

The Spider Club News

(Without any logo.)

Editor : Astri Leroy

December 2007 to January 2008
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MISSION STATEMENT:

“The Spider Club provides a fun, responsible, social learning experience, centered on spiders, their relatives and nature in general.”

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From the Editor:

At the end of last year there was panic in the ranks, everyone was too busy with life, work, families, visitors, crisis management, etc. to get a December newsletter out to our most important people, the Spider Club members. That is why this one is dated December, but you are receiving it in January!

I Am down on my knees and apologize profusely. I said I would step in sometime in late November, quite convinced that I knew it all, could run off a newsletter in record time and get it out to the membership – but guess what? Life again got in the way. I need to apologize personally to all of you and particularly to the Spider Club Committee, I am sorry guys, I let you down. However I think this is a bumper newsletter and I really hope you enjoy it. Perhaps you will see photos of yourself in it (always nice!) and maybe you will learn a little more about arachnids (see Glossary) and have your appetite whetted to come to some of our events before the end of 2008. Astri.

From the Hub

Hi All

Another year has been and gone, they seem to be getting shorter and shorter! For the Spider Club 2007 was pretty eventful, starting with the fantastic Kruger trip, going through very successful id courses, the AGM, Yebo Gogga and other expo's, interesting and awesome outings to different parts of our wonderful country but the two most important projects are that we have started our own reference collection and set up a googlegroup which keeps us all in touch electronically. (Thank you Ian for initiating these two important innovations. Ed.) The sorting sessions of specimens for the reference collection have been a huge learning curve for all those who got involved. WOW!! WHAT A YEAR.

If you have no idea what I am talking about then you must make a plan to join us on our events this year.

Talking of which, please let us know (on spiderclub@googlegroups.com) any favourite places you would like the Spider Club to visit so that we can all get involved. We already have a few very exciting outings planned (see Diary) so JOIN IN.

We would like to wish all of you a wonderful and Prosperous New Year. If you have been away please tell us about the adventures, spider related or not. (If you would like to give us something on these adventures for the newsletter please send them direct to Shirley on armalley@lantic.net. Ed.) If you go went to a really cool place let us know so we can go there too. This is your club and we want to hear from YOU, yes YOU!! ☺
Carol.

Report back on my Second trip to uMkuze Game Reserve

I left in a great rush on Friday afternoon to get through to Nelspruit in time for the evening Spider Talk which was presented by Astri and John at the Lowveld National Botanical Gardens. (See Lowveld Spidering. Ed.) After an absolutely awesome weekend spent in and around Nelspruit I made my way to uMkuze on Monday morning.

This trip we slept in tents and only had electricity for part of the time and there were only 4 UK volunteers to help so it was a bit of a challenge. BUT I have never run away from a challenge before and so on we went.

We collected in the exact same sites as our July/August trip. The buckets had already been opened and so I started collecting spiders on Tuesday morning. One of the volunteers got to a bucket and shouted for me, "there is a really big spider in this one". Now you need to understand that the BIGGEST spider that most of the volunteers have ever seen in their lives is a daddy long legs, so most of the wolf spiders raise this alarm. I ambled over to find – THE BIGGEST SPIDER I HAVE EVER SEEN IN MY LIFE!! It was a *Ceratogyrus bechuanicus* (Horned Baboon spider), adult female and the most awesome specimen. Why she was in a pit fall trap I still have no idea. That is how my Tuesday started, well worth the challenges of wet tents and no electricity.

It started to rain on Wednesday afternoon and when I left on Sunday had not stopped. So the rest of the trip was mainly emptying water out the buckets, some of which started floating in the holes as the water table rose so high. Needless to say Jon Werner, the herp dude was ecstatic. The one day we pulled 22 frogs and toads from one trap station. We found a dead bullfrog in a bucket and Jon dissected it. In its stomach it found a shrew and a lot of spiders. So even if the buckets were not flooded the frogs ate all the spiders before we got there!! Maybe that is the way to do research, put frogs in the buckets and pull all the spiders out of the frogs???? The problem would then be to ID them.

Anyway, despite all of that I have some great finds. This is an e-mail between Ian and Richard Gallon about the other baboon spiders found in the buckets

Hi Richard,

Carol Smith has returned from a survey in Mkuze Game reserve in northern Kwazulu Natal with a whole bunch of male *Idiotheles*. Looking these specimens they seem to be very different to the ones I have seen before. Both the male that Martin and I collected in Kruger and the male from near Carletonville were about the same size, dark brown in colour, and had no radial pattern on the carapace. These Mkuze males are silver grey in colour (just like *C. paulseni*), are much larger and have a very distinct radial pattern on the carapace. I don't think the latter is the same as the Ndumo blue footed species, but is there a possibility that this and the darker form are not conspecific?

Ian

Hi Ian,

Not all *Idiothele nigrofulva* have the distinct carapace pattern. In some specimens the carapace is uniformly dark, in others the striae are so wide that they merge to give the impression of a uniformly pale carapace. Would be worth checking the bulbs just to make sure - if they have a hook-like flange on the embolic tip then you can be fairly certain they're *nigrofulva*.

