



Black Widow

Latrodectus hesperus

Description: The notorious black widow spider is known for its dangerous bite and its shiny pea like body. It is characterized by the red hourglass marking on its abdomen. There are several different species of Widows but they all pack a powerful punch. They only grow to be about 1 in long and only weigh about 1 gram.



Habitat: Like most spiders, they live in a temperate climate, they prefer dark places and warm weather.

Range: Widows are found all over the world, the Black Widow that is found in the United States can be found from the southern United States to southern Canada.

Life Span: 1 to 3 years

Natural Diet: They are carnivores and only eat meat, like insects.

Zoo diet: At the zoo they are fed crickets.

Behavior: They are relatively nonaggressive and only bite when they feel threatened. The females have been known to kill their mates, but this isn't always true. Their bite is 15 times more venomous than a rattlesnake. It cause nausea, dizziness and paralysis of the diaphragm which can stop your breathing. Fatalities in the U.S. are rare. Usually the ones most affected by bites are very young, very old, or sick.



Reproduction: Females can save the genetic material of a male for months at a time and lay an egg sac when ready. The egg will release thousands of baby spiders. Baby widows and males are harmless to humans.

Amarillo
ZOO

Conservation Status: Least concern