WEE RIGGER – A POEM IN SCOTS by Robert Menzies Banks

You creep along the skirting board
You scamper over the floor
You hide in small dark corners
Pretending you’re not there.

Such industrious little creatures
Why are you so reviled?
Why do Arachnid haters
By your presence feel so riled?

I know myself, I tend toward
A certain admiration
For rigging skills, I would award
A very high citation.

For once I was a rigger too,
Not all that long ago,
Compared to you all I can say
Is, I was very slow.

You can rig both stayer and braces,
And anchor with a tweak,
You can finish in two minutes
What would take me near a week!

I’m glad little beastie, you’re so small
For I would bet my shirt
That had you been as big as me
I’d have long been out of work.

Ye creep alang the skirting board
Ye scamper ower the flair
Ye hide in wee dark corners
Pretending ye’re no there.

Sic industrious wee craters,
Why are ye sae reviled?
Why dae Arachnid haters
By yer presence feel sae riled?

Ah ken mesel, Ah tend toward
A certain admiration,
For riggin skills, Ah wad award
A very high citation.

For ance Ah wais a rigger tae,
No aa that lang ago,
Compared tae you, aa Ah kin say
Is, Ah was awfy slow!

Ye can rig baith stayer an braces,
An anchor wi a tweak,
Ye can feenish in twae meenits
Whit wad take me, neer a week!

Ah’m gled, wee Beastie, ye’re sae wee
For Ah wad bet mah sark,
That had ye been as big as me
Ah’d lang been oot o wark ..

Tegenaria sp. They are really not so small!
Photographed in Scotland
21.9.2009 by Astri Leroy

Ye can rig baith stayer an braces,
An anchor wi a tweak,
Ye can feenish in twae meenits
Whit wad take me, neer a week!

Ah’m gled, wee Beastie, ye’re sae wee
For Ah wad bet mah sark,
That had ye been as big as me
Ah’d lang been oot o wark ..
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### DISCLAIMER

THE VIEWS OF THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS PUBLICATION DO NOT NECESSARILY COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF THE SPIDER CLUB OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.
Who are we?

The Spider Club of Southern Africa is a non-profit-making organisation. Our aim is to encourage an interest in arachnids – especially spiders and scorpions - and to promote this interest and the study of these animals by all suitable means.

Membership is open to anyone – people interested in joining the club may apply to any committee member for information.

Field outings, day visits, arachnid surveys and demonstrations, workshops and exhibits are arranged from time to time. A diary of events and outings is published at the end of this newsletter.

Mission Statement

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

Contact Us

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POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. Box 390, Ruimsig, 1732

Visit our website, and send us photos and news that we can post there!

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From the hub

What have you gained from being a member of the Spider Club of Southern Africa? What do you like about the club? What don’t you like? We would love to have feedback from club members, so let us know and send your ideas, complaints or compliments to info@spiderclub.co.za.

We would still like to boost club membership, so if you can think of good ways of recruiting new members, please let us know. If you have a friend or friends who just MIGHT be interested, bring them along to one of our club events. You would be surprised how many otherwise bush-wise folk have no clue about arachnids. Bring along your birding friends, the tree huggers, big game watchers and even hunters. They will be amazed by our animals! If you know someone who is (quite irratically) afraid of spiders, maybe joining The Spider Club will help them get over it, after all most spiders are small and very beautiful. So bring your friends along to your Spider Club events.

The Highveld and Bushveld areas are gearing up for summer, so get ready guys! Once the rains start there will be plenty to see out there. The lucky members from other, wetter parts of the country are already sending in photographs of interesting spiders, so the “season” is really starting!

In fact, we have just received a photograph of a strange male mygalomorph sent in by Dave Turner. The spider in question was seen and photographed in Honeydew, Gauteng and is probably a male AMERICAN Purse Web Spider *Sphodros rufipes*. How on earth did it land on a lady’s chest on the West Rand, South Africa? One of my fears has always been that inevitably some of these exotic animals will escape or be released and become established in the wild. Many come from countries with similar habitats to ours and if they DO establish colonies may quickly outcompete our local fauna which in itself poses problems, and many of them could pose threats not only to the integrity of OUR biodiversity but actually be a threat to people. Oh, horror! On the other hand there are far too many people, so maybe that’s a good thing.