Cheers,

Richard

There were also a lot of different orb web spiders. If you would like to see some of the things I found come along to a sorting session.

I am planning to go down again in February and May next year to collect from the same sites. This will give us good data on spiders found in the area in different seasons and on age structure of different spiders in different seasons. If anyone is interested in joining me please let me know. I will be going for about a week both months. Carol Smith.

Spidering goes east

On 3, 4 and 5 December I had the privilege of being part of a "Landsdiens" programme on a beautiful farm, Skurwekoppie, just east of Piet Retief, on the Swaziland border, in Mpumalanga. Skurwekoppie Adventures are run by Philip and Elize Riekert.

Over the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the six groups of children rotated through six activities, one of which was SPIDERS. The children, aged from 13 to 18, turned out to be extremely enthusiastic and by the fourth group, children from the first and second groups were bunking the second half of other activities in order to do a second session of spider hunting.

Each session started with a talk in the hall during which we discussed why people are generally so afraid of arachnids, how these little creatures help us, the different methods of catching prey, the basics of web building and spiders which are venomous to human beings. My beautiful female rain spider that accompanies me on all talks performed exquisitely as usual, endearing the children to that which many of them had previously found to be 'grillerig'. We then moved on to scorpions, comparing tails and pincers of a few different species and many of the children plucked up the courage to handle them while smiling proudly into the ever present camera. Thereafter, the children were briefed on bush lore of spider hunting and off we went.

Within the first 100m of the first walk we had found our first Solifuge, which was put into a bottle, under great duress, for later viewing. The area turned out to be fairly swarming with them and a boy in the last group was lucky enough to witness one stalking a grasshopper up a grass stalk, pouncing on it and by the time the rest of us responded to his excited calls, it was munching away happily.

I became known as 'spinnekoottannie' and in each group there were at least two or three children who became so involved that they refused to leave my side for fear of missing anything. Little did they realize, I am notorious for turning over 'unlucky' rocks!

We found some impressive funnel-webs, a variety of crab spiders, wolfies, black buttons, velvet spiders and a tiny baboon spider amongst others. The *Cheloctonus jonesii scorpion* was prolific in the area and there was always great excitement when another one was discovered.

The three days spent with these wonderful people in the most beautiful setting, doing what I love best was a gift at the end of a busy year.

Shirley Armstrong (Spiderlings)

SPIDERS MAY KNOW WHO THEY ARE BUT WE STILL HAVE TO GIVE THEM NAMES! It can take a while!

A received a clipping from the newspaper "Le Soir" of 11th September, 2007 headed: "Découverte d'une nouvelle araignée belge" - "Discovery of a new Belgian spider". Herman Vanuytven found the first specimen in 1989 near the city of Namur but because these things happen slowly it was only after 25 had been examined in 1994 that it was confirmed as a new species.

It is only when an organism is described and the description accepted and published in a recognized scientific publication that it can be assigned a name and in this instance it will only happen either late this year or early 2008. That's taken almost 20 years! It is certain that this small comb-footed spider, *Theridion asopi vanuytven* was happily hiding in crevices in Belgium for millions of years, long before Asterix roamed the ancient forests of Gaul but until the description is published it is officially just a nameless little spider!

This naming of "new" organisms can take a very long time and can you imagine how many spiders still need to be described from our part of the world? Anything we can do in the way of collecting and supplying specimens to the official collections around the country must be worthwhile. You can help by joining the sorting sessions after collecting trips. Voucher specimens are deposited in the National Collection of Arachnida.

HIGHVELD SPIDERING

For those of us who could make it we had a lovely morning in the Pretoria National Botanical Garden where Elizabeth Kassimatis is running a survey of the arachnid fauna and will be presenting her preliminary findings at the Afras Colloquium in February.

She explained to us that this survey is part of S.A.N.S.A. (South African National Survey of Arachnida) which is in turn part of South Africa's contribution to the Convention on Biodiversity. This is an enormous worldwide programme to try to list and name as many organisms as possible before we wipe them off the face of the earth. Perhaps we can even slow the rush to extinction if we awaken the public's awareness of our incredible natural heritage in this country and show people that any natural area is a priceless jewel to be preserved at all costs, even when or perhaps because, it is surrounded by urban development. Elizabeth also explained why, when collecting land invertebrates, including arachnids, it is necessary to kill and preserve them because they are too small and often too difficult to identify without microscopic examination.

After that we set off to check her pitfall and tree traps, see what was in them and at the same time see what other arachnids we could find. Rossouw and friend were up the rocks and into the bushes like weasels, the really small boys sought spiders nearer the ground and Astri used her sweep net in the grassland. Whilst checking under rocks for scorpions (led by Ian - of course!) Chris' son found a really beautiful jumping spider. Astri thought it was in the genus *Cosmophasis*, which it was till renamed to the original genus *Mexcala*. We found this out because Elizabeth sent off to Charles Haddad in Bloemfontein to be identified. Here are his comments: (Thanks Charles!)



This was taken with a cell phone camera!

