The Spider Club NEWS

March 2022 Vol. 38, No. 1

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

AUTUMN EDITION

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About the Spider Club

The Spider Club of Southern Africa is a non-profit organisation. Our aim is to encourage an interest in all arachnids 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.

Contact us

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at "The Spider Club of Southern Africa"

Your committee; always available and ready to help:

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Acknowledgements:

Our sincere gratitude goes to the following people for this edition of the newsletter:

- All the photographers of the photos used in this edition. Without you, these pages would be very dull.
- Astri Leroy, of course, for all her contributions, and informing me of any new content, as well as the entire SCSA Committee (Roulla, Jarrod, Henning, Desiré, and Ruan) for their contributions.
- Jeanne van Aswegen, my colleague and superior half, for proofreading and editing the newsletter. Her voice is loud in the background, yet silent in the foreground.
- Everyone on SCSA for all the interesting content.
- All the readers of this newsletter, and all the positive feedback we receive. Of course, keep the negative feedback coming, so that we can improve on this newsletter.

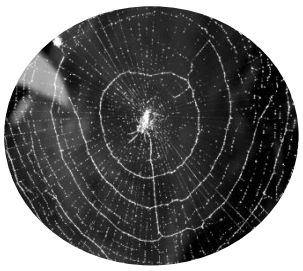


Photo: *John Leroy*

FROM THE HUB

Goodness, this spider season seems to have gone by so very fast this year with winter now just around the corner. But don't worry, there are more walks and events coming your way because the new admins are really making things happen.

WARNING – there are no free images! In early January, the Spider Club received a demand to pay more than R10 000 for infringement of copyright on a picture that was copied from Amazon.com where Amazon was marketing a recent publication on spiders and which later appeared on our web page. It seems logical that if the image was out there on the Amazon page, and it was a picture of the layout of the book, it was free to be used. Apparently not! To say we were alarmed at the sum and the legalese is an understatement because that much money would have wiped out our bank balance. The photographer had sold the rights of this particular image to an international photographic library based in Switzerland and anyone wishing to use it would have to have signed an agreement and paid for the right to use it. Legally this is correct. John and I know this from the other side when the Philatelic Society of South Africa commissioned an artist to copy photos from our and from Martin Filmer's original book. Websites, ours included, can be accessed by anyone, anywhere, and that is where the representatives of the image library found it. We wonder if Amazon had to pay for the right to use it or if a huge international organisation is exempt. It took a long and nerve-wracking time to persuade the South African representatives of the image library that we are a non-profit organisation and they eventually reduced the amount by 70%, but even so, it hurt the club.

So please, be very much aware that there are no free images and to be very, very careful when you use someone else's image without their express permission. I've been told that many websites that offer images have downloaded them illegally. This incident has made me realise it is high time the Spider Club formalises and becomes a legal entity or the admins and even ordinary club members might individually and severally be held responsible for things we say, publish and print, or do. We need to have a General Meeting and set up a new constitution; our current one is out of date in many ways and needs to be modernised.

These are my own sketches by the way!

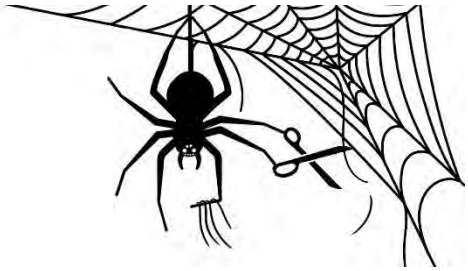
I am feeling my own mortality, which has prompted me to do a lot of clearing up and chucking out. I used to keep live spiders and other arachnids to use when asked to give demonstrations but COVID-19 put a stop to that. Anyway, it didn't seem fair to me to keep them in captivity and renewing my permit was an irritation. Natural attrition helped thin the numbers and the last two creatures I had were local scorpions, which were returned to the Ruimsig Butterfly Reserve, where they had been collected a few years ago.

Some other spider stuff like sweepnets and champagne glasses are taking up house room too and I'd love to find them new homes and at the same time as raising funds for the club, so please look at "Regalia and Equipment" in the Snippets section.

We have had to postpone the exciting spider walk scheduled for the weekend of 26 and 27 March at the awesome Sterkspruit Nature Reserve. There was so little response that Jarrod and I decided the cost of fuel to reach Mashishing/Lydenburg was not worth it. It's really a shame because the nature conservator, Malcolm Bain, had offered free accommodation and Jarrod had arranged a night walk on the 26th and a morning walk on the 27th. Malcom was very keen to receive new records to add to the list the Spider Club compiled for Sterkspruit Nature Reserve some years back. It's very difficult to gauge how to arrange and market events when we get over 30 folk attending in Gauteng and only two responding for Mpumalanga. Any suggestions would be welcome.

- Astri Leroy, 19 March 2022 -

Snippets



NEW ADMIN AND COMMITTEE MEMBER

Welcome to Ruan Booysen as our new admin and committee member! He has been on our Facebook group for eight years, and most of you know him by now, so it's about damn time! This also makes him the only arachnologist on our team (the rest of us are either amateurs or spider enthusiasts).

Not only does Ruan have immense knowledge of spiders, but he's always super helpful and just plain out a very nice guy :) We are very chuffed (and honoured) to have him on our team!

POPIA: THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY ACT, 2013

If you are currently subscribed to our mailing list, we use the personal information supplied by you to be able to communicate with you. The Spider Club of Southern Africa (SCSA) must comply with the Protection of Personal Privacy Act, 2013 ("POPIA") and respects your privacy. So we need your consent to continue sending you the Spider Club News, related notices, and other updates concerning the SCSA. **If you are happy to continue receiving correspondence from us, DO NOT REPLY**, but if you would like your details removed, please send an e-mail to info@spiderclub.co.za so that we may remove your name and details from our mailing list. If you remain on the list, we undertake to ensure that your personal information is safeguarded and used only for the purpose of communication between the SCSA and yourself.

SCSA STANDING WITH RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN ARACHNOLOGISTS

We recently received this message from the International Society of Arachnology (ISA):

Dear ISA members,

Yuri Marusik, together with several other colleagues, has asked me to circulate a statement to the arachnological community concerning the current terrible situation in Ukraine.

Yours sincerely,
Jason Dunlop (Secretariat)
The International Society of Arachnology

We, undersigned arachnologists who live and work in Russia, wish to inform the community of our colleagues that we stand firmly against the war in Ukraine that has been unleashed by our government.

We are with our colleagues in Ukraine and are ready to help them in any way we can.

Not everyone here was able to join this letter since their relatives are currently prosecuted for their war protest.