If you know of great places to visit this summer, let someone on the committee know on info@spiderclub.co.za. Talking of which you will see quite a change in the committee … Alistair our super Chairman last year has abandoned us and is now working in Nigeria so we
don’t REALLY have one. We are headless so to speak, but it seems the web has caught me again, which is why I am giving you a hard time ‘From the Hub’.

As usual our newsletter is full of interesting articles, reports and forthcoming events. Please diarise these and come and join in. **Don’t be an armchair arachnologist!**

![Spider Image]

**Hang in there!!**

![Spider Image]

*Astri Leroy,* reluctantly, once more at The Hub.

---

**From the Editor:**

Spring finally arrived after a tough winter, and then suddenly we were in summer! I am finding lots of mature wolf and nursery web spiders in my garden, all ready to breed. It all looks very promising for a productive summer of spidering.

We really do need your help at YEBO GOGGA this year. Astri and John Leroy are away for the whole of October, and Alistair Mathie is in Nigeria. Without these stalwarts to help us run the stand, we really are in dire straits. Even if you can only manage an hour or two at the stand, please contact me. We can throw in a complimentary Yebo t-shirt if you come along to help.

My thanks for Astri’s assistance with this issue.

Yours in spidering

![Spider Image]

**Joan**
BOOK REVIEW – BY Astri Leroy

SPIDER COMMUNICATION Mechanisms and Ecological Significance
Edited by Peter N. Witt and Jerome S. Rovner

Although this book was published almost 30 years ago, it is still vitally relevant and (to me at least) utterly fascinating. There are 10 chapters by well-known arachnologists that cover not just methods of communication but interactions between individual spiders, social spacing and behavioural responses to conspecifics, prey and predators. Some of the chapters are easy to understand, some – I must admit – are more difficult but all are enthralling. This book opened a whole new world of spider behaviour to me when I was just learning how to identify a few familiar species. It had not really dawned on me that most spiders are social creatures with a need to communicate and when I understood that they actually “spoke” to each other, serenaded potential mates and chased away rivals ACoustically, I was quite blown away.

You WILL notice that systematics have changed since the book was published. For example the genera Nephila and Nephilengys were at that time placed in the family Araneidae, but that doesn’t alter their behaviour and anyway the spiders themselves don’t know we have moved them around the taxonomical chess board! Don’t let that put you off; it is a fascinating book if you are interested in spider behaviour.

The chapters are:

Chapter 1. **Introduction: Communication in Spiders** by Peter N. Witt
Chapter 2. **The significance and Complexity of Communication in Spiders** by Bertrand Krafft
Chapter 3. **Spiders and Vibratory Signals: Sensory Reception and Behavioral Significance** by Friederich G. Barth
Chapter 4. **Acoustic Communication and Reproductive Isolation in Spiders** by George W. Uetz and Gail E. Stratton
Chapter 5. **Visual Communication in Jumping Spiders (Salticidae)** by Lyn Forster
Chapter 6. **The behavior of Communicating in Jumping Spiders (Salticidae)** by Robert R. Jackson
Chapter 7. **Chemical Communication in Lycosids and Other Spiders** by William J. Tietjen and Jerome S. Rovner
Chapter 8. **Spider Interaction Strategies: Communication vs. Coercion** by Susan E. Riechert
Chapter 9. **Social Spacing Strategies in Spiders** by J. Wesley Burgess and George W. Uetz
Chapter 10. **Spider Foraging: Behavioral Responses to Prey** by Susan E. Riechert and Jadwiga Luczak.

Each chapter is broken down into sub-sections and although written as a compilation of stand-alone scientific papers the book is easier to read than most of this genre!

Highly recommended if you want to get a handle on spider behaviour.
HOW TO CATALOGUE YOUR BOOK COLLECTION!

By Joan Faiola

After a physical review of my possessions by my insurance brokers, it transpired that my book collection was valued by them at one third of my total insured amount for household contents! In a way this was a thumb suck by them, and I questioned them about it. The advice of my brokers: if you want to understand your books’ worth, you need to catalogue them!

I’ve been collecting books for years, and have amassed a fair number of books on Natural History, including a few collectable items and first editions. It was obvious that they were right, and if I lost my books in a fire, how would I be able to replace them without a list?