“*Mexcala elegans* is quite a widespread species in Africa, occurring from East London area up the East coast as far as Kenya, and as far west as central Zambia (specimens I have collected/seen). It is a senior synonym of *Cosmophasis natalensis*, and there are several colour variations. Males usually do not have spots, and rather have a dark triangular abdominal marking on a silver-grey background. Females have two pairs of white or yellow spots, as in your photo. The immatures are also different and have a metallic green carapace and silver-blue abdomen, which is sometimes even metallic purple. I did some research on this species while at Ndumo and they seem to prey exclusively on ants. So far I have observed on 8 or 9 species, some even double the body length of the spider (one female feeding on an African stink ant). This is something that I will be trying to write up next year and publish. I have a fair number of photographs that I could send if needed.”

LOWVELD SPIDERING.

16th - 18th November, 2007. Hosted by the Lowveld National Botanical Garden and the Agricultural Research Council's Tropical Research Centre.

This was a three-part event: an evening spider hunt on Friday night and another on Saturday morning. Both events were full up, in fact oversubscribed with at least double the number of people we had expected! Are Lowvelders more in tune with Nature? Do they have less to do over weekends or is Lou-Nita's marketing just so good they cannot resist. There were people from Witbank, White River and Komatipoort as well as Nelspruit locals and of course us Gautengese.

The evening walk turned up the usual HUNDREDS of wolf spiders (family Lycosidae) on the ground and nursery web spiders (*Rothus* sp. family Pisauridae) higher up in vegetation and as usual those who had never done night "hunts" were amazed. We also were able to watch various orb web spiders (family Araneidae) weavers and thick jawed water orb weavers (*Tetragnatha* sp.) spinning their webs as night fell. There were fishing spiders (*Thalassius* sp. family Pisauridae) on the pond and some as yet unidentified corinnids on tree trunks. Tiny round headed house spiders (*Oecobuis navus*) and small comb-footed spiders (family Theridiidae) had webs against the walls of buildings and a beautiful green male huntsman spider (*Olios* sp. family Sparassidae) led us a merry dance through the leaves of a giant cycad and a lively dandy jumping spider on our bathroom ceiling. Probably for me the most interesting find was a pair of adult spiders (*Mimetus* sp.). The presence of hippos makes for interesting night walks - little bright eyes reflecting back from ground level are fine but if the eyes much wider apart and higher from the ground beware! We were warned that the beasts are NOT people-friendly.

Saturday morning in a disused field belonging to the A.R.C. research farm we had some really great finds, some of the most endearing were many different jumping spiders, family Salticidae, including another dandy jumper (*Portia* sp.). Grass sweeps netted crab spiders (family Thomisidae) in several genera including, *Thomisus*, *Synema* and *Runcinia*. Two particularly beautiful little male web builders were found, one was *Araneus apricus* (family Araneidae) in a curled leaf retreat at the edge of a small orb web, with a bright turquoise-green abdomen and the other in the genus *Episinus*, a comb footed spider (family Theridiidae) that also lives in a curled leaf held together by few strands of silk which seems to be all the web it makes. This one has a kind of box shaped abdomen with yellow tooth-like markings along the sides and a pretty coppery-brown, tree-like marking on the pale cream carapace.

Saturday afternoon the hard-core spider people - John, Astri, Carol, Jurie and Eugene went bush in the Crocodile River Gorge Conservancy. Jurie used his 4 x spidermobile to take us to a wooden cabin built into the rocks with a stunning view over a wooded valley and the cliffs and enormous granite boulders of the gorge itself. Jurie's promised sunset didn't materialize. It rained. While the men braai-ed that evening Carol and I found some amazing spiders: a minute lycosid female, less than 1mm long complete with egg sac attached to her abdomen, a couple of zodariids *Caesetius* sp., some ant-like corinnids, probably in the genus *Merenius* and another huge corinnid hidden behind a curtain of thick, dry silk in a hollow tree branch. Could it be *Corinna natalia*? But of the ground-dwelling spiders, a pair of strange lycosids *Zenonina albocaudata*, with their white legs and velvety triangular abdomens that Jurie caught were the stars of the evening. The kite spider females all seemed to be immature but there was a mature male lurking in one of the ladies' webs. Was he hanging in there till she matured?



Sunday was adventure day when we descended a kloof leading steeply down to the Crocodile River Gorge itself where the N4 highway goes east towards Komatipoort and Maputo. For "normal" people this should take a little more than 2 hours. It took us 6! We had to examine each web, turn over each rotting log, try to name each strange plant, examine otter spoor, collect spiders, exclaim over the view, the reptiles, the trees, a lone klipspringer as well

as scramble and jump over rocks and muddy pools. It was just a most wonderful day. Thank you Jurie and Eugene, you can invite us **ANY TIME!**



Carol was a little unsteady over the rocks, but there are always gentlemen to help a lady in distress. (Jurie and Eugene.)

BEGINNERS' IDENTIFICATION COURSE.

“Astri could not have chosen a more perfect venue for it! Rietfontein Nature Reserve, the little koppie we see on the northern side of Witkoppen Avenue between Main road and Rivonia, is a gem of pristine bushveld in the concrete jungle that is northern Johannesburg. We arrived in the morning to find Blesbok and Springbok frolicking on the lawn in front of the buildings, and a group of wood hoopoes foraging in the trees. The weather was looking a little ominous, and not very conducive to spider hunting with low hanging clouds and the odd bit of drizzle, but we had a very cosy little workroom where we presented our first beginners ID course of the season.