- Marusik Yuri
- Azarkina Galina
- Kuzmin Evgeniy
- Mikhailov Kirill
- Nekhaeva Anna
- Omelko Mikhail
- Propistsova Evgenia
- Shirobokova Svetlana
- Sokolova Sofya
- Sozontov Artem

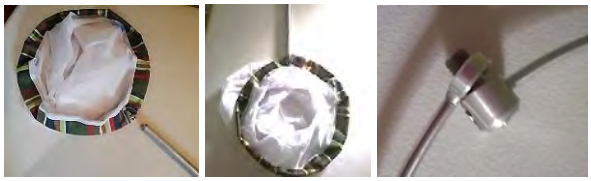
Members of the Spider Club of Southern Africa join our arachnological friends in Russia in standing firmly against the war in Ukraine and hope that these friends in arachnology are not compromised in any way for their support of their colleagues. You may not personally know most of them but anyone who follows our Facebook page will know Galina Azarkina as our go-to lady to identify many of our South African jumping spiders. It is now 19 March and for more than a week I have been unable to communicate with Galina and Yuri now has an email address in Turku, Finland.

- Astri Leroy -

REGALIA AND EQUIPMENT

The following are the regalia and equipment that the Spider Club has. If you want to buy some, it will add to the kitty so that we can get newer and nicer goodies.

Four sweepnets remain at R100, plus R100 for courier.



The cool thing about the design of the screw fitting means that the handle is removable and can double as a bush beater and the net can be removed so that it can be washed or replaced if it gets too worn and torn.

In 2015, for the Spider Club's 40th anniversary, we had an elegant luncheon at Eagle's Fare restaurant in the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden. Each guest received a 40th anniversary champagne flute. Yes, I know we are heading for the club's 50th but you might still like one, or a dozen, with the club logo. There are 22 left at R20 each plus courier.

This is what they look like, detail on the right:

A new batch of jeweller's loups (eyeglasses) with 10 x magnification will be here soon, they're still R50 each.

Then there are three of these yellow bandanas that you can have for free when you next attend a Gauteng spider walk.

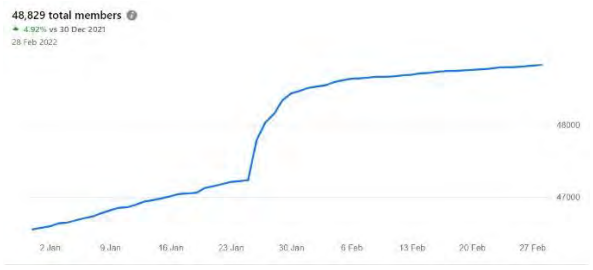
SANSA STARTING TO UPLOAD PHOTO GUIDES

Stefan Foord recently shared the following on our Facebook group:

I think most people on this group are aware of the South African Survey of Arachnida (SANSA), and this is such an enthusiastic Facebook group that I thought I'd let you know about SANSA's open access platform. We're currently uploading content built up over the more than 20 years of SANSA's existence. More relevant to this group though, are the photo identification guides for all the known South African species. These guides include species descriptions, photos of specimens, images of diagnostic characters, and distribution maps. We're in the process of uploading all the guides, and will hopefully finish in the next few weeks. This is the link to the website: https://zenodo.org/communities/sansa/. All of this content is for free, and the links will be up until the internet becomes obsolete one day (Suppose we'll be on the blockchain by then), but for now this should suffice. You can search for content within the page. Those keen on the ID guides, just type "identification guide" in the search tab. We've also included the SANSA newsletters on the database and the latest one can be found here: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5932672.

THE POST THAT KEPT THE ADMINS BUSY

On 26 January, I made the "mistake" to post the above image created by Andrew Blaurock on our Facebook page. The image shows the Latrodectus species in the world (excluding the two recently described species from Colombia). In the next few days, thanks to almost 7 000 shares, we had an influx of member requests the likes of which the SCSA Facebook page has never seen. The admins had to deal with hundreds of requests per day for the next few days, and since very few people answered the membership questions, we had to decline most of them, with feedback that they should answer the questions to be admitted. After all, we prefer quality of members over quantity of members. Those who did answer the questions eventually led to the group gaining more than 1 000 new members in three days. The following shows the growth chart for those few days:



Book review:

Spider sex and more: Spider biology, human, and spider

What you never wanted to know – and yet find out here now, by Rainar Nitsche

By Anka Eichhoff

Author: Rainar Nitsche

Publisher: Rainar Nitzsche Verlag (May 19, 2015)

Language: German

ISBN-10: 3930304198

ISBN-13: 978-3930304196

Price: Approximately R500

The title of the book already suggests entertaining and interesting reading. Nitzsche compares the love life of spiders and humans (from the male point of view).

It's all about spider sex: Do males really only want *one thing*? Do all spider females eat their sex partners after or even during coupling? Why are they then not extinct? How frequent is sexual cannibalism? Is it even advantageous for him to be eaten by her? But there is more: The courtship before mating, dancing males during the day, drummers at night, nuptial gifts and gift robbery, silken love shackles, waiting for the perfect moment, while she is busy or defenceless, rape efforts, old females for consumption and young ones for sex, amputation of genitalia and finally castration by her during coupling, eventual death of male by exhaustion. Spider emotions, spider love?

And more: Our fear of spiders, their looks, their senses, and their biology: Preying, life cycle, mother and kids. Native species (Germany), baboon spiders, social spiders. Spider records. Poisonous spiders worldwide. Spider of the year (2015). What we can learn of them (bionics). Film spiders, Internet (Google, Wikipedia and spider friends), spider art, spider associations, systematics (Aranae,spider families), explations of 269 technical/scientific terms and register of spiders.

The book is very well structured and really bears a lot of noticeable information, contains 161 colour photos, 33 black-and-white photos, 13 tables, and 22 graphics. One can just read and enjoy or one can use the book to look up information about specific spiders by using the spider register in the back. Unfortunately, as far as I can see, there is no English version available, nor as an e-book.

Observations

Anka Eichhoff from Namibia found this snail shell hanging from a bush, and saw that it housed a jumping spider (*Pellenes* sp.). She broke it off and took it home. She removed the shell from the twigs and put it on the bottom of the glass. Later that afternoon, she saw the spider dragging the shell up the side of the glass and attaching it to the inside of the glass. The shell clearly contained an egg sac because a few days later, the babies hatched.




Lourinda Liebenberg from Brakwater in Namibia posted this tropical tent-web spider (*Cyrtophora citricola*; Araneidae), with her unusual red colour. These spiders can come in a range of colours, such as white, beige, brown, grey, and black, and now also apparently red.

Lycan Paw posted a few photos and videos of this scorpion-tailed spider (*Arachnura scorpionoides*) in her garden. Similar to *Cyrtophora citricola*, this spider strings her egg sacs together. She stopped at six egg sacs, which recently hatched.

Elsabe Bentley photographed this single-line-web spider (*Miagrammopes* sp.; Uloboridae) in Umdoni, KZN. Is this a normal feeding position for this genus/species, with the food parcel held behind the head?

