

Just for Kids

Spiders

There are over 30,000 different kinds of spiders. Close to 500 are found in Connecticut. Many are web weavers, although others ambush their prey. Almost all are harmless to people and most help us by eating insects.

Did you know.....

Wolf spiders carry their young (spiderlings) on their backs.

It only takes an orbweb weaver 45 minutes to spin its web.

Spiderlings can “balloon” (float in the air on lines of silk) to move from one place to another.

Many birds depend on spider silk to “glue” their nests together.

Not all spiders have venom glands.

Tarantulas are not found in Connecticut.

Harvestmen (daddy-long-legs) are not spiders and do not make silk.



Paralyzed Prey

A spider's venom is used to paralyze or kill its prey. Most spiders' fangs are not strong enough to break through human skin. The black widow's venom could make you very sick, but this spider is uncommon in Connecticut.

What makes a spider a spider?

Spiders are not insects!

Spiders have 2 body parts and 8 legs. Insects have 3 body parts and 6 legs.

Spiders usually have 8 eyes. Scientists can identify many spiders from the size and arrangement of their eyes.

Spiders also have fangs, which they use to inject venom into their prey.

Sensational Silk!

Spiders make liquid silk from special glands in their abdomen. The silk leaves the spider's body from spinnerets located at the tip of the abdomen. Different types of silk help spiders make webs, egg cases, protective “retreats” and more. Pound for pound, silk is stronger than steel. Researchers are studying silk for use in bullet-proof vests. Now that's strong!!

Try this at home:

Go out at night to look for spider eyes. Take a flashlight, hold it on your forehead and shine it 10 feet from you on the ground. Look for sparkling green eyes among the plants. These are the emerald eyes of wolf spiders.