This particular event was a case of the people making the day. In spite of having only a handful of attendees, we could not have asked for a more enthusiastic group of students. After a short introduction to the incredible world of spiders, we headed onto the koppie to see what we could find. The turnout of spiders in spite of the weather, was remarkable. In the space of an hour we had seen little red spotted jumping spiders hidden in their maternal cocoons with bunches of large yellow eggs, tiny little black orb web spiders with yellow stripes, an incredible ant mimicking spider, and a velvet spider which took exception to being extracted from its retreat by biting the extractor on the finger. The group was also captivated by a burrowing scorpion which we found hiding under a rock, and which pugnaciously lived up to its name (*Opisththalmus pugnax*). It was then that the heavens opened and we headed back to our workroom to examine the catch in more detail.

If you ask any expert on the topic, identifying spiders is a tricky task that requires painstaking observation of the animals in minute detail. However, our approach with these courses is to give people a very broad idea of what spider they might be looking at. We do this by focusing attention on the general ‘feel’ of the spider – the way it walks, the way the legs are arranged, the general colour pattern, and where they are found. Using hand lenses and

two microscopes, the students took the task like fish to water, and quickly learned what wolf spiders, jumping spiders, and crab spiders amongst others, (usually) look like. Overall the course was thoroughly enjoyed by learners and teachers alike, and we gained some great new members.

Our next course is on the 23rd of February 2008, at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, Roodepoort. If you haven't attended one of these courses before and you're interested in getting to know your spiders well, be sure not to miss it!"

Violin spider stuff.

I am sure many of you have been badgered, inundated, annoyed, irritated by dozens (if not more) e-mails about the dreaded violin spider which is overwhelming South Africa. Well, forget it! There are no more violin spiders now than there were last year, or the year before or the year before that. The spider in the photograph is *Loxosceles reclusa* a species which occurs in the Gulf States of the United States of America. Sure, we do have violin spiders here and when they bite it can be a problem but spider bites are really not something people need to worry about. It is just a shame that the general public know that spiders possess venom. The vast majority (and the count is now up to 40 000 species as of right now) cannot, do not and have no need to bite humans. If you want to know first-hand (or thumb to be more precise) about a violin spider bite, please contact Eugene de Kok our webmaster.

KWA-NUNU in Natal.

The event takes place from 11th – 15th July at the Natural Science Museum, Durban. If anyone can join in please let Carol know and she will liaise with Marilyn.

KWANUNU, an interactive exhibition, with an exciting mix of live animals (and plants), that can be seen, touched and even eaten, will be a fun and creative way to bring science to the future generations, and simultaneously highlight professional entomologists, conservationists and amateur enthusiasts as people with fascinating careers and hobbies.

This joint venture, between the Durban Natural Science Museum and the School of Biological & Conservation Sciences, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, will run at the Durban Natural Science Museum from 11th to 15th July 2008. We showcase our incredible biodiversity and at the same time have local relevance using carefully constructed and managed displays that can appeal to all ages from preschoolers to school leavers, parents and teachers. We promise real experiments, interactions with professionals and amateur enthusiasts and an underlying message of conservation and respect for living things.

Holding the International Congress of Entomology in South Africa is a major event for African Entomologists but probably means little to the general public. How can we share this excitement with the general public in a worthwhile and meaningful way?

We would like to mount an interactive arthropod exhibition along the lines of Yebo Gogga developed under the creative guidance of Mrs Caroline Crump and Professor Marcus Byrne of the University of the Witwatersrand. This exhibition is an exciting mix of live insects and other arthropods that can be seen, touched and even eaten, real experiments, interactions with professionals and amateur enthusiasts and an underlying message of conservation and respect for living things. Our fascinating arthropod fauna could be showcased for our international delegates and at the same time make a solid and useful contribution to biology teaching in local schools, making the study fun and interesting for pupils and providing materials that the average teacher would never have the chance to obtain. Experience has shown that carefully constructed and managed displays can appeal to all ages from preschoolers to school leavers, parents and teachers. It also highlights professional entomologists, conservationists and amateur enthusiasts as people with fascinating careers and hobbies, a fun and creative way to bring science to the future generations. The exhibition has always attracted lots of media attention with television, radio and print coverage, enhancing the importance of science as a career.

Ms Marilyn Bodasing of the Department of Biology of the University and Mr Guy Redman of the Durban Museum would be in charge of the exhibition. Both are experienced museologists. Assistance has been promised by various specialist societies and professional organizations. The organization would be in competent hands.

Our aims:

- To promote entomology as a worthwhile career in science.
- To provide an educational experience to scholars and teachers in the wider Durban area.
- To showcase our arthropod fauna for international visitors.
- Create a learning and teaching experience for student helpers.
- Create a common platform for professionals and amateur societies to work together for the community.
- To leave a legacy of material that could be retained for future exhibitions in both the Durban Museum and the Museum of the Biology Department of the University of Kwa Zulu Natal.