Cecile Roux posted this white-coloured button spider (*Latrodectus* sp.) from the Western Cape. She has found a few of these white ones with the darker ventral side and the lighter hourglass marking. It is probably a colour variation of *Latrodectus geometricus*, but the specimens will have to be collected to be sure. When I asked Cecile for more information, she stated:

"I have found three of these small white button spiders. The first one was on the slopes of Koringberg, between Moorreesburg and Piketberg. We were exploring the Renosterveld vegetation and arthropods; I turned over a small rock and found the small spider in a messy web on the bottom. The second one was also in Renosterveld, this time on the slope of Kasteelberg, Riebeek West. Its nest was close to the ground between some *Eucalyptus* bark and the lower twigs of a small shrub. The last and smallest one had a circular retreat in its web on the underside of a piece of driftwood on the dunes at Dwarskersbos beach. I didn't collect any of these spiders; they were all very small, maybe still juveniles? No egg sacs were visible in any of the webs."

Old news, yes, but something I only recently learned. After posting photos of a community-nest velvet spider (*Stegodyphus dumicola*), Charles Griswold commented the following:

"Keep a look out for a little dictynid that lives in their nest. Teresa and I described it as *Archaeodictyna ulova* back in 1987[1]. They should be available through the WSC website. I can send them if they are not accessible. *A. ulova* were common in nest of both *S. dumicola* and *S. mimorsarum* at Spioenkop in KZN. I looked in lots of *S. mimorsarum* nests in Madagascar and in *S. sarisinorum* nests in Burma, but only found the kleptoparasitic dictynids in KZN. Here are a couple of Teresa's photos from Spioenkop, KZN, back in 1985. The grey are *Stegodyphus* females, the black and white guy is a *Stegodyphus* male, and the little yellow jobs are *A. ulova*."

[1] Griswold, C.E. & Meikle, T.C. 1990. Social life in a web. *Natural History*, 89(3): 6-10.
Griswold, C.E. &Meikle Griswold, T.C. 1987. Archaeodictyna ulova new species, (Araneae: Dictynidae), a remarkable kleptoparasite of group-living eresid spiders (Stegodyphus spp., Araneae: Eresidae). *American Museum Novitates*, 2897: 1-11.

I noticed that the last three linyphiids (hammock-web spiders) I photographed all had a leg or two missing. What caught my attention was that all those legs were amputated below the patella, as opposed to below the coxa, like with most spiders missing a leg. When I pointed this out in a post, Charles Griswold commented the following, which I found very interesting:

"Vincent and Barbara Roth made a study of leg breaking (autospasy) across all spiders. Linyphiids and filistatids have a pre-arranged breaking point on their legs between the patella and tibia. Most spiders break their legs between the coxa and trochanter. Oddest of all is that males of some (but not all) Ududidae and Zoropsidae break their legs near the base of the tibiae, leaving just a bit of tibia with two spines remaining. I discovered that in the last century but have been disappointed in that it doesn't seem to provide much phylogenetic information."

Top: A black-tail linyphiid (*Ostearius melanopygius*) with right leg 1 amputated below the patella. **Bottom left and right:** A male and female *Microlinyphia sterilis*, also with legs amputated below the patella.

Not a Southern African spider, but still interesting enough to include here.

It's a regal jumping spider (*Phidippus regius*) with an eye deformation. The top photo was when the spider's AMEs weren't completely fused together, and the bottom photo is after a few moults. It's also interesting that rather than separate after a few moults, the eyes just fused more.

Taken by Frank Schneider from Split Second Nature. You can see more photos on his page: https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063701010393

Spider walks

KWAZULU-NATAL

PALMIET NATURE RESERVE: WESTVILLE, DURBAN –18 DECEMBER 2021

by Jarrod Michael Todd

The spider walk that took place at Palmiet Nature Reserve in Westville, Durban, was probably the most excited I have ever been for a spider walk. I live in Johannesburg, the concrete jungle, and as many nature reserves and parks that it has, they are quite underwhelming when it comes to the life that you find out there.

I was staying in Balito on holiday over the December holiday in an estate called Santorini. This was such a beautiful place, and everywhere you looked there was just nature EVERYWHERE! I was overwhelmed and just knew the walk was going to be a spectacular one!

The day finally arrived for the spider walk, and I was the first to arrive, along with Suncana Bradley, who suggested the reserve for a spider walk. The reserve was absolutely beautiful and just walking around the entrance I had found so much life in all shapes and sizes. Once everyone had arrived, we headed into the reserve for some spider hunting.

As the walks usually go, we barely moved 5 m from the entrance and were already admiring some of the finds. One of the first spiders spotted was one of the ground crab spiders in the genus *Borboropactus*. I had not yet seen one of these spiders before, so this being one of the first ones seen was super exciting for me! There were plenty grass lynx spiders and other little jumping spiders in the low vegetation, and after we found a few specimens, I decided to lead the walk a bit deeper into the tree line on the other side of the river.

As we were walking along, there were emperor moth caterpillars by the thousands, all over the ground and in the trees, some dead and some still living. The smell that these caterpillars were leaving was not

very pleasant; I think it was all the dead ones decomposing. Anyways, here in the tree line we found some different spiders. We found two different tree huntsman spiders (*Olios* spp.), and when lifting some rotting logs, we found some small daddy longlegs (*Quamtana* sp.) and hackled mesh-web spiders (Phyxelididae).

We circled back after some time out with some of the interesting finds for me to photograph; quite a few of them being first finds for me. The day went by so quickly and I really didn't want to leave; I could've spent the rest of the day and night in this place, just admiring the beauty and plethora of life in this forested area. All I can say for now is that Durban has not seen the last of me!

Species list

FAMILY	GENUS/SPECIES
Araneidae	*Arachnura scorpionoides* *Argiope* cf. *flavipalpis* *Isoxya* sp. *Neoscona* sp. *Unknown specimen
Cheiracanthiidae	*Cheiracanthium* sp.
Clubionidae	*Clubiona* sp.
Euagridae	*Allothele* cf. *caffer*
Lycosidae	Multiple undetermined genera
Oxyopidae	*Hamataliwa* cf. *kulczynskii* *Oxyopes tuberculatus* Other *Oxyopes* spp.
Phyxelididae	Undetermined genus
Salticidae	*Hyllus argyrotoxus* *Menemerus* sp. *Myrmarachne* sp. *Phintella* cf. *aequipes*. *Thyenula leighi* *Thyenula* spp.
Selenopidae	*Anyphops* sp.
Scytodidae	*Scytodes* spp.
Sparassidae	*Olios* cf. *auricomis* *Olios* spp.
Tetragnathidae	*Tetragnatha subsquamata*
Theridiidae	cf. *Platnika* sp. cf. *Achaearanea* sp.
Thomisidae	*Borboropactus* cf. *silvicola* *Synema* sp. cf. *Diaea* sp. *Thomisus scrupeus*

