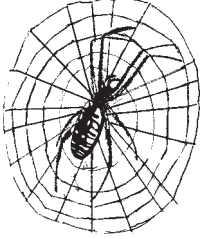


## PEST CONTROL BULLETIN NO. 40

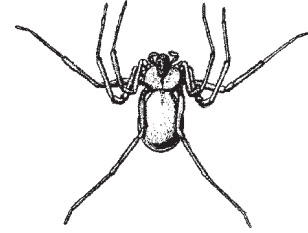
# VARIOUS SPIDERS



GARDEN SPIDER



BLACK WIDOW SPIDER  
*Latrodectus hesperus*



SOUTH AMERICAN VIOLIN SPIDER  
*Loxosceles laeta*

### GARDEN SPIDERS

Spiders are interesting creatures with eight legs and two body parts. At the front is the head and chest section to which legs are attached. The entire hind part is the abdomen. They feed on insects or other spiders.

Historically, garden spiders have been considered as beneficial and in most cases live in fields away from man's habitat and feed on insects. In recent years, with the growth and spread of cities, spiders have taken on a more significant role. They now appear to have adapted themselves to the newly created environments of suburban backyards where for one reason or another they invade homes. Some have become so well accustomed to buildings that they are called "House Spiders."

Most spiders are not normally aggressive, but may retaliate if hurt by being sat on, picked up, or rolled on in bed. A physician should be consulted if any bite symptoms persist. If possible, save the spider for identification.

### HABITS

Spiders live in a variety of habitats in and around structures. They weave their webs, some messy, some beautiful, on vegetation, fences, wood piles, debris, or other protected areas. Access into a building is usually through a window or under a door. Most spiders build webs either as traps, snares, or simply as a home base. In homes, the webs are most often located around windows or in corners of a room. The eggs are laid in these webs.

### BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS

Black widow spiders are so-called because the female of the species, if sufficiently hungry, will sometimes feed on the smaller male. The bite of the black widow on humans can be dangerous, particularly to the young, old, or ill. In all cases, a physician should be consulted.

### DESCRIPTION

The adult black widow, including the legs, is about one-inch or more across. The round pea-like abdomen may be one-fourth inch or more in diameter. The fused head and thorax area is smaller than the abdomen. The legs are wiry and brittle in appearance. This spider is usually a hard and shiny black color. In most cases, there will be an orange to reddish hour glass on the belly.

### HABITS

Black widows spin their untidy but strong webs in dark secluded areas. The webs are usually fairly close to the ground, where insects may be. The silken egg case, which contains from two to nine hundred eggs, is about as large as a pea and is attached to the web. The female, who often hangs up side down on the web, will quickly disappear to a hiding place if disturbed. Egg cases should be thoroughly crushed or burned.

The black widow is one of the most dangerous spiders in southern California and should be eliminated whenever possible. The first step in black widow control is sanitation or removal of

hiding places. Piles of debris, brush, or other materials are favorite spots for the black widow to spin her web.

## SOUTH AMERICAN VIOLIN SPIDERS

### DESCRIPTION

The South American Violin Spider is a relatively newcomer to the Los Angeles Basin. This is a very shy and secluded spider that moves around mostly at night. Although it may live inside, it hunts its insect prey outside the building. This spider is difficult to describe, because as it gets older it gets darker in color. The mature adult has long brown legs. The abdomen is oval and has no markings on it. If the violin is visible, it will be noted on the back or top of the head and chest area with the handle of the violin pointing toward the abdomen. This spider can inflict a serious bite, if direct contact with it is made. It is definitely NOT aggressive. It is rare to find this spider in southern California.

### HABITS

Because this spider is so shy, it builds its cotton-like web in very secluded areas usually indoors. When it sheds (molts) its outer skin, it leaves that skin near its web. This skin is unique in that it is in the shape of an outstretched spider, in other words, spread eagle. The webs are usually located in attics or basements, seldom in the living area of a house or other building.

### CONTROL

The basic control of any spider problem is sanitation, including removal of untidy debris, piled lumber,

and other hiding places. Another aid in control is to cut back vegetation from a window or other entrance which would allow the spiders to enter the home.

## INSECTICIDES

Where sanitation is not indicated (such as in garages, homes, outbuilding, or vegetation), insecticide sprays or dusts should be applied thoroughly. Many insecticides will kill the black widow and other spiders, and some can provide a residual effect for several weeks. Insecticides may be in an aerosol spray can or as a concentrate in a bottle. In all cases, the words "black widow spider" or "spiders" should be on the label of the container. Follow label directions regarding the use of the material. Insecticides are available at nurseries, garden supply, or hardware stores, etc.

If it is necessary to cover a large area, use a garden hose sprayer to apply the insecticide and not an aerosol can.

### CAUTION

Handle pesticides with care. Read all precautionary labeling and follow mixing directions exactly. Apply only in amounts specified. Do not use near open flame or exposed foods. Clean food preparation areas after use of pesticides. Store in original containers out of reach of children and pets. Dispose of containers when empty so that they pose no hazard to humans and animals.

No endorsement of trade names is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned. If additional help is needed, contact with a licensed pest control operator is suggested.



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