Regards
Marilyn

Yebo gogga.

This was a great event and a wonderful showcase for invertebrates, although we find that plants and bats and things seem to be creeping into the picture. However as usual the spiders and scorpions stole the show. We don't want to hide our light under a bushel and be shy about it, we almost ARE Yebo Gogga! It is fun to participate and see the faces of the public when they realise that arachnids are non-threatening and really quite interesting. If you have not visited this annual event at the Life Sciences Museum of the University of the Witwatersrand, please make a date for the first week of October and WATCH THIS SPACE.



Some years back a wonderful member of the Spider Club, Anne Cleal who lives in Wakkerstroom, sat down and wrote out a glossary general of terms on entomology/biology in general and arachnology in particular. It is comprehensive and pretty long so I have cut it up into alphabetical order, here are the terms beginning with “a”. Can I suggest you keep a copy so that after 26 letters of the alphabet and 26 more issues of the Spider Club News, you will have a pretty extensive glossary of terms. That takes us up to the year 2014! Do you think that is practical?

SPIDER CLUB OF SOUTHERN AFRICA GLOSSARY SPIDERS (Southern African) & related words

Acknowledgements:

AFRICA BIRDS & BIRDING 1997 : 2(6)66 (Black Eagle Publishing)
AFRICAN SPIDERS - AN IDENTIFICATION MANUAL
AS Dippenaar-Schoeman, T Jocque (ARC-PPRI)
BABOON & TRAPDOOR SPIDERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA - AN IDENTIFICATION MANUAL
AS Dippenaar-Schoeman (ARC-PPRI)
FIELD GUIDE TO THE SCORPIONS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
Jonathan Leeming (Struik)
KINGFISHERS OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
Phillip A Clancey (Jonathan Ball Publishers)
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GLOSSARY

s = singular p = plural

abdomen: also called opisthosoma: posterior part of the body of a spider
abiotic: non-living, e.g. chemical.
abutting: touching at one end or side, lying adjacent to
Acari (order): ticks and mites
Acarology: The study of Acari.
accessory claws: modified setae at tip of tarsi; only present in web-building Spiders, used together with the tarsal claws to secure grip on threads
accessory radii: extra radii.
Achaearanea globispira: known as the bauble spider
aciniform glands: silk glands vaguely in shape of needles.
Acroceridae: known as spider flies, a deadly internal parasite; larva climb up the host spider's legs entering body through booklungs
actuate: to put into action
acuminate: tapering to a sharp point
Adonea (genus): known as decorated velvet spiders
adpressed: flattened to the substrate.
aerial dispersal: (also known as 'ballooning') a method of travel used by spiders – strands of silk, emitted from the spinnerets, are suspended by air currents, so carrying the spider through the air
Aethriscus (genus): known as bird-dropping spiders
Afraraneus (genus): known as hairy field spiders (as are genera *Neoscona* and *Araneus*)
Afrarchaea (genus): known as African long-neck spiders
African bolas spiders: common name for genus *Cladomelea*
African corklid trapdoor spider: common name for genus *Stasimopus*
African curtain-web spider: common name for genus *Thelechoris*
African leaf-litter trapdoor spider: common name for genus *Homostola*

African long-neck spider: common name for genus *Afrarchaea*

African mask crab spider: common name for the genus *Synema*

African purse-web spider: common name for *Calommata simoni*, family Atypidae

African tree trapdoor spider: common name for genus *Moggridgea*

African wafer-lid trapdoor spider: common name for genus *Ancylotrypa*

afromontane forest: of, growing in, or inhabiting, African mountain areas

afrotropical region: refers to Africa south of the Sahara, previously known as the Ethiopian Zoogeographical Region

Agelenidae (family): [agelenids] build flat, slightly concave sheet-webs with a funnel shaped retreat in grass and low vegetation; known as funnel-web spiders and grass funnel-web spiders, the latter esp. genus *Olorunia*. In southern Africa single subfamily Ageleninae, genera: *Agelena*, *Benoitia*, and *Maimuna* (Namibia/Botswana), *Mistaria*, *Olorunia*, and *Tegenaria*

agglutinated: joined together by adhesion

aggregate glands: for glue of sticky spiral using posterior spinnerets

aggregation: large collection

aggregation size: area of mass or cluster of gathering

agonistic behaviour: combative/competitive actions or attitude; behaviour associated with aggression, including offensive, defensive and submissive attitudes.

agroecosystems: an ecological community together with its physical environment of fields and earth, considered as a unit

allopatric (allopatry): of two or more species occupying mutually exclusive ranges which do not overlap (cf. sympatric and parapatric)

allospecies: allopatric species that together form a superspecies, assumed to have evolved from a single, geographically variable species; forms of immediate evolutionary origin now in a condition of secondary contact without intergradation, reacting at the range interface as viable species; a constituent species of a super species

alveolus: a small cavity or pit in which lies the cymbium

Amaurobiidae (family): [amaurobiids] drab brown or grey, ground-dwelling cryptic spiders, commonly found in dark and damp places; known as hackled mesh-web spiders or light-eyed cribellate spiders. Genera found in southern Africa are *Chresiona*, *Macrobunus*, *Obatala* and *Pseudauximus*

