



Ohio Spider Survey

The Ohio Spider Survey is an effort to find out how many species of spiders live in Ohio. The original list of Ohio Spiders was published by William Barrows in 1924 and included 306 species. The current project was begun in 1994 and the list of spider species known for Ohio has now reached 583. There are probably many more species yet to be discovered. The aim of the Ohio Spider Survey is to fill the major gap in our understanding of natural spider communities in Ohio.

Why a survey of spiders?

1. Spiders are the most numerous and probably the most important predators of insect pests.
2. The variety of spiders is large enough to provide a sensitive measure of the health of ecological communities. There are probably between 600 and 700 species occurring in Ohio.
3. Spiders are found everywhere, and thus could provide comparative data from all sites. Sufficient samples of spiders can be collected for documentation of distribution and ecological patterns without damage to their populations.
4. Spiders are relatively easy to collect using standard methods, and novice spider collectors can be trained relatively easily. Collections require a minimal amount of space and are simple and inexpensive to curate when compared to other taxa (e.g. pinned insects, vertebrate skins).

A survey of Ohio is an ambitious project and will necessarily involve much volunteer effort. I would welcome any donations of spider specimens from Ohio, and I am particularly interested in receiving specimens that include basic data (collector, habitat, date and locality). Specimens may be collected directly into 70% ethyl alcohol. Isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol can be used, but is less desirable for a number of reasons. The collections will be permanently housed at the Museum of Biodiversity, Ohio State University. In addition, good quality close-up color slides would also be of assistance. Many spider species cannot be determined from photographs, but slides could be used in public-education projects associated with the survey. If you are interested in contributing specimens, slides or your time to this effort; please feel free to contact me.

Dr. Richard Bradley
Department of EEO Biology
Ohio State University, Marion
1465 Mt. Vernon Ave.
Marion, OH 43302

(740)725-6266
bradley.10@osu.edu

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife has provided funding for a survey of spiders in our state through the Do Something Wild tax check-off program.

Where can I learn more about spiders?

ON THE NET

Here is a very good website which has **links** to the world of **spiders** and spider research. The site also has information about **scorpions** and other arachnids:

<http://www.arachnology.org/> then click "Arachnology pages" on left.

If you want more information about potentially dangerous spiders which occur in Ohio you may wish to connect to the Ohio State University Extension spider pages:

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ohioline/hyg-fact/2000/2060.html> (spiders around the house)

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ohioline/hyg-fact/2000/2061.html> (brown recluse)

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ohioline/hyg-fact/2000/2061A.html> (black widow)

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ohioline/hyg-fact/2000/2061B.html> (tarantulas as pets)

The Ohio Spider webpage:

<http://www.marion.ohio-state.edu/spiderweb/mainpage.htm>

IN BOOKS

There are two really excellent general books on spiders that provide basic information on the biology of spiders and may help you learn to identify them:

Levi, H.W. and L.R. Levi 1990. ***Spiders and their kin***. A Golden Book from St. Martin's Press. ISBN 1582381569 (available @ Amazon.com for \$6.95)

Two previous printings are available with few differences. It features excellent color paintings and general text with worldwide coverage. This inexpensive gem of a book provides basic information about the Spiders, Scorpions, the 12 other orders of the Class Arachnida and similar invertebrates as well as many common non-arachnid land invertebrates.

Kaston, B.J. 1978. ***How to know the spiders***. 3rd edition, 272pp. WCB/McGraw-Hill ISBN 0697048985 (recently out-of-print, but available @ Amazon.com new/used from \$14.95) This is the best set of keys to families and many genera of North American spiders intended for beginning students. It contains excellent line drawings of many species and an illustrated glossary of terminology.

COLLECTING SPIDERS IN OHIO

The Ohio Division of Wildlife has no general permit requirements for collecting spiders in Ohio. The Division does require that the collector obtain permission (preferably in writing) from the landowner before collecting. When collecting on public land this would involve contacting the public agency responsible for the area. This is particularly important if you may be collecting in ODNR Natural Areas and Nature Preserves or Ohio State Parks. Some of these areas are *closed* to collecting and others *will require a specific permit*. You should feel free to mention the Ohio Spider Survey in your request to a landowner/agency if that will help you convince them that the collections are for a legitimate scientific purpose.