I started on this daunting task, using Excel to build a database. I got 30 books into the database, and this took quite a couple of hours. I felt rather dispirited. Luckily Google came to my rescue, when I discovered some cataloguing programs available online. I immediately downloaded a couple of these programs on free trials, and after some testing found that Collectorz.com’s Book Collector Pro suited me the best. The downside of this program is that it cannot be used for other collections, such as Vinyl LPs, DVDs and CDs, comics (!) etc. So in a way the designers are a little greedy. You have to buy different programs from them for the other collections. (Some of the other products available allow you to catalogue all your collections in one program.) And it appears that the best program of the lot can only be used on an Apple Mac, so I could not try it.

I’ve ordered an inexpensive barcode scanner from Collectorz.com, and can’t wait to receive it! In the meantime, I have loaded nearly 200 books by searching using the ISBN number. The program finds the book online, with its title, authors and classification details. All fields for the entry can be edited, and the program downloads an image of the cover. You can then add details of the book’s condition, your rating of it, whether it is a signed first edition, paperback, hard cover etc., and there is even a field for recording other media such as CDs that were delivered with the book. A monetary value can be assigned to each book. All the fields can be searched upon, and reports extracted. The program even found a book or two that are too old for ISBN numbers, but if a book does not exist on the online database, you can add it anyway.

I am really enjoying using this program, but I will probably download one of the freeware programs to catalogue my music.

If any of you with extensive libraries have a need for this type of software, go research for yourself what’s available, and choose the program you like best.

I’ll let you know how I get on with the scanner!
**Events Reports**

**National Science Week Open Day, Pretoria Zoo - 6 August 2011**

Report by Astri Leroy

We were excited to be invited to take a stand at the National Science Week Open Day at the National Zoological Gardens in Pretoria on 6th August. Our fine bright yellow gazebo should have caught the public’s eye but we were kind of hidden in a far corner of the zoo grounds, far from such draw cards as the large carnivores, snakes and crocodiles so we didn’t really get much "passing trade". If we are invited again next year we should ask if we can be close to the reptiles, it would be logical. However, as usual we had our fair share of fascinated people around our stand and we had LOTS of helpers. Thank you so much everyone. It was a nice easy day and because we were not rushed off our feet we had time to enjoy the zoo.

**Outdoor/indoor market at Sammy Marks Museum, Pretoria - 9 August 2011**

Report by Peet Van der Ark

It was an early start for most of us from the Spider Club of Southern Africa. My day started with a hunt to get a big hairy tarantula out of her hide. This 8 legged beast was cleverer than me and showed me who was the boss. She turned her abdomen so that you could see her abdomen and back legs. The next moment she gave it to me and everything was just covered in tarantula hair.

No it’s not a plastic model!  

Total disbelief (or dismay).

At the expo we were busy like you couldn’t describe. There wasn’t time to rest. As spiders are always making everybody scared the visitors all asked questions about spiders, scorpions and the guests from Venezuela
and Brazil. They pulled most of the people because of their size. As the day went by I noticed the big *Theraphosa apophysis* (Goliath Pinkfoot) drooling venom out of her fangs because of all the handling. She was still calm yet with venom drooling everywhere. She gave me a big fright when she almost drove her fangs into my hand. I left her alone for a while and she calmed down.

We convinced many people that spiders are your friends and that they are a big can of 8 legged doom that control other bugs and pests. (*Hopefully they did not see the Pinkfoot’s venomous fangs! Ed.*)

### Sorting and ID Workshop at the Ditsong Natural History Museum, Pretoria 28 August 2011 – host: Robin Lyle

**Report by Terry Gunter**

Our trip to the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria was very exciting. Chesney (age 10) was thrilled about using a microscope for the first time. On our arrival we were shown to the workshop room – everyone was very friendly. A brief overview on spiders was given, the only drawback was the print on the screen was very small and difficult to follow, then we got started. The first spider we analyzed was a rain spider. Rob’s microscope worked very well and we were able to see the eyes, booklungs etc. – Chesney is now able to identify the difference between male and female spiders also. When using the reference books all spiders seemed to be of the same suborder that we looked at, it would also be very interesting to see the difference in the classroom between mygalomorphae and araneomorphae suborders. We managed a quick peek around the museum during our lunch break, which was superb. Chesney wants to have a sleepover for her birthday there next year.

A super outing for people of all ages and a really nice way to spend the day!!

