

# Black Widow Spider



## Appearance:

Glossy black, often with red “hourglass” on back. May also be dark or light brown. 3/4-inch length, 3/8-inch diameter.

## Habitat:

Contrary to legend, female black widow spiders rarely devour males after mating. They are found in all 50 states, often living around wood piles and gaining entry to a structure when firewood is carried in. They spin their webs near ground level in protected areas, such as in cluttered garages, outhouses and stacks of firewood. The black widow is widely feared because its bite results in severe pain that may take several days to subside. Such bites are rarely fatal, but because small children and elderly persons are at risk, spider control is important if you suspect black widows.

## Diet:

Black widows eat any insect they can capture. They paralyze or kill their prey with venom, then inject a fluid that enables them to suck out the digestive liquid food. They can survive without food for several weeks to a few months.

## Solutions:

**What you can do:** The likelihood of introducing dangerous spiders within structures and encountering them in and around buildings can be reduced by: (1) eliminating tall and dense vegetation close to the foundation which serve as harborage for spiders and their prey (e.g., vines, groundcover, juniper, uncut grass and weeds), (2) excluding gaps under doors (by replacing or adding door sweeps), lower courses of siding, around utility penetrations and weep holes in brick veneer, (3) capturing wandering spiders on ground level, in basements and in attached garages by placing sticky traps indoors along walls behind furniture, washer, dryer, sump pump, water heater, furnace, commode, and storage (out of reach of children and pets), and (4) removal using a shop vacuum cleaner or household vacuum fitted with a hose attachment; this is useful for removing spider webs as well, (5) thoroughly inspecting goods and produce trucked in from the South, Southwest and from Mexico on the loading dock or receiving area for stowaway spiders before storage, processing and distribution occur.

**Professional Solution:** A Quik-Kill service technician will apply an exterior barrier treatment around the foundation perimeter, beneath lower siding, under eaves and porticos, along exterior molding/trim, thresholds, patio, deck and chimney attachments, as well as inside and around sheds and other outbuildings. A regular pest management service program may be required in cases where large populations of spiders are present and where landscaping conditions and locality are conducive to their propagation. Indoors, basement sillplates and perimeters, as well as the corners and edges of spider-infested rooms, can be treated.



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