Photos

Left to right, top to bottom: *Hyllus argyrotoxus*, *Tetragnatha subsquamata*, *Phintella* cf. *aequipes,* unknown araneid, *Thyenula* sp., *Thyenula leighi*, *Arachnura scorpionoides*, *Hamataliwa* cf. *kulczynskii*. ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Left to right, top to bottom: *Allothele* cf. *caffer*, *Oxyopes tuberculatus*., *Isoxya* sp., *Oxyopes* sp., *Thomisus scrupeus*, *Anyphops* sp., *Olios* sp., *Olios* cf. *auricomis*. ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Top left: Phyxelididae. **Top right:** *Oxyopes* sp. **Bottom:** cf. *Platnika* sp. ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

NORTHERN CAPE

RED SANDS COUNTRY LODGE: KURUMAN –29 JANUARY 2022

by Frans Pretorius and Altha Liebenberg

Never in my wildest dreams would I ever have guessed that I would host an official spider walk for the Spider Club of Southern Africa. Northern Cape, specifically Kuruman, was put on the map with a bang! To make this walk even more special, I was blessed with the presence of a handful of experts from Johannesburg and Bloemfontein (Roulla Janse van Rensburg and Garrie Wright all the way from Joburg, and Ruan Booysen, Rudi Steenkamp, and Michael Vickers (USA) from Bloemfontein).

Frans Pretorius (the host) addressing attendees at the Kuruman spider walk. ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Attendees at the Kuruman spider walk, which included 29 people and one service dog. ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

A budding young entomologist proudly showing off his finds to Roulla Jansen van Rensburg (**left**) and Dr Michael Vickers (**right**). ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

I managed to get together a decent number of keen local people and it was awesome to see the enthusiasm and interest in learning more about our eight-legged friends. In total, 29 people (and one dog) participated in the walk. The participation and interaction by the group were great and the newbies had

insight into the wonderful world of spiders. I could sense by midday that the green Kalahari heat was taking its toll on many people but we pushed on and had an awesome day in the bush. Spiders from 20 families, 36 genera, and 29 species were found, of which there were three possible new species (to be confirmed): *Steatoda* sp., *Thatanus* sp., and *Myrmarachne* sp.

Three possible new species found on the Kuruman spider walk, including a male *Myrmarachne* sp. (**left**), a male *Thanatus* sp. (**top right**), and a very small *Steatoda* sp. (**bottom right**); the latter two were found the day before the spider walk. ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Another spider walk for the Northern Cape is definitely on the cards as there is so much more habitat to explore!

Herewith is feedback from one of the participants, and moth, dragonfly, and damselfly guru, Altha Liebenberg.

- Frans Pretorius -

Ná ’n nat week het die spinnienaweek uiteindelik aangebreek, en ons is beloon met ’n pragtige warm sonskyndag.

Alhoewel ons die vorige aand al Oom Rassie se koppie aangedurf het, was ek aangenaam verras om die groot getal belangstellendes daar te sien. En soos mense wat mekaar al lankal ken, gesels en groet ons en stel mekaar bekend. Ná die opening is ons met hoed en waterbottel na die voëlskuiling toe, so al soekende na als wat beweeg, natuurlik veral na die met agt pote en baie oë.

Ongelukkig is daar paar mense vroeg huis toe, maar al die bittereinders het ’n sukses van die dag gemaak. Terug by Red Sands se ontvangs moes ons wag tot 14h30 voordat ons kon middagete kry, wat baie gesellig verloop het. Daarna het ons verdaag en weer 20h00 bymekaargekom vir ’n naglopie. Die aand was ’n

belewenis; motte, skerpioene, en spinnekoppe was volop. Met n “Hier’s een!”, “Kom kyk hier!” kort-kort en almal wil sien en weet, het die aand te gou aan sy einde gekom.

Dankie aan almal vir n ongelooflike lekker naweek en ek hoop om elkeen van julle sommer gou weer te sien.

Spinnie-groete,

- Altha Liebenberg -

Unlike most spider walks where the spiders are set free after being photographed and identified as far as possible, the spiders from the Kuruman spider walk were collected and identified in the lab by Ruan Booysen. Here are the two lists from the day and night walk, also compiled by Ruan. These two lists include only the arachnids found on 29 January; however, the photos that follow include arachnids collected on both 28 and 29 January.

Species list

Day walk

Order	Family	Genus	*Species*	Males	Females	Immatures
Araneae	Agelenidae	*Agelena*	*australis*		1	1
Araneae	Araneidae	*Cyclosa*	sp. Indet			2
Araneae	Caponiidae	*Caponia*	sp. Indet			1
Araneae	Cheiracanthiidae	*Cheiracanthium*	sp. Indet			4
Araneae	Corinnidae	*Copa*	cf. *flavoplumosa*			2
Araneae	Eresidae	*Stegodyphus*	*dumicola*	1		
Araneae	Gnaphosidae	*Aesemesthes*	cf. *lineatus*			1
Araneae	Gnaphosidae	*Aesemesthes*	*purcelli*		1	
Araneae	Gnaphosidae	*Ibala*	*bulawayensis*	1	1	
Araneae	Hersiliidae	*Hersilia*	*setifrons*			1
Araneae	Lycosidae	*Pardosa*	sp. Indet			2
Araneae	Oecobiidae	*Oecobius*	*putus*		2	
Pseudoscorpiones	Olpiidae	*cf. Horus*	sp. Indet			2
Araneae	Oonopidae	*Orchestina*	cf. *fannesi*		1	
Araneae	Philodromidae	*Philodromus*	sp. Indet			3
Araneae	Pholcidae	*Quamtana*	*hectori*		2	
Araneae	Pholcidae	*Smeringopus*	sp. Indet			1
Araneae	Pisauridae	*Cispius*	*kimbius*		1	
Araneae	Prodidomidae	*Prodidomus*	sp. Indet			1
Araneae	Prodidomidae	*Theuma*	*fusca*		1	
Araneae	Salticidae	*Euophrys*	*leipoldti*		3	
Araneae	Salticidae	*Euophrys*	*leipoldti*		1	
Araneae	Salticidae	*Heliophanus*	*charlesi*	2		
Araneae	Salticidae	*Heliophanus*	*charlesi*	1	1	2
Araneae	Salticidae	*Heliophanus*	sp. Indet. 2	2		
Araneae	Salticidae	*Myrmarachne*	sp. (new)	1		

Order	Family	Genus	*Species*	Males	Females	Immatures
Araneae	Salticidae	*Thyene*	*bucculenta*	1		
Araneae	Salticidae	*Thyene*	*natalii*		2	
Araneae	Salticidae	*Tibellus*	*minor*		1	
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Chrysso*	sp. Indet		1	
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Enoplognatha*	*molesta*			1
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Genus indet 1*			1	1
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Genus indet 2*				1
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Genus indet 3*		1		
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Latrodectus*	*renivulvatus*	1		
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Tidarren*	*cuneolatum*		3	1
Araneae	Thomisidae	*Diaea*	sp. Indet			1
Araneae	Thomisidae	*Misumenops*	*rubrodecoratus*	1	1	
Araneae	Thomisidae	*Monaeses*	*austrinus*	1		
Araneae	Thomisidae	*Thomisus*	*kalaharinus*	1		
Araneae	Uloboridae	*Uloborus*	*plumipes*		3	1
Totals				**14**	**27**	**29**
2 Orders	**20 Families**	**36 Genera**	**39 Species**	**70**		