The following genera have been moved into a new family the Phyxelididae: *Lamaika*, *Malaika*, *Matundua*, *Namaquarachne*, *Phyxelida*, *Pongolania*, *Themacrys*, *Vidole*, and *Xevioso*

Amaurobioidea:

Amaurobioidea (genus): known as seashore spiders, as is the family Anyphaenidae

Amblypygi (order): known as tailless whip scorpion (*not* scorpions) (**amblypygids**)

ambulatory:

Ammoxenidae (family): [ammoxenids] known only from southern Africa, unique free-living, fast moving termitophagous hunters with a special ability to dive into sand; known as termite-eating spiders or sand divers. Genera *Ammoxenus* and *Rastellus*

amplitude: refers to the intensity of a sound, as measured in decibels from a fixed distance

ampullate glands: a) for producing drag lines using anterior spinnerets
b) for producing frame threads using median spinnerets

anal tubercle: small tubercle above spinnerets through which the anus opens

analogous character: a character shared between taxa as a result of convergence, not as a result of being present in a common ancestor (cf. homologous character)

analogue: a second form corresponding in an evolutionary, morphological or other sense with the one under discussion

Anapidae (family): [anapids] cryptozoic and found in the litter layer, some produce small horizontal orb-webs; known as ground orb-web spiders / ground orb-web weavers and dwarf ring-shield spiders. In southern Africa, genera *Crozetulus*, *Dippenaaria*, *Metanapis* and *Pseudanapis*

anastomosing radii: radii (in an orbweb) that connect to other parts of web.

anastomosis: the union or connection of branches, as of spider webs

anciniform glands: for ensnaring silk, sperm web and the outer wall of the egg sac, using median and posterior spinnerets

Ancylotrypa (genus): known as African wafer-lid trapdoor spiders

anecdotal: characterised by short accounts of interesting incidents
angulate: to become angular in shape
annelids: earthworms and other worms having segmented bodies, belonging to the phylum Annelida
annotated: with notes.
annulations: ring-like structures or segments
ant-eating armoured spiders: common name for subfamily Zodariinae
anteriad: toward the front.
anterior: towards the front or the front part of...
anterior lateral eyes (ALE): eyes situated at each end of anterior eye row
anterior lobe: anterior part of endite, often elongated in Mygalomorpha
anterior median eyes (AME): middle pair of eyes in anterior eye row
anterodorsal: towards the front and on the upper surface.
anteromedian: towards the front and in the middle.
anteromesal scopula: scopulae towards the front (of a leg for example).
anthropogenic extinction: extinction caused by people.
anthropomorphism: the attribution of human form or behaviour to an animal
antivenin: an antitoxin prepared from the blood serum of an animal, usually a horse, which neutralizes or inactivates a specific toxin
ant-like sac spiders / ant-like spiders: common names for the family Corinnidae
Anyphaenidae (family): [anyphaenids] only a single littoral species in southern Africa, known as seashore spiders. Genus *Amaurobioides*
Anyphops (genus): commonly referred to by the family name of flattie or wall spider
apex (p = apexes or apices): distal tip
apical: terminal, at the end or top of a structure; constituting the apex
apomorphic: apomorphies: apomorphy: derived character
apophysis (p = apophyses): an excrescence or appendage changing the general cylindrical or globular shape of a sclerite; most often used in description of male palp
aposematically: aposematic coloration: warning coloration
appressed: lying flat or pressed closely against something
aquatic: living or growing in water
arachnophobia: irrational or excessive fear of spiders
arachnid: a class of arthropods characterized by having simple eyes and four pairs of legs; any of various arthropods of the class Arachnida, such as a spider, scorpion, tick or harvestman, characteristically having four pairs of legs, simple eyes and no antennae
Arachnidism: Envenomation caused by an arachnid.
Arachnological: To do with arachnology.
Araneae: spider order, usually divided into the Mesothelae and Opisthothelae
Araneidae (family): [araneids] collectively known as orb-web spiders; a diverse group of orb-weavers occupying a wide range of habitats. Southern African subfamilies and genera listed below

Araneinae	Argiopinae	Cyrtarachninae	Cyrtophorinae	Gasteracanthinae
<i>Aethruscus</i>	<i>Argiope</i>	<i>Cladomelea</i>	<i>Cyrtophora</i>	<i>Gasteracantha</i>
<i>Arachnura</i>	<i>Gea</i>	<i>Cyrtarachne</i>		<i>Gastroxya</i>
<i>Araneus</i>		(Mozambique)		<i>Hypsacantha</i>
<i>Cyclosa</i>		<i>Pycnacantha</i>		<i>Isoxya</i>
<i>Cyphalonotus</i>				
<i>Kilima</i>				
<i>Larinia</i>				
<i>Lipocrea</i>				
<i>Neoscona</i>				
<i>Paralarinia</i>				
<i>Paraplectana</i>				
<i>Pararaneus</i>				
<i>Poltys</i>				
<i>Singa</i>				

subfamily unknown: genera *Caerostris*, *Chorizopella*, *Ideocaira*, *Megaraneus*, *Nemoscolus*, *Nemospiza*, *Ursa*

Araneinae (sub family): described as typical orb-weavers

Araneism: The clinical symptoms of arachnid envenomation.