Thank you

Rob, Terry and Chesney

Photos: Astri Leroy
Sandfields & Forests Outing and Survey - Limpopo 24 – 25 September 2011

Report by Joan Faiola

A few stalwarts headed for Sandfields and Forests, to continue the survey started earlier this year. The Leroy’s, Paul Cowan, his children Andrew and Courtney and Joan Faiola made the journey early on Saturday morning.

We had hoped to do a comprehensive survey with 200 pitfall traps, but the economics (the cost of so many traps), and the logistics (who would dig so many holes?) won in the end, so we settled for 23 of Astri’s ingenious traps made from 2-litre cold drink bottles. All got stuck in to help dig the traps, including our driver, Piet. We chose the Tambotie area near the floodplain on sodic soils for 13 of the traps, and another area close to the house in the Burkea woodland for the rest.

Of course, we were after Trapdoor spiders, and willed it to rain on Saturday evening, to encourage the males to leave their burrows, but no luck. Never mind – we got a lovely haul of small Araneomorphs, which will be recorded and sent to the National Collection.

Thanks once again to the owner, Brian Frank, for his unceasing hospitality and generous spirit.

Below left: Work party in action at Tambotie. Photos: Astri Leroy

Below right: ingenious fastener for trap barrier – using thorns from Carissa bispinosa bush (NumNum)
Spider Sorting Session at ARC, Pretoria
30 July 2011

Report by Joan Faiola

Not quite so many attended this session as the previous one on the 11th June – did we confuse you all in the last newsletter when we got our dates mixed up? Anyway, Paul Cowan, Robin Lyle, Louise Muller, Astri Leroy and Joan Faiola made their way to Roodeplaat for the second sorting session. Even with a handful of people, we still managed to sort quite a few spiders and carry on learning more about arachnids as we went along. As usual, we were made to feel at home, and Ansie and staff provided a pleasant lunch.

Sorting spiders presents a fantastic opportunity for learning, and Ansie and her colleagues assure us we are really helping when we sort spiders for the National Collection!

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

Yankee Mygalomorph in Joburg!

Sometimes the website contacts throw us a few surprises. Not least was being sent a picture of an unknown Atypid, as mentioned by Astri in From the Hub this issue. The sender was Dave Turner, a former field guide.

Astri referred the photo to an astonished Ian Engelbrecht, who commented:

“This spider is an adult male *Sphodros rufipes*, an American member of the family Atypidae, the purseweb spiders. If you google it you'll get pics and more info. The females live in silk tubes camouflaged with bits of soil and other debris. They use their huge jaws to impale insects that get stuck on the outside of the tube. The males are apparently pompilid wasp mimics. Interestingly, it looks like the males of our local species mimic ponerine ants.

So the question is, what's the story behind the pic? Please could you follow up with your friends to find out if the spider was really seen in Joburg, and if so, exactly where and when they saw it. It may have come in with imported plants or something. “

Read Astri’s From The Hub for the answer!
Other Interesting Mygalomorph sightings

1. Gonubie, East London

A Brachionopus robustus (East London Baboon Spider) (left) was found in a Gonubie, East London hotel guest room by Andrew McQueen.

2. Lake Sibaya, Zululand

Steve Rubin of Lake Sibaya (what a fantastic place to live!) found a Harpactira gigas (old common name: Transvaal Baboon Spider) near his home about 3km from the lakeshore. Steve has also sent us a number of photos of the region’s spiders, which we will showcase in a forthcoming edition.
Arachnids in England and Switzerland

Report and photos by Joan Faiola

It was still early days for spiders in May in England this year. Although Surrey had been suffering from drought for three months, and the weather unseasonably warm for the whole of that period, arachnids were a bit hard to find (perhaps BECAUSE it had been so dry). But I found an opilionid in a flower pot in my friend Jennifer’s garden. (In truth, Jen found it). I also caught a *Tegenaria domestica* (very black English house spider usually found in baths by arachnophobes) thus finally putting away my childhood fear. I did not photograph this – it moved so fast! In Switzerland I was luckier. I found another opilionid in my nephew Giuliano’s garden, and a wonderful web full of baby spiders (still unidentified). Lurking near the baby spiders was a really pretty jumping spider – definitely up to no good, but very amenable to posing for the camera.