Night walk

Order	Family	*Genus*	Species	Males	Females	Immatures
Araneae	Araneidae	*Araneus*	*apricus*	1		1
Araneae	Araneidae	*Isoxya*	sp. Indet			1
Araneae	Araneidae	*Neoscona*	*subfusca*	1		
Araneae	Gnaphosidae	*Ibala*	*bulawayensis*	1		
Araneae	Gnaphosidae	*Pterotricha*	*auris*		2	
Araneae	Hersiliidae	*Hersilia*	*setifrons*			2
Araneae	Oonopidae	*Dysderina*	cf. *speculifera*		1	
Araneae	Pholcidae	*Quamtana*	*hectori*	2	3	
Araneae	Pisauridae	*Cispius*	*kimbius*		1	
Scorpiones	Buthidae	*Parabuthus*	*granulatus*		1	
Scorpiones	Scorpionidae	*Opistophthalmus*	*pluridens*		1	
Solifugae	Solpugidae	cf. *Solpugema*	sp. Indet			2
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Euryopis*	sp. 1		1	
Araneae	Theridiidae	*Theridion*	sp. 1	1	2	1
Araneae	Uloboridae	*Uloborus*	*plumipes*		1	
Totals				**6**	**13**	**7**
3 Orders	**11 Families**	**15 Genera**	**15 Species**	**26**		

Here are more photos of some of the spiders (and other arachnids) found in Kuruman (on both the day before and the day of the spider walk):

A *Hewittia gracilis* crab spider; one of two females found on the day before the spider walk. ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Three different jumping spiders: *Thyene natalii* (**left**); *Hyllus* cf. *brevitarsis* (**top right**), and *Heliophanus transvaalicus* (**bottom right**). ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.


Two stegodyphus velvet spiders; one solitary (*S. tentoriicola*; **left**) and one social (*S. dumicola*; **right**). ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.


Front and side view of a male *Monaeses austrinus* crab spider. ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.



Three of many *Quamtana hectori* daddy longlegs spiders found; on the bottom right is a male. ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Spiky field spider (*Pararaneus spectator*; Araneidae). ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen.

A different type of arachnid: a pseudoscorpion (*Horus* sp.; Olpiidae). ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen.

From left to right: *Heliophanus charlesi* (Salticidae), *Orchestina* cf. *fannesi* (Oonopidae), and *Theuma fusca* (Prodidomidae). ***Photos:*** Ruan Booysen.

Left: *Chrysso* sp. (Theridiidae). **Right, top to bottom:** *Oecobius putus* (Oecobiidae), *Prodidomus* sp. (Prodidomidae), and *Diaphorocellus biplagiatus* (Palpimanidae). ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Ibala bulawayensis (Gnaphosidae). ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

GAUTENG

KLIPRIVIERSBERG NATURE RESERVE: JOHANNESBURG – 13 FEBRUARY 2022

by Joanie Beytell

Sunday, 13 February... and off we went on yet another spider walk. This time, at the beautiful Klipriversberg Nature Reserve to the south of Johannesburg. The venue is not unfamiliar, as we had a previous walk there about two years ago. The reserve boasts a diversity of interests with some beautiful birdlife and wildlife. We were there for the spiders and, oh my, we were not disappointed!

We arrived shortly after 8 am and from the start it was obvious that it was going to be a super walk! As we entered the parking lot, we were greeted by dear old spider friends and a few familiar faces. Only when we joined the group, did we realise how many new spider lovers joined us! It turned out that we were well over 50 people in attendance and that made it the biggest turnout for a walk yet!

A record number of people attended this spider walk. ***Photo:*** Joanie Beytell.

Attendees of the spider walk before splitting up in smaller groups. ***Photo:*** Garrie Wright.

We were welcomed by our team leader (and event organiser), Jarrod, who explained all the dos and don'ts. He gave advice from general safety to the correct handling of spiders, as well as where to actually look for them. He also advised us on how to not disturb the ecosystem. At this point, I have to congratulate Jarrod on a job well done with his enthusiasm and heaps of knowledge.

Not long after the walk started, Henning's son, Brandon, found a stunning *Harpactira hamiltoni* (highveld baboon spider) under a rock not far from the entrance. It was almost the same spot where Garrie found one two years ago.

We took to the paths and the field, and weren't disappointed by the enthusiasm of the newbies. We crossed a wooden bridge over a stream and continued our walk until we reached old ruins. This was my personal highlight of the walk because not only did we find awesome spiders, but also a few agama lizards (*koggelmanders*). We later learned that these ruins were the original homestead that was built and owned by the Marais family and later bought by Joseph Henry Quilliam in 1908. How sad that it wasn't looked after or declared a monument of some kind years ago.

Attendees looking for spiders in grass and under rocks. ***Photos:*** Joanie Beytell.

The beauty of this walk was not only all the stunning spiders that we found, but a host of other creatures and critters to light up the experience. Among these were a colony of assassin bugs, velvet ants, butterflies, colourful grasshoppers and locusts, pretty field flowers and even field plants with medicinal value, and also little Bibron's blind snakes! Yes, it took some rock-lifting super powers, knees and elbow scratching, and lots of litres of water as it was a super-hot day.

Larger animals included some beautiful bird species, of which the diederik cuckoo was a personal highlight. Also worth mentioning was the black wildebeest bull that was spotted doing its own thing like old bulls usually do.

As the day drew to an end, we realised what a wonderful privilege it is to be able to still enjoy and experience nature just a few kilometres from the city. The reserve is well looked after and we hope to visit it again soon.

Big thanks to Astri, Jarrod, Roulla, Garrie, and all the spider friends who made this day possible.

Regards
Joanie and Jannie

Species list

Family	Genus/Species
Agelendiae	Unknown sp.
Araneidae	*Araneus apricus* *Hypsosinga lithyphantoides* *Neoscona moreli* *Neoscona* sp. *Trichonephila senegalensis annulata*
Eresidae	*Dresserus* sp.
Gnaphosidae	*Zelotes* sp.
Linyphiidae	*Microlinyphia sterilis*
Lycosidae	Various spp.
Philodromidae	*Tibellus* sp.
Salticidae	*Heliophanus* sp. *Icius* sp. *Menemerus* sp. *Nigorella hirsuta* *Pellenes bulawayoensis* *Thyene thyenioides*
Selenopidae	*Anyphops* sp.
Theraphosidae	*Harpactira hamiltoni*
Thomisidae	*Misumenops rubrodecoratus* *Monaeses austrinus* *Thomisus blandus* *Xysticus* sp.

Photos

Common baboon spider (*Harpactira hamiltoni*; Theraphosidae). ***Photo:*** Jarrod Todd.

