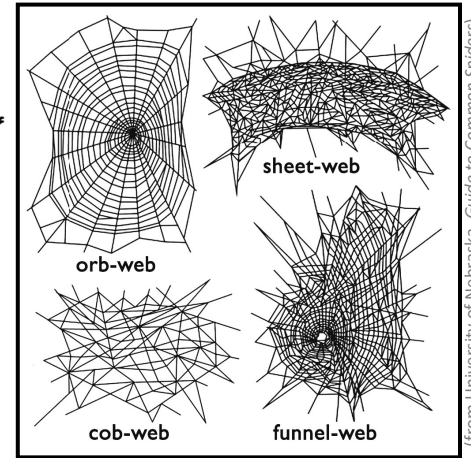
Like insects, spiders are *Arthropods*, characterized by segmented legs and an exoskeleton that is periodically shed (molted) as they grow. Unlike insects (class **Insecta**), spiders (along with scorpions, ticks, mites, and daddy-long-legs) are in the **Arachnid** class and differ by having 8 legs (not 6), 2 body parts (not 3), 6 to 8 simple eyes (instead of 2 compound eyes), and no wings or antennae.

Spiders also have a pair of smaller, front leg-like “pedipalps” for sensing and handling prey (with bulbous tips in males to transfer sperm into females), a pair of fangs and venom glands, and—unique among Arachnids—spinnerets (1 to 4 pairs at the hind end). These issue the silk used to wrap prey and eggs, to line retreats and burrows, to produce draglines, and—in some species—to construct webs to catch prey.

(from John Serrao, *75 Spiders of Central Florida*)



Spider Anatomy



Types of Common Spider Webs

Spider Body Size Key

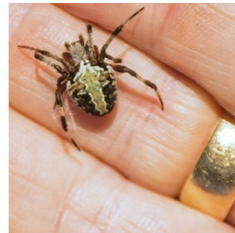
(Each spider's rough size is noted in its observation box to aid in identification.)



VS - very small



S - small



M - medium



L - large



VL - very large

(from University of Nebraska, Guide to Common Spiders)

(from Serrao, *75 Spiders of Florida*)

See how many of the following common central Florida spiders you can locate and identify by searching their typical habitats. Record your observations for each spider you find in the box next to the species.

Woodlands, Scrub

Look early: many spiders make webs at night, remove (eat) their webs in mornings, & hide in leaf or silk retreat by day.



Spotted Orbweaver
(*Neoscona domiciliorum*)

M



Golden Silk Orbweaver
(*Nephila clavipes*)

VL



Crab-Shaped Orbweaver
(*Gasteracantha cancriformis*)

S



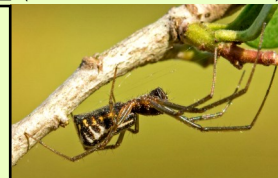
Funnel-Web Spider
(*Barronopsis floridensis*)

S



Tent Cobweb Spider
(*Tidarren sisypoides*)

S



Bowl and Doily Spider
(*Frontinella communis*)

VS

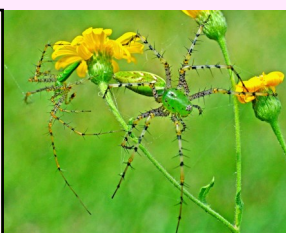
On Wildflowers, Grasses, Herbaceous Plants in Meadows, Roadsides, Clearings

Visit a forest, field, or clearing on a dewy early morning to see countless, exquisite orb, sheet, and funnel webs. Inspect wildflowers for the beautiful colors and patterns of the spiders as well as the flowers.



**Black and Yellow
Argiope**
(*Argiope aurantia*)

L-VL



Green Lynx Spider
(male & female)
(*Peucetia viridans*)

M-L



Brilliant Jumper
(female & male)
(*Phidippus clarus*)

S

Shoreline Trees, Shrubs, and Aquatic Plants in Ponds and Rivers

These spiders use water as part of their strategies.



Long-Jawed Orbweaver
(shoreline shrubs)
(*Tetragnatha* sp.)

S-M



**Okefenokee Fishing
Spider** (tree trunks)
(*Dolomedes okefinokensis*)

VL



**Shoreline Fishing
Spider** (floating plants)
(*Dolomedes triton*)

L

Under Logs and Other Cover Objects

Be careful in doing so, but by looking under, you might find a spider hiding from a predator or looking for its prey.



Tiger Wolf Spider
(moist woods)
(*Tigrosa aspersa*)

L



**Florida Wandering
Spider**
(*Ctenus captiosus*)

M-L



**Hackled-Mesh
Weaver**
(*Metaltella simoni*)

S-M

Nocturnal Spiders

Best of all, venture out a night with a flashlight to see the green, reflecting eyes of wolf spiders on the ground or nocturnal orbweavers spinning or resting in their webs between branches.



**Hump-Backed
Orbweaver** (woods)
(*Eustala anastera*)

S



**Giant Lichen
Orbweaver** (woods)
(*Araneus bicentenarius*)

L-VL



**Star-Bellied
Orbweaver** (aquatic shores)
(*Acanthepeira* sp.)

S-M