![Opilionid, Basel area, May 2011](image)

![Jumping Spider, Basel area, May 2011](image)

![Unidentified araneid babies in a huddle (Basel)](image)

![Opilionid from Surrey garden, May 2011](image)
ARACHNID SCIENCE

Latest version of Platnick Catalog – 42,473 and counting

A new version of the Platnick Catalog (12.0) with 42,473 listed species has now been released and is available at the usual address under:

http://research.amnh.org/iz/spiders/catalog/INTRO1.html

_Euprosthenops australis_ Project – SLU Uppsala, Sweden

Report by Anna Rising, Marlene Andersson and Jan Johannsson

Spider silk is one of the strongest fibres known to man. It is composed of proteins, is produced under ambient conditions, is degraded in Nature and as been suggested to have excellent properties for medical applications like wound healing. Since 2003 Swedish researchers are trying to understand how the spiders manage to produce this fascinating material. Astri and John Leroy and Ruan Lambrechts (the Spider Club of South Africa) have kindly assisted in collecting several specimens of _Euprosthenops australis_, known to spin one of the strongest spider silks known. These spiders were kept and shown to the public at Skansen Zoo in Stockholm during 2010, and were recently used in studies on spider silk proteins at the Swedish University of Agricultural Institutet in Stockholm.

_Above: Photo of Euprosthenops australis_ female taken with a microscope

_Euprosthenops australis_ female with egg sac at the Lab at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm

Anna Rising pulling spider silk from anaesthetised _E. australis_
Spider silk consists of very large proteins that are produced by glands in the spider abdomen. Some spiders can produce up to seven different types of silk depending on the intended usage of the silk (web construction, prey capture, egg protection, etc). The dragline silk, which is the strongest type of silk (normally used for web frame construction or as a life line), is made up of proteins synthesized by paired major ampullate glands. The proteins are believed to be synthesized in the tail of the major ampullate gland, stored in the ampulla sac, and finally extruded through an S-shaped duct. (Proteins from the major ampullate glands are extremely large and have three distinct parts; an N-terminal domain (NT), a C-terminal domain and an extensive repetitive region (Fig X). It has been proven that solid fibres contain the C-terminal domain and the repetitive middle parts of the protein. However, whether NT is present in the final fibre has not been determined.

Our studies have shown that NT keeps the spider silk proteins in a soluble state during storage in the silk producing glands and acts as a pH-dependent relay causing the fluid silk to convert into a solid fibre in fractions of a second in the duct (Askarieh, G., et al. Nature. 2010). However, very little is known about the molecular mechanisms that trigger the conversion from liquid to solid state.

Our current research includes:

- Gathering spider silk from *E. australis* in order to sequence the proteins that make up the spider silk, trying to study whether NT is present in the silk fibres or not.

- Dissecting the major ampullate glands and using them for histological and morphological studies in order to get an insight in which roles the different parts of the silk protein play, where the proteins are produced, how the spider manages to keep the aggregation prone proteins in solution at extreme concentrations, and in more detail understand how the spider can form a solid silk fibre from a liquid protein solution. Major ampullate glands from *E. australis* have been studied by electron microscopy, revealing the cellular ultrastructure of the gland. However, further studies on several glands are needed before one can conclude how the glands function, where the proteins are produced and how they form solid fibres (fig).

(Note on the authors: Anna Rising is a scientist at the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Biochemistry, Uppsala Biomedical Centre, Sweden and at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm. Marlene Andersson is a PhD student at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and Jan Johansson is a Professor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Anna has sent her thanks to the Spider Club for their assistance in supplying specimens.)
Mantispid behaviour unchanged in 44 million years

Above: Mantispid larva attached to spider in 44 million year old amber. Photo lifted from BBC Wildlife, Sept 2011

A modern day mantispid, *Leptomantispa pulchella*. Photo: Patrick Coin. Lifted from Encyclopaedia of Life. [www.eol.org](http://www.eol.org)

News of an amber fossil find in Germany, of an ancient mantispid larva attached to a spider, and reported in BBC Wildlife Magazine in September 2011, highlights another parasite of spiders, other than the well-known pompiliid wasps, this time insects in the order Neuroptera (lacewings, antlions and their kin) family Mantispidae. The amber shows the Mantis fly, a kind of lacewing, in the act of spider boarding. This behaviour is unique to this group. The larva leaps onto a female spider and rides on her until she spins an egg sac, which it enters and uses it for shelter and food (the spider’s eggs). The fossil is clinging to the spider with its head wedged between her body segments, exactly as today’s species do. Some modern-day mantispids are also wasp-mimics.