Araneoida: defined as ecribellate spiders with three tarsal claws on each leg and lacking scopulae

Araneological: refers to spiders only.

Araneomorphae: one of two suborders of the Opisthothelae (the other being the Mygalomorphae); represented by 93 families about 2700 genera and some 32,800 species, approximately 94% of the known spider population.

Araneomorphae are known as "true" spiders, usually having two booklungs and/or tracheae, six spinnerets and diaxial fangs

araneomorph spiders: so-called 'true spiders', having diaxial fangs

araneophagic: **araneophagous**: spider-eating organisms.

Araneophagy: eating spiders

Araneus (genus): known as hairy field spiders (as are genera *Neoscona* and *Afraraneus*)

A. apricus: known as the Green orbweb spider.

arboreal: living in or among trees *see* terrestrial

Archaeidae (family): [**archaeids**] free-living, slow-moving, cryptozoic hunters, found at high altitude; single genus

Afrarchaea found in southern Africa. Known as long-necked spiders, also long-neck spiders

arcuate: curved or arched

Argiope aurocincta: known as the red-legged garden spider

A. australis: known as the yellow and black striped garden spider.

A. cuspidata: known as Saint Andrew's Cross spider. *A. nigrovittata*: known as the black & yellow garden spider

A. trifasciata: known as the banded garden spider

Argyrodes (genus): known as dew drop spiders, a kleptoparasite often found in the orb-webs of *Nephila*

Ariadna (genus): commonly referred to by the family name of tube-web spider

arid: very dry, lacking sufficient rainfall to support agriculture

arid zone: a region of low rainfall with characteristically sparse vegetation, intermediate between desert and savannah

armoured spiders: common name for the family Zodariidae (aka burrowing spiders)

arthropoda: an assemblage of phyla, all of which possess an exoskeleton and jointed limbs

articulated setae: jointed bristles functioning as mechanoreceptors, monitoring touch and vibration

asexual reproduction: reproduction that does not involve sexual activity

asperities: sharp or rough pimple-like elevations on the skin

aspirator: another word for pooter.

assemblages: gathering together

atrium (p = atria): internal chamber at entrance of copulation tract in female haplogyne spiders

attachment disc: silken disc used to attach silk to a surface.

attenuated: made finer or reduced in strength

Atypidae (family): [**atypids**] live permanently in burrows with a purse-like web covering the entrance, known as purse-web spiders. One species known from southern Africa, *Calommata simoni*

autochthonous: arising in a given place or region; native to that region

autospasy: voluntary severance of part of its body by an animal.

Avellopsis (genus): known as camel-backed spiders

If you want to keep up to date on the forthcoming 9th AFRAS Colloquium at Lajuma in the Soutpansberg, please visit the official website at <http://soutpansberg.com/aac9> see below:

SOME SPIDER EVENTS FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

Note that many several events are NOT arranged by the Spider Club, although Spider Club members are very welcome. Please contact the official organizers in each case to book.

SUNDAY 27th January, 2008. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Spiderlings outing. Delta Park Enviro Centre, Randburg. BOOKING ESSENTIAL, BOOK BY 20TH JANUARY 2008 with Shirley Armstrong, 083-637-0690 or armalley@lantic.net. Cost R20 per child, Adults free. Meet in parking lot of Delta Park. Adult supervision so children can be left and fetched at 12.45. Wear closed shoes and a hat; bring a water bottle and lunch. You will get dirty, so please wear old clothes!

TUESDAY 29TH JANUARY, 2008 Time 7 for 7.30 p.m.

Spider talk and slide show by Astri Leroy, organized by People for Wildlife, Roodepoort Branch. Venue Roodepoort Country Club, Hole in one Road, Ruimsig. Contact Charmaine (011) 953-4470 No charge but donations to People for Wildlife are welcome. Cash bar and bar meals available.

SUNDAY 3 – FRIDAY MORNING 8th February, 2008. 9th AFRAS Colloquium, hosted by the University of Venda and ARC-Plant Protection Research Institute. The venue is Lajuma Mountain Retreat 50 k from Makhado/Louis Trichardt. For more information visit the official website at <http://soutpansberg.com/aac9> or e-mail Stefan Foord at Stefan.Foord@univen.ac.za. Registration, abstract submission, etc. close on 5th January.

FRIDAY 8th – SUNDAY 10th February, 2008.

Weekend away near Zerust at Andre and Ruan Lambrechts' farm. R100 per person for the weekend. Booking essential Contact Ian Engelbrecht on Ian.Engelbrecht@gauteng.gov.za or 082-763-4596, but be quick, there are very few indoor spaces left!

SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Spider talk and walk led by Astri with the Botanical Society at The Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, Poortview, Roodepoort. BOOK WITH THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY call Karen on (011) 958-0529 or botsoc@sisulugarden.co.za for details and cost.