Male (**left**) and female (**right**) false pajama spiders (*Hypsosinga lithyphantoides*; Araneidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Left: Flattie (*Anyphops* sp.; Selenopidae). **Right:** Long-bodied thyene jumping spider (*Thyene thyenioides*; Salticidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Green pea spider (*Araneus apricus*; Araneidae). ***Photo:*** Jarrod Todd.

Left: Jumping spider (*Icius* sp.; Salticidae). **Top right:** Dark ground spider (*Zelotes* sp.; Gnaphosidae). **Bottom right:** Banded-legged golden orb-web spider (*Trichonephila senegalensis annulata*; Araneidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Top and front view of a male masked flower crab spider (*Thomisus blandus*; Thomisidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Female (**left**) and male (**right**) white-striped monaeses crab spiders (*Monaeses austrinus*; Thomisidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

Top and front view of a Zimbabwe pellenes jumping spider (*Pellenes bulawayoensis*; Salticidae). ***Photos:*** Jarrod Todd.

The Southern Drakensberg BioBlitz

by Ruan Booysen

Attendees of the Southern Drakensberg BioBlitz. ***Photo:*** Angus Burns.

As part of a combined effort between the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and South African National Parks (SANParks), a BioBlitz event was hosted in the southern Drakensberg area, around Rhodes and Maclear, earlier this year to survey the area and determine if it is suitable for a new national park. A BioBlitz is an event in which the participants do a survey of their respective taxonomic groups in order to generate data regarding taxon distribution, environmental ecology, biodiversity, and land quality. At this particular event there were around 50 people who focused on various ecological fields and taxonomic groups, including plants, birds, ants, spiders, aquatic invertebrates, and hoverflies. Some people also assessed field quality and water quality.

Liezl and I decided to attend and survey the area for arachnids as there is very little data available for them. After a hectic time of organising permits, we were finally sorted and then we were off to our first base of operations, Rhodes Village. This is a very small town with only about 900 residents, with a very calm atmosphere. The participants were grouped by interest, and people who had similar interests shared accommodation. The accommodations were very cosy and spread out through the town. We rendezvoused at the Walkerbouts Inn, a large inn that hosted us every evening with delicious food. Every evening, before dinner, we were asked to provide some feedback on what we found that day. This was new to me as I have never had this type of feedback session before, but I managed! It was very interesting to hear what other people had seen or found during the day, as well as how different plant compositions can affect land use.

Upon arrival at our cottage, we immediately started exploring the area to see what there was to find. The same went for our first night. The first thing we noticed was the humongous poplar trees surrounding the cottage and in the bark, there were hundreds of tube-web spiders of the genus *Ariadna* (Segestriidae). After rummaging around a bit more, we found several mesh-web spiders of the family Amaurobiidae in the leaf litter, a new species of comb-tailed spider (*Hahnia* sp.; Hahniidae), as well as some linyphiid sheet-web spiders.

Left: A new *Hahnia* species (Hahniidae). **Right:** A tube-web spider (*Ariadna* sp.; Segestriidae). ***Photos:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

Our first official survey began the next morning, at 06:00… a terrible time to be awake. Why this early? Well, it seems that the majority of the sites we were planning on surveying were deep in the Drakensberg mountains. On this first day we drove four hours on a muddy 4x4 track to get to the first site, and yes, people did get stuck several times! After our little "bundu bash", we arrived at the Batlokoa communal land near Tenahead, at an altitude of about 2 800 m. Unfortunately, the weather did not play along that day, because within an hour or two into our survey, it started to pour, which greatly diminished our chances of finding anything. Some of the other people still did a 5-km hike into the mountains, but lower altitudes were our friend at this point. Our surveys at this site were limited to looking underneath some rocks, along rock faces, and between rocks and grass. The grasses and shrubs did not yield any spiders at the time, but I am sure if it was drier, they would have. Nevertheless, we did find some very interesting spiders up there. Between the rocks and grasses I found a beautiful iridescent ant-mimicking ground spider (*Micaria chrysis*; Gnaphosidae), and a species of ant-mimicking jumping spider (*Myrmarachne* sp.; Salticidae) I have yet to determine. We also found a new species of six-eyed ground spider (*Afrilobus* sp.; Orsolobidae), which were very abundant at this high altitude.

A female *Micaria chrysis* (Simon, 1910) (**left**) and a female *Myrmarachne* sp. (**right**) from the Batlokoa Communal Land (Tenahead area), Eastern Cape. ***Photos:*** Ruan Booysen.

Our next site was somewhat closer to the town, so we got to sleep in a bit. The intended site was high up in the mountains… again, but we were given the choice to stay at the bottom to survey low altitudes if we

wanted to, and so we did. This site was much more lucrative with regard to arachnids as it was lower in altitude, a warm sunny day, and it had a much more complex habitat composition. We spent half of the day collecting up a hill, and the rest of the day near the river and grassland. We were able to do beating and sweeping here as well and found a variety of arachnids that included pseudoscorpions (*Horus* spp.; Olpiidae), scorpions (mostly burrowing scorpions, *Opistophthalmus basutus*), and some harvestmen (*Rhampsinitus* spp.; Phalangiidae). In the evening, we found out that the members who went up the mountain had to hike up there through eight river crossings… shoes were lost, and a 45-minute walk turned into two hours!

A dorsal view of female *Uloborus walckenaerius* Latreille, 1806 from Rhodes. ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen.

The next day we went to another private farm close to the town and met a very friendly and inquisitive landowner. He showed everyone where to go as there were several options available, depending on what you wanted to do. We opted to stay near the river and collect in the riparian woodland area. Personally, this was my favourite place to collect, as there were plenty of rotten logs to look inside, and Oubos trees to beat. This site yielded our first tetragnathids as we found both the long-jawed orb-weavers (*Tetragnatha* spp.) and silver vlei spiders (*Leucauge* spp.). We also found beautiful tropical tent-web spiders (*Cyrtophora citricola*; Araneidae) with stunning colour variations. The rotten logs had plenty of harvestmen (Opiliones), wolf spiders (Lycosidae), and some spitting spiders (*Scytodes* sp.; Scytodidae) inside them. The *Scytodes* turned out to be a new species too! The list of *Scytodes* does not seem to get any shorter. Anyway, we made our way across the river towards a large cliff face and some Oubos trees. Liezl beat the trees, and I searched up and against the cliff face. There were pockets of leaf litter that got stuck on the cliff face, and inside I found tonnes of pseudoscorpions of the families Olpiidae and Chthoniidae; the latter being incredibly fast as they don't walk like typical pseudoscorpions.

A female harvestman (Triaenonychidae) from Mountainside private farm near Maclear, Eastern Cape. ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen.

The female of a new species of *Scytodes* sp. from Rhodes, Eastern Cape. ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen.