The following is an extract from the entry in the Encyclopaedia of Life for this interesting group of creatures.

“The Mantispinae, however, are relatively well known. In contrast to the scattered data available for the several other subfamilies, which suggest that a wide range of insects may be used as food by developing individuals of various mantispid species, known larval developmental associations of species in the Mantispinae are all with the egg sacs of spiders and the larvae are predators on spider eggs. Larvae of some mantispine species are obligate egg-sac penetrators. These larvae locate and penetrate spider egg sacs that have already been produced and deposited in the environment. Other mantispine species locate and board spiders, then enter the egg sac during its construction. Larvae of still other species use either or both techniques to get inside spider egg sacs. If larvae enter an egg sac containing nearly hatched spiderlings, they may board these. It is not clear whether larvae are able to search out spiders from a distance. Given that adults produce egg clutches containing from several hundred to several thousand eggs, it is possible that searching is purely random and that encounters with spiders are simply fortuitous. Although larvae would presumably benefit from boarding only female spiders, in all species that have been studied larvae board male and female spiders with equal frequency. However, in at least one species, larvae that find themselves on a male will transfer to the male’s mate when he copulates; in at least one other species, larvae on a male spider will transfer to a female who cannibalizes the male. (Redborg 1998 and references therein)
Left: South African species of Mantispid.

South Africa has its own Mantispids, but they have not been studied in any depth and are therefore poorly known. They are mostly found in the moister eastern part of the country. They parasitise Rain Spiders, among others.

Grateful thanks to Lambert Smith for the use of his photograph.

Although it has long been known that mantispine larvae feed on spider eggs, only in the 1980s was it recognized that some (possibly all) spider boarders feed on spider haemolymph ("blood") while aboard adult spiders. Spider-boarding mantispids overwinter on their host spiders. The overwintering behaviour of egg-sac penetrators is more varied. In some species, individuals overwinter as a mass of unfed first instars and search for egg sacs the following spring. Others may overwinter as larvae or pupae within spider egg sacs. (Redborg 1998 and references therein)

Once inside a spider egg sac, a mantispid larva pierces and drains eggs with its modified mandibles and maxillae. As a third instar larva, it constructs a pupal cocoon within the spider egg sac. In the laboratory at 25º C, the entire life cycle for the well-studied Mantispa uhleri takes around 28 days from first instar to adult. The incipient adult bites its way out of both the cocoon and egg sac and walks some distance away before undergoing the final molt, presumably because egg sacs may be located in concealed or awkward places such as under tree bark or within a silken retreat. (Redborg 1998 and references therein)

_Lifted from www.eol.org/pages/948. The amber specimen was identified and described by Michael Ohl of the Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin, and reported in BBC Wildlife in September 2011. Other source: Naturwissenschaften, vol 98, pp453-6._
Britain’s Rarest Spider reintroduced to more areas

One of Britain’s rarest spiders, the Ladybird Spider, *Eresus sandaliatus* (Eresidae) is arguably also their most beautiful and colourful spider. Until recently, the species was only known from one locality, which was kept secret to ensure the survival of the species, whose numbers had fallen to 56 in the 1980’s, at one time even being thought to be extinct. There are now at least 1,000 of these enigmatic spiders in existence in Britain.

Thirty of the spiders were released in August at RSPB Arne Reserve in Dorset, already an arthropod hotspot, being home to the threatened silver studded blue butterfly, the Purbeck mason wasp, and the Roesel’s bush cricket, as well as more than a third of Britain’s known species of spiders. To ensure the continued survival of the Ladybird Spider, specimens will be released at other localities. The spiders were moved in plastic water bottles including plant material and moss, as this was found to be the best method of introducing them to their new home. The spiders favour the threatened Heathland habitat type, and a lot of effort has been made in Britain to conserve this habitat, which is, like much of Britain, under threat of destruction from human encroachment.

The male of the species is the red beauty, although the female is rather attractive too, being velvety jet black. The male gains the red colouration only when breeding.

