

Common Maryland Spiders

Spiders are some of the hardest working wildlife in Maryland. Many people are fearful of spiders and often overlook the critical role they play controlling insect pests. Knowing how to distinguish some of the different types of spiders and understanding the important functions that they serve in our environment can often lead to a greater appreciation of their beneficial qualities. This online guide is not an inclusive list of spiders found in Maryland, but it contains many commonly encountered spiders. There are over 40,700 species of spiders worldwide and hundreds of species in Maryland.

For more information on these species, check out the DNR page on MD's Spiders:

dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/habitat/waspiders.aspx

Venom and Bites

Many of the spiders in Maryland possess venom, but the black widow is the only native Maryland spider that is dangerous to people. All other venomous Maryland spiders either have too little venom to affect people or their venom is specially adapted for their prey.

Brown recluse spiders are not native to Maryland, but on very rare instances they can stow away on packages from the Midwest and the Southwest where the Brown recluses are more common.

Spider bites are actually quite uncommon, and most spiders will only bite humans in self defense. While spiders have fangs, they are usually too small to leave visible puncture wounds. Many times, spider bites will result in pain, redness, itching and swelling that lasts a couple of days. Spiders rarely bite more than once, so multiple bites are usually caused by insects such as fleas, bedbugs, chiggers, ticks, mites and biting flies.

Although black widow and brown recluse spider bites are rare, care must be taken to properly identify and treat the wound. Healthy adults may only experience mild symptoms but children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems should be extra cautious.



Wolf spider, photo by Richard Orr

Wolf spiders are commonly misidentified as brown recluses.



Brown recluse spider, photo by Mark Dreiling

However, brown recluses have a distinct violin shape on their head (see picture on right) compared to wolf spiders which usually have stripes (see picture on left).

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Black Widow Spider
© Richard Schuerger



Cellar Spider
By: Olaf Leillinger



Jumping Spider species
© Richard Schuerger



Crab Spider species
By: R.H. Wiegand



Common House Spider
© Richard Schuerger



Funnel Weaver Spider species
© Richard Schuerger



Fishing Spider species
By: Richard Orr



Wolf Spider species, Female with Young
By: Kerry Wixted



Nursery Web Spider species
By: Kerry Wixted



Black and Yellow Garden Spider (left)
Marbled Orb Weaver (center)
By: Kerry Wixted
Spined Micrathena (right)
By: Patrick Coin