

for limiting spider populations in your home:

- Avoid leaving your porch light on at night, or use a motion detector sensor. A night-light will attract insects, and spiders to eat them.
- Keep plants back from the perimeter of your living structure, because plants provide food for insects. When plants rest against the side of your home, it provides a ready path for spiders to access the side of your house.
- Keeping window and door screens in good repair will help, but are unlikely to keep small spiders from entering when the window is open. Some aluminum windows have drip-holes in the base that are large enough to let in most spiders.
- A periodic monthly rinsing off around the windows, eaves, and doors will also help reduce spider populations on the exterior of your home.
- An effective way to remove an unwanted spider from your home is to vacuumed it up with the hose and wand attachment.
- If you are inclined to use pesticides (usually unnecessary), the standard treatment is around window frames, around doorframes, under the eaves and along the foundation.

There are a variety of Wolf Spiders of the family Lycosidae found in our area, and even though they look intimidating, they are not an aggressive spider.



These are wandering/hunting spiders and often their hunting or mating trip may find them in your home, and because of their coloration and bulky size they stand out well on walls. They will readily bite if mishandled.

Urban Legends and Misconceptions About Spiders

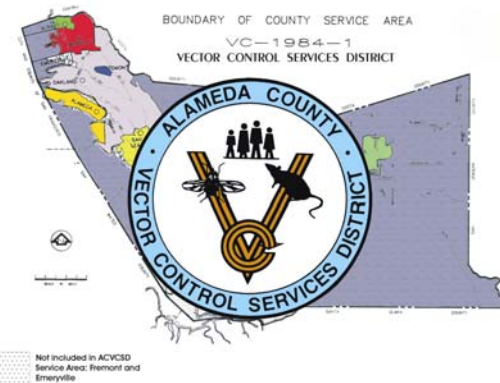
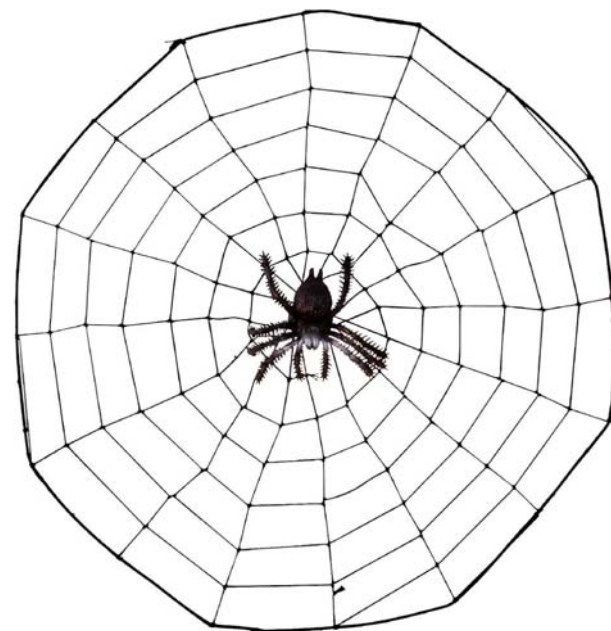
- fi** "Most spiders have fangs too small to bite through human skin."
 - ◇ Most spiders do have fangs long enough to bite through human skin. There are some very small spiders that cannot, but the reality is that us big humans are not on the lunch menu for spiders!
- fi** "Cellar spiders (Daddy-Long-Leg Spiders) have one of the most potent and deadly venoms, but their fangs are too small penetrate human skin."
 - ◇ Same as above, but if no one was bitten, how do we know how potent the venom is on humans?
- fi** "All spiders make webs."
 - ◇ All spiders make and use silk, but many do not make a hunting web.
- fi** "You can always tell a spider because they have eight legs."
 - ◇ All spiders have eight legs, but not all eight-leggers are spiders, like harvestmen (daddy long legs), scorpions and others.
- fi** "Spiders suck the juices of their prey, but do not literally eat it."
 - ◇ Spiders regurgitate on their prey to begin the digestive process and use their mandibles to bite and chew their meal.
- fi** "House spiders benefit from being released outdoors."
 - ◇ Most house spiders have evolved to live inside structures, and do poorly outdoors.
- fi** "You unknowingly swallow 4 spiders in your sleep each year."
 - ◇ There are no documented cases of this happening. What is the spider going to do in your mouth?