Like some other eresids, *E. sandaliatus* lives in a hole in the ground, a tube which it lines with silk and decorate with the remains of its prey, often beetles. The females rarely leave their burrows and both sexes feed off insects that become entangled in the fine strands of web at the hole’s entrance.


Britain lists 31 species of spider as ‘priority arachnids’, including the Ladybird Spider. These species are all protected by law. We hope to have an article on the endangered Fen Raft Spider *Dolomedes plantarius* in our next issue.

![Male Ladybird Spider](image)
Invitation to Participate in the i5K Arthropod Genome Sequencing Initiative

Colleagues,
i5K is an international initiative with the goal to sequence 5,000 arthropod genomes. Funding is already available for the first 50 genomes, some of which are very likely to be non-mite arachnids. I5K seeks input broadly from the scientific community, and therefore participation by arachnologists is particularly important. You may both nominate species for sequencing, and vote for species already nominated. Community support is crucial. Forty-nine species of chelicerates have been nominated already.

The main page of the project is: http://arthropodgenomes.org/wiki/i5K. To vote or nominate species, you must first create an account at: http://arthropodgenomes.org/w/index.php?title=Special:UserLogin&returnto=i5K

After creating an account, you should log in, choose the “edit with form” tab, and from that tab choose “i5K information.” On that page you will see a box labeled “i5K Nominated species (adding a species name here will indicate your support for genomic sequencing).” Add species, separated by commas, to vote for them.

Jonathan A. Coddington
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Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Ed: This is a very significant opportunity to get Southern African arachnids on the map. Scientists and involved amateurs alike can use the links above to make submissions.
## ON-LINE RESOURCES FOR ARACHNOLOGY

(This list is not exhaustive – please let us know of any other useful sites)

### LOCAL

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<tr>
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### OVERSEAS

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<td><a href="http://salticidae.org/jsotw.html">http://salticidae.org/jsotw.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>University of California - Spiders (Rick Vetter)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.spiders.ucr.edu">http://www.spiders.ucr.edu</a></td>
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PHOTO GALLERY – SPIDER EYES
By John Leroy (text by J Faiola)

As we know, spider eye patterns are one of the features used to identify spiders, at least to family level. John Leroy set out recently to record as many eye patterns as possible, forming a breathtaking photographic record. (Credits: African Spiders an Identification Manual: Dippenaar-Schoeman/Jocqué for descriptions of the eye patterns).

Above left: typical Lycosid eye pattern. Lycosids (wolf spiders) are ground dwelling hunters with good eyesight, enabling them to see well even at night. The eye pattern is 4:2:2 – three rows with anterior row of four small eyes below second row with two large eyes, and third row with two eyes placed at the sides of the carapace.

In contrast, the photo above right of a Ctenid (tropical wolf spider) shows another eye pattern, which helps differentiate this family, which has a similar life style, from the Lycosidae. This family has the eye pattern 2:4:2 – the central row having four eyes including two large ones and the anterior row only two small eyes.

The sac spider shown above left (Miturgidae: Cheiracanthium furculatum) has a distinctive black face and eight eyes in two rows (4:4) Note the strong chelicerae and fangs.

Lynx spiders, Oxyopidae, as in the photo above right, Oxyopes sp., have eight eyes, with six forming a hexagonal pattern and two small eyes below that. This is well demonstrated in the male spider depicted.
Spitting spiders *Scytodes* sp. (Scytodidae) have only six eyes arranged in three separate diads, one pair centrally placed just above the chelicerae, and two pairs above, one pair on each side.

*Palystes* spp. (Sparassidae) have the familiar eight eyes in two rows 4:4, with the median eyes usually the largest, although not in this example.

Jumping spiders (Salticidae) are not the only spiders to have large eyes! The bizarre and beautiful *Deinopis* sp. (Deinopidae) need large eyes to gather as much light as possible to see in a very dark habitat, under the forest canopy on the moonless nights they prefer. They have eight eyes in three rows with the largest eyes in the middle row.

One can never leave jumping spiders out of a feature of this nature, because they have the most remarkable eyesight of all. *Portia* (above right) wins the prize all round for its remarkable eyes, proven intelligence, and bizarre appearance. Salticids have eight eyes in three or four rows, anterior median eyes being very large, and anterior lateral eyes slightly smaller, these four eyes all directed forward.