At this point, our time at Rhodes came to an end, and we headed off to the town of Maclear. We left early so that we could go survey a site before checking in. The site was a private farm located deep in the mountains. This site was at a high altitude, with only red grass around where we parked. We sampled the grass and rocks all the way down to the marshlands next to a river. We found plenty of *Neoscona moreli* (Araneidae) orb weavers and *Thomisus* (Thomisidae) crab spiders. After that, we decided to go collect around the rocky outcrops of a small waterfall and found more *Myrmarachne* by beating some of the shrubs around the waterfall.

Left: A male *Thomisus australis* Comellini, 1957 from Martindale private farm near Rhodes. **Right:** A female *Thomisus australis* Comellini, 1957 from Glen Avice private farm near Maclear. ***Photos:*** Ruan Booysen.

The last day was another long drive, and another three hours of intense 4x4 driving high up into the Drakensberg mountains. Upon arrival, some of us split up to cover the woody area close to the river. We did some sweeps and beats before heading down to the river itself. We crossed the river to get to a rock face where we spent most of our time hand collecting. It wasn't a very large area to cover, but we found a bunch of spiders underneath the rocks, rock overhangs, underneath moss carpets, and inside grass tussocks. Some interesting finds include a tetragnathid genus called *Diphya* (a first for me!), some large flatties (Selenopidae), jumping spiders (*Pseudicius maculatus*), and a very small tree huntsman (*Olios* sp.; Sparassidae).

Diphya sp., one of the water orb-web spiders (Tetragnathidae). ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

A male *Pseudicius maculatus* Haddad & Wesołowska, 2011 from Kilowern private farm near Rhodes, Eastern Cape. ***Photos:*** Ruan Booysen.

Not everyone joined on this trip into the mountains as many seemed opposed to the idea of driving another three hours through rough terrain. Instead, they opted to go to several other sites; one of which was a dense natural forest close to the accommodation. It was there that Peter Hawks, the owner of AfriBugs, found two mygalomorphs (the first ones for the trip!). One of them is part of a rare group of spiders called micro-mygalomorph spiders (*Microstigmata* sp.; Microstigmatidae), and the other one potentially a trapdoor of the family Bemmeridae (yet to be identified). A perfect way to end the trip.

Left: A micro-mygalomorph spider (*Microstigmata* sp.; Microstigmatidae) from a natural forest near Woodcliff Lodge outside Maclear, Eastern Cape. ***Photo:*** Ruan Booysen. **Right:** Trapdoor spider (cf. Bemmeridae) from the same location. ***Photo:*** Rudi Steenkamp.

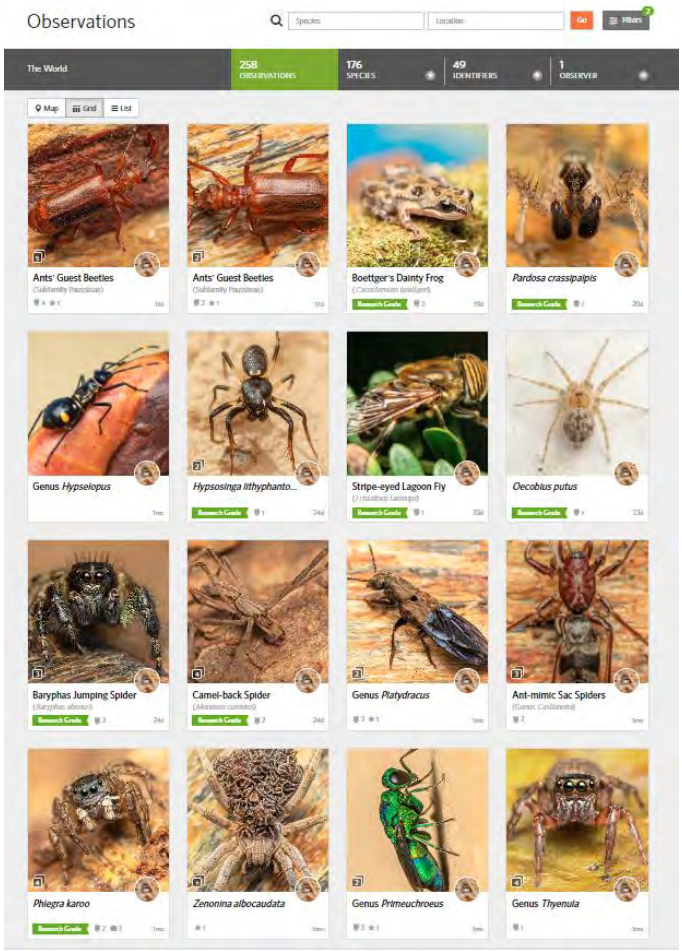
While this was an amazing trip, there were plenty of "bloopers" along the way. People got stuck in the mud, on their bellies (we were some of them), and got flat tyres. I guess these things come with the territory when you go driving in the mountains. There will definitely be more opportunities to go survey some more areas, and I am keen on going again!

iNaturalist – A dopamine-driven biodiversity database!

By Ruan Booysen

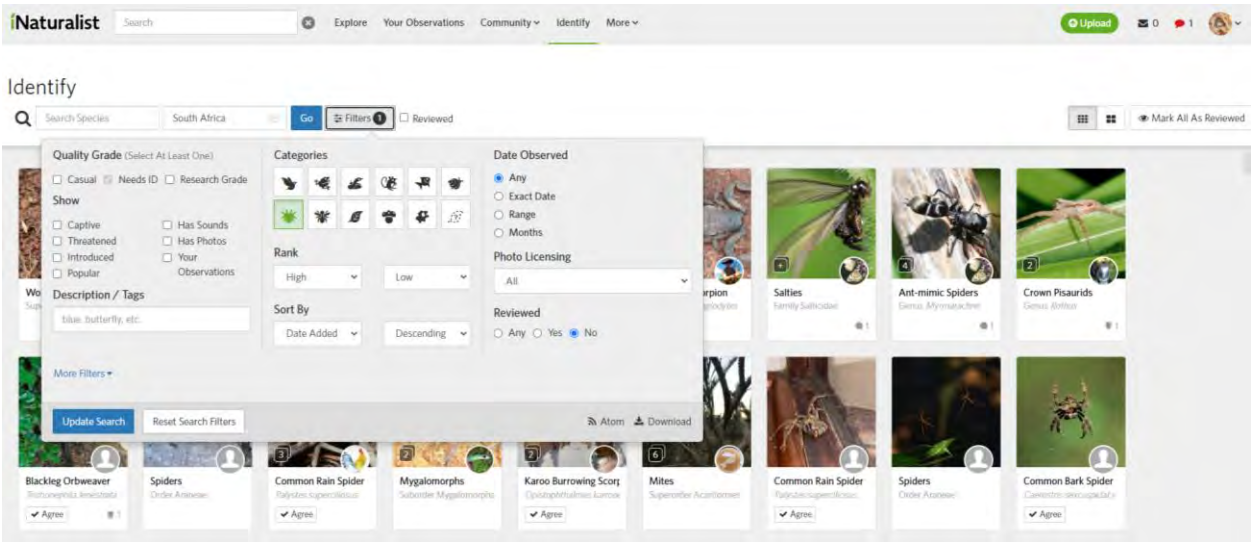
As part of the BioBlitz survey (see previous article), we were asked to upload our finds to iNaturalist. iNaturalist is a free online database that records all of planet Earth's biodiversity, as well as some useful ecological information about them. By simply registering an account on inaturalist.org, a user can upload any photographs, or sounds, of any species of plant, animal, fungi, or microorganism to the website. The website is elegantly designed and easy to use. One can easily upload hundreds of "observations" to the database and provide additional info such as tags, habitats, sounds, locality, and much more!