For more information Contact:

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ACVCSD August 2006, information from Rodney L. Crawford, and R. S. Vetter

Spiders and You



Spiders and Our Environment

Spiders play a significant role in our environment. Their ubiquitous presence, and uncanny ability to show up in even the most meticulously maintained home gives us pause to wonder at their ability to thrive seemingly anywhere. There are about 34,000 identified species of spiders worldwide, and even more species not identified. There are about 2,000 identified species of spiders in the US.

Spiders are eight-legged members of a group of arthropods, called arachnids. They have the ability to produce a variety of silk strands that they use to create shelters, snare food, house and protect their eggs, use as a dragline to find their way, or to encase their prey. With many species, all of these uses occur!

All spiders are venomous. The spiders' venom is used in prey capture and digestion. The specific components of the venom vary significantly, and evolved over the millennia for the individual species needs. The spider regurgitates on the captured prey to begin digestion, and wraps up the prey in silk. The spider then uses its' mandibles to chew up the meal.

The main concern many people have about spiders is their bite. It must be kept in mind that spiders do not eat people, or consider us a potential food source. Most spider bites to people occur during incidental contact while engaged doing yard work, cleaning up around the home, or at work. The vast majority of spiders are not even aggressive to people, or other animals, and they retire from the scene when confronted by a human.

There are a number of spiders capable of biting people, which have venom that will harm people. In many cases, the affect of spider venom on any individual person may

vary, dependent upon individual sensitivities, and reaction. There are two types of spider venom that are of medical importance; *neurotoxic* venom from spiders such as the black widow spider, and *cytotoxic* venom from spiders like the brown recluse, and the yellow sac spiders. The only citation I was able to find of fatalities attributed to black widow spider bites in the U.S. were four deaths from 1960-69. The decline of the popularity of the "outhouse" and the availability of anti-venom may contribute to this declining number. This is not to imply that a widow spider bite is not a medical emergency: always seek medical attention, and there are treatment options for the systemic, neurotoxic widow bite. We are fortunate that in our region of the US, brown



Black widow spider on left, and yellow sac spider on top. (Pictures University of Nebraska)

recluse spiders do not occur. The unfortunate rejoinder is that yellow sac spiders are abundant, and are reported to be the spider that bites the most people. Their cytotoxic bite is not as powerful as the brown recluse, but if you are sensitive to the toxin, you will likely develop a necrotic wound commonly diagnosed as a brown spider bites. The main problem with the yellow sac spider is their nocturnal wandering habits. If they abide in your home, they come out well after dark (most often when you are sleeping), and wander around your home in search for prey. They have a bad habit of

dropping onto a sleeping person, and when they land, they use their mandibles to stabilize themselves, thereby injecting the unknowing somnolent with a dose of cytotoxin, usually not painful, and resulting in a transient bump that rarely requires medical attention.

The problem with suspect spider bites, is not having the offending spider with you when seeking medical attention. Unless there is a severe reaction, the physician is left with guesswork. If you know a particular spider bit you, capture it!



The Cellar Spider (Daddy-Long-Legs Spider) is one of the most common house spider in our region. (Image from <http://www.spiders.zacharoo.com>)

Spiders in Your Home?

Spider populations are often a reflection of the food available to them: a lot of insects equal a lot of spiders. The common cellar spider that resides in most people's homes, (sometimes called the "daddy-longlegs spider") cohabitates with humans with little conflict, and is tolerated. They stay in their corner and eat whatever small insects are available. The biggest problem may be the webs accumulating, and the spider-ling dispersion in the home. Here are some tips (cont