

I, Spy...SPIDERS!



★ **Spiders eat pests** like mosquitoes, flies, roaches, earwigs, fleas, clothing moths, and garden aphids (400-800 million TONS per year worldwide)!

★ **Spiders are food** in a healthy ecosystem for many small mammals, birds, & fish!

★ **Spiders are SHY**, not aggressive! They prefer to hide & runaway from danger.







★ Only ONE spider in Colorado has venom of medical importance to humans (western black widow), and it **will ONLY bite humans if seriously provoked!**

★ The Bluff Lake site is home to at least 100 different spider species!



Can you find any of these spiders often seen at Bluff Lake?

Put a check mark in the box when you spot one!

<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Funnel Web Spider <i>Agelenopsis aperta</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Builds a silken platform with a funnel near the ground• Sits near the back and rushes out to eat insects when they "blunder onto" the web (accidentally get stuck)• Web often has a back door the spider can use to escape	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Banded Garden Spider <i>Argiope trifasciata</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Builds webs in grassy fields• May create "stabilimenta" (white zig zag bands) in its web• One of the few orb weaving spiders that keeps its web up during the daytime	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Louse Hunter <i>Dysdera crocata</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often found under rocks, logs, and other moist areas• Bright orange, with large "chelicerae" (jaws)• Hunts wood lice (the plural form of "louse") and roly polies• Introduced to the U.S. from Europe and is now common here
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Yellow Sac Spider <i>Cheiracanthium mildei</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common throughout Colorado—including in homes• Introduced from Eurasia, it has spread throughout the U.S.• Builds a silken "retreat" (private, safe place) under leaves to hide during the day• Very active hunter at night• Gets some of its energy by sipping nectar from flowers!	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Western Lynx Spider <i>Oxyopes scalaris</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often found in low branches of trees and shrubs• Hunts its prey by stalking, running, and jumping on insects, much like jumping spiders• The body is spiny• 6 eyes arranged like a hexagon, with 2 smaller eyes underneath	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Wolf Spiders <i>Lycosidae</i></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dark colors help camouflage• Don't build webs—wander on the ground looking for prey to catch• Solitary creatures• Often found in grasslands, moist areas (like near the lake), or near or inside the shed• Despite their fierce name, shy & avoid danger (like most spiders!)

Cobweb Weaver

Enoplognatha ovata



- Can be found in messy webs under leaves in shrubs
- Female guards bluish egg sac
- Young spiderlings stay near their mother until they can build webs & hunt on their own
- When they are old enough to leave their mother, they balloon off on strands of silk

Apache Jumping Spider

Phidippus apacheanus



- Like all types of jumping spiders, to hunt it creeps up on prey then JUMPS onto it by surprise!
- Bright orange-red markings
- Jaws are "iridescent" (shimmer and seem to change color)
- Active during the day
- Female often deposits soft, silken egg sac under bark

Bold Jumping Spider

Phidippus audax



- Striking white markings among deep black "setae" (hair-like structures) on the body
- Bright green "chelicerae" (jaws)
- Like all types of jumping spiders, it has extremely good eyesight
- If you encounter one, move your finger in front of its eyes and it will track the movement!

Crab Spiders

Thomisidae



- Often found on flowers
- Hold their legs to the side of their bodies and scuttle side-to-side like a crab
- They are sit-and-wait predators
- When a pollinating insect comes to visit the flower... POW! The crab spider grabs the insect with its first two pairs of spiny legs
- Often very colorful, and some can change their body color to match the flower!

Slender Crab Spider

Tibellus oblongus



- The slender crab spider is a "running crab spider" in a different family (*philodromidae*) from the crab spiders in the previous entry (*thomisidae*)
- Commonly found in the grassy fields of Bluff Lake
- Buff-colored body with a central stripe down the middle
- Its colors and markings give it great camouflage
- Hides among grasses and vegetation

Western Black Widow

Latrodectus hesperus



- Bright red markings on underside
- Very messy webs close to the ground with strong silk
- Only spider in CO with venom of "medical importance" to humans
- Will only bite humans if seriously provoked. Venom takes a lot of energy to make—they'd rather use it on something they can eat!
- Bites can be very painful, but symptoms typically resolve in 48 hours untreated
- Antivenom is available – if bitten, try to take whatever remains of the spider with you to the hospital

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