

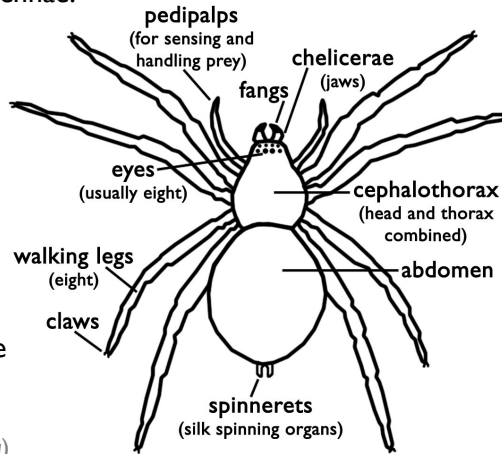
ARACHNOLOGY: *Home and Backyard* Study of Central Florida Spiders

SPIDERS: A Class apart from Insects

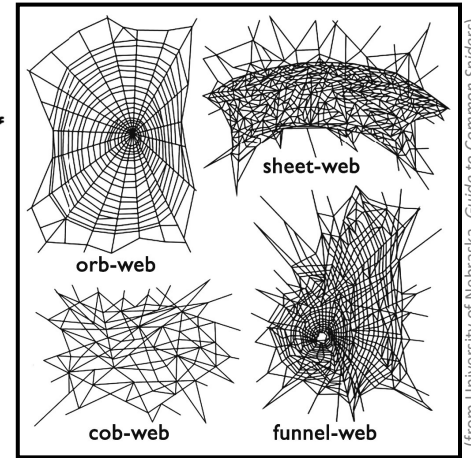
Like insects, spiders are *Arthropods*, characterized by segmented legs and an exoskeleton that is periodically shed (molted) as they grow. Unlike insects (class **Insecta**), spiders (along with scorpions, ticks, mites, and daddy-long-legs) are in the **Arachnid** class and differ by having 8 legs (not 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



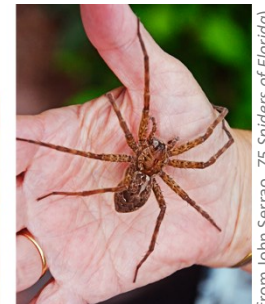
S - small



M - medium



L - large



VL - very large

(from John 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.

Inside Homes, Garages, Basements

The conditions of human homes—artificially lit, moderated temperatures, and relatively dry—are not welcoming to most spiders. But here are a few you might find indoors—especially in cool, dark, humid places like kitchen cabinets, bathrooms, and garages.



Round-Bodied Cellar Spider
(*Phycocylus globosus*)

S



Parson Spider
(*Herpyllus ecclesiasticus*)

S



Wall Spider
(*Oecobius navus*)

VS

On Outsides of Buildings

The outside surfaces of your home are more inviting to spiders: if you look around you'll likely find a greater diversity.



Southern Crevice Spider (male & female)
(*Kukulcania hibernalis*)

M-L



Gray Wall Jumper
(*Menemerus bivittatus*)

S

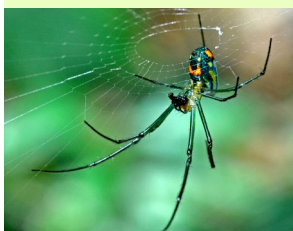


Brown Widow
(***Dangerous**) & egg sac
(*Latrodectus geometricus*)

M

Lawns, Gardens, Yards

Early on a dewy morning, look around shrubs, blooming flowers, and low grasses for showy webs and patient spiders.



Orchard Orbweaver
(webs in shrubs)
(*Leucage venusta*)

S



Magnolia Green Jumper (on shrubs)
(*Lyssomanes viridis*)

S



Scarlet Sheet-Web Spider (webs on low grass)
(*Florinda coccinea*)

VS

Under Logs, Boards, 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.



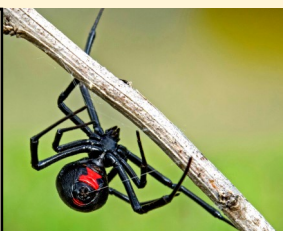
Ant-Mimic Spider
(*Falconina gracilis*)

S



Florida Wandering Spider
(*Ctenus captiosus*)

M-L



Southern Black Widow (***Dangerous**)
(*Latrodectus mactans*)

M

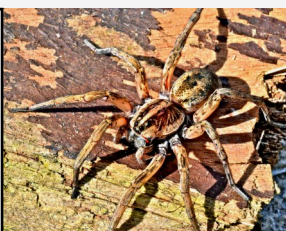
Nocturnal Spiders

Best of all, venture out at 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.



Tropical Orbweaver
(woods, yards)
(*Eriophora ravilla*)

M-L



Field Wolf Spider
(on ground & grass)
(*Hogna lenta*)

L



Huntsman Spider
eating cockroach (buildings)
(*Heteropoda venatoria*)

L-VL