16th – 24th FEBRUARY, 2007. RESEARCH EVENT, u MKUZE GAME RESERVE, KZN. Contact Carol Smith on 083-374-6116 or membership@spiderclub.co.za. Book as soon as possible. Cost to be confirmed. This is the 3rd stage of the research project.

SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2008. 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Beginners' Spider Identification Course. Nestlé Environmental Centre, Walter Sisulu National Botanical Gardens, Malcolm Road, Poortview, Roodepoort. BOOKING ESSENTIAL. Book with Astri Leroy, info@spiders.co.za, (011) 958-0695 or 073-168-7187. Cost R60 Spider Club members, R120 non-members. This course is an opportunity to learn the very basics of identifying spiders. Topics covered include an introduction to spiders in general, venomous spiders, where and how to look for spiders and identifying and naming spiders. Included in the course fee is a copy of the booklet Highveld Spiders by Astri Leroy, and other books will be on sale. This course is easy going and great fun. Regret no children under 14.

SATURDAY 1st March, 2008. 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Spiderlings/Spider Club day outing. Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, Poortview, Roodepoort. Meet in the parking lot. There will be adult supervision so children can be left and fetched at 12.45. Wear closed shoes and bring a water bottle, hat and lunch. . Contact Shirley Armstrong. Cell 0832-637-0690 or e-mail armalley@lantic.net Cost R10 to Spider Club and entrance fee to the garden.

SUNDAY 2ND March, 2008.

Spider walk at Kloofendal Nature Reserve, Roodepoort. Bookings with Friends of Kloofendal for Guided Walks: Friends of Kloofendal members: R20; non-members R30; children R10. Walks are usually about two hours. Please book with Karin to assist with numbers at tell 011-674-2980, cell 072-595-6991

www.footprint.co.za/kloofendal.htm, www.footprint.co.za/spottiswoode.htm

SUNDAY 9th March, 2008. Times: 09:30 – 12:30

Spider Walk. Pretoria National Botanical Garden

Cost: R30/adults and R15/children

Participants will all meet at the Environmental Education Centre in the Garden. A pair of comfortable shoes, a hat and maybe something to drink can be brought along for the walk. The event will start with a short talk and slide show and then the walk, conducted by Astri Leroy (author of the book *Spiders of Southern Africa* on sale for R120) and will take place in the Garden. **Booking is essential because only a limited number of people can be accommodated.**

Banking Details:

Account holder: South African National Biodiversity Institute. Bank: Nedbank Claremont, Account number: 1046 361 635, Branch code: 104609. Current Account

I. PLEASE INDICATE THE FOLLOWING info in the reference section of the deposit slip: Pretoria NBG – Spider Walk

I. PLEASE FAX proof of payment (deposit slip) to Fax number: 086 692 6837 or (012) 8044992

For more information please email Linette Ferreira at: ferreira@sanbi.org or phone (012) 843 5172/3/4

LONG WEEKEND 21st – 24th MARCH, 2008. CLUB OUTING. Location to be confirmed, possibly South Coast. Contact Carol Smith on cell 083-374-6116 or e-mail fristaidpriority@absamail.co.za

WEEKEND 21st – 24th MARCH, 2008. SPIDERLINGS WEEKEND AWAY. Limited to 20 children ages from 7 – 14. No adults, no electronic devices! Details to be confirmed. Contact Carol Smith on cell 083-374-6116 or e-mail fristaidpriority@absamail.co.za

SUNDAY 20TH APRIL, SPIDERLINGS OUTING. Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve. Details to be confirmed. Contact Shirley Armstrong. Cell 0832-637-0690 or e-mail armalley@lantic.net

SUNDAY 11TH MAY 2008. 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Spiderlings/Spider Club day outing. Fountains Valley Recreation Area. Meet in the parking lot. There will be adult supervision so children can be left and fetched at 12.45. Wear closed shoes and bring a water bottle, hat and lunch. Cost: entrance fee to resort. Contact Shirley Armstrong. Cell 0832-637-0690 or e-mail armalley@lantic.net

SATURDAY 7TH JUNE, 2008. 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. SPIDERLING TALK / SHOW & TELL.

At Shirley's house. Cost R20. Bring your own creepies to tell us about and we will bring ours. Talk will cover different spiders and scorpions and care of your pets. A craft activity will be included. Bring a water bottle and lunch. Contact Shirley Armstrong. Cell 0832-637-0690 or e-mail armalley@lantic.net

FRIDAY 11TH – TUESDAY 15TH JULY. KWA NUNU.

22nd JUNE – 22ND AUGUST 2008. uMKUZE GAME RESERVE, KZN. Spider Research Survey.

This is a new research project at uMkuze Game Reserve. The Spider Club has been invited to be part of it. If you are interested and can come for a few days, please contact Carol Smith on cell 083-374-6116 or e-mail membership@spiderclub.co.za for more information. Book by 10th June 2008, latest. Cost to be confirmed.

MEMBERS BE AWARE!!!! WE HAVE ARRANGED LOTS OF STUFF FOR YOU. IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE HERE'S YOUR CHANCE. LET'S SEE YOU ALL AT SOMETHING THIS YEAR....