The orange lungless spiders, in the family Caponiidae (left) in Africa have either two eyes or eight. *Diplogena* sp. has two eyes, and *Caponia*, shown at left, has two main eyes surrounded in a compact group by the other six eyes. These unusual spiders warrant a full article, as their eyes are not the only feature that sets them apart from other spiders.
The Spider Club of Southern Africa

DIARY 2011/ 2012

Keep your eyes on your e-mail as other events are organized during the summer months, sometimes at quite short notice. We will attempt to give you fair warning and those who do not have access to e-mail will be sent an SMS.

2011

YEBO GOGGA at Wits University 12 – 16th October 2011 (Set up 11th)

Now we REALLY need you and you and you! Yebo Gogga (If you haven't attended before) is run by APES (genuine - that's what they are called: it is short for Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences) and our job is to introduce youngsters and the general public to arachnids! It's quite intense but it's also a whole load of fun. Convenor Joan Faiola. Contact her at info@spiderclubco.za or 082-565-6025 with your offers of help.

Night Walk Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, Poortview – 12th November 2011

This event is organized by the Botanical Society and booking and PRE-PAYING are mandatory. However Astri will need three or four group leaders to show the public spiders and scorpions at night. Please contact Astri if you would like to help otherwise for official booking, contact Karen Carstens on botsoc@sisulugarden.co.za or landline (011) 958-5177. If you just pitch without booking and pre-paying you will be turned away.

Sandfields and Forests Weekend Outing and Survey
19th & 20th November 2011

This venue comprises a group of farms belonging to the Frank family being run as a conservancy, situated immediately north of Nylsvley Nature Reserve near Mookgopong (Naboomspruit). The purpose of the visit is to survey the arachnid fauna, as well as add to the bird list already started! We will be permitted to collect specimens. Accommodation comprises basic bedrooms with bathrooms and a central kitchen. Camping will be permitted near the buildings. Booking is essential - please book with Joan at info@spiderclub.co.za or 082-5656-025. Directions will be supplied closer to the time, and for those who know Nylsvley, it is situated off the Vogelfontein road. We regret that this outing is not suitable for children under the age of 12.
2012

**Day outing Cullinan Conservancy, north east of Pretoria**  
14th January, 2012. 8:30 for 9 a.m.

This is a wonderful part of Gauteng and well worth a visit. The event is run by the Conservancy for details please contact Joan du Toit on 082 681 5122 or e-mail cullinanconserv@nes.co.za. We will have more details nearer the time. Please bring the children and have a fun family day!

**Kloofendal Nature Reserve, Roodepoort**  
21st and 22nd January 9 a.m.

Astri will be leading two consecutive days for Spider Walks in the lovely Kloofendal Nature Reserve. This is a family event organized by Friends of Kloofendal and we will walk, looking for spiders. Contact Friends of Kloofendal cell No. 079-693-5608 or go to their website www.kloofendalfriends.yolasite.com for more details.

**Terra Nostra Weekend outing – 3rd – 5th February, 2012**  
3rd – 5th February, 2012

Although Andre Lambrechts has sold his share in this beautiful game farm near Marble Hall in Limpopo Province the current owner has kindly allowed us to use the facilities again. Accommodation is limited so booking essential. Convenor Ruan Lambrechts ruanlambrechts@gmail.com or cell 084 584 5566.

**Elandsvlei, near Bapsfontein, Gauteng – 18th February 2012**

Following our successful visit last year, we will return to this interesting conservancy to continue surveying the arachnid fauna. Details to follow.

**4th March, 2012, Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve, Joburg South. Day Outing.**

Bring your family and a picnic lunch, meet at the parking area outside 322 Frandaph Drive, Johannesburg South. Coordinates S26°16'59.57"/E28°00'34.34". 8:30 a.m. for 9 a.m.

**Night Walk Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, Poortview – 10th March 2012**

As for 12th November 2011.

**16th – 18th March, 2012 Weekend at Pete Koziel’s farm in Limpopo**

Pete Koziel owns a share on a game farm in the Thabazimbi area, and has invited us to stay there with an option to take 2 days’ leave and include Human Rights Day, 21st March. Details to follow.

And remember that Norman Larsen is at the Cape Union Mart Adventure Centre, Canal walk in Cape Town every Saturday between 11 a.m. and 12 noon to demonstrate and talk about SPIDERS!