How it works is that once an observation is uploaded to the website, the observation is publicly visible to everyone for identification. The more people who agree with the identification, the more accurate data you will have. Identifications where more than two people agree on can gain "research grade" status if it is a community taxon (a taxon with two or more identifications), and has a date, species name, and locality with it. Research grade can also be assigned to taxonomic ranks higher than species (such as genus, subfamily, family, etc.) if no more additional data can be provided, but this has to be done manually. A user may also choose to join a "project" or create one of their own. Projects are basically "groups" a user can join to contribute to a specific dataset. For example, I am part of the "Spiders of Southern Africa" project, which means that the group will automatically import photographs from my personal observations that meet their criteria. In this case it must be a spider (Araneae) from the Southern African region (based on the locality the user provided). Some groups do not automatically import photographs and a user would have to add them to the group manually. You can check a project's info for the requirements to see what the requirements are.



An example of a user's observations, where some obtained "research grade".

A user may also contribute to the identification of other users' observations if they want to by simply viewing the observation and making use of the "Suggest an identification" tab under the "Activity" heading. A user may also provide additional annotations such as the life stage, sex, and whether the organism is dead or alive. If the user wants to see specific taxa, aside from the ones in the groups, they may choose to subscribe to a taxon and/or a place to view those records on their newsfeed. Similarly, a user may follow other users to see their content. It is like Facebook for biologists! There is, of course, a search function on the top of the page where you may search by species or place at any time.

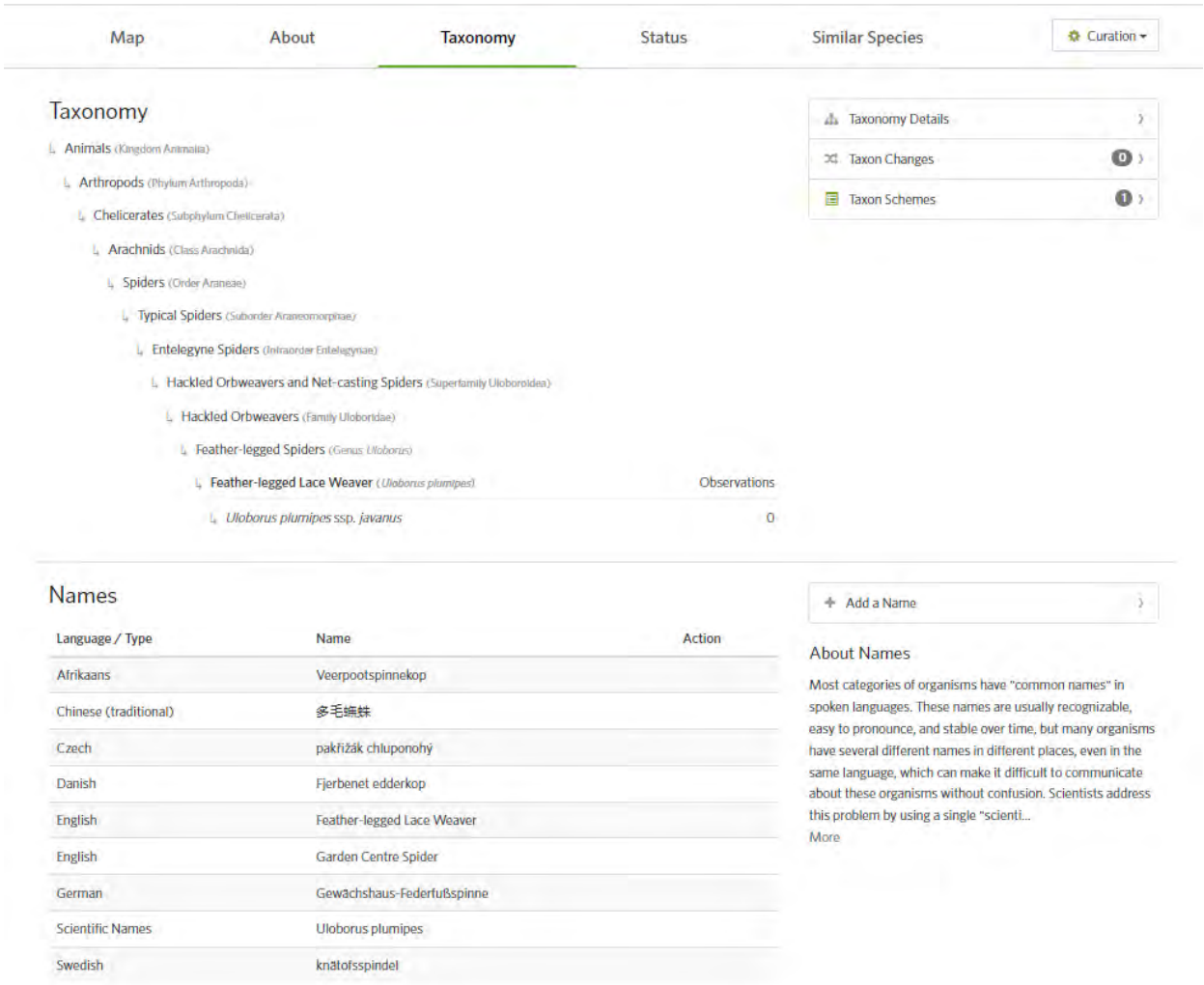


When identifying photos, you can use filters to show the field you are knowledgeable in; in this case, arachnids from South Africa.

Every photo, or sound, uploaded to iNaturalist can be covered by copyright if the user chooses to do so, and can be changed for each photo at any time in your profile. By default, the copyrights assigned to the photograph is CC-BY-NC, which is a Creative Commons licence that allows non-commercial use, and you will be given credit. You may read more on the creative common licence on their website at https://creativecommons.org/.

iNaturalist is a great place to share the things you find, as well as to gather information from other people's observations. It is also possible to download multiple observations and their data into a worksheet if it is desired. Something to keep in mind is that localities can be indicated as "open", "private", or "obscured". If the locality is regarded as "open", the locality information is completely visible to anyone who views the observation. A "private" observation has all of its locality information hidden from the public and will also not show in the list when doing locality-specific searches. An "obscured" observation will have only its coordinates hidden, and locality names are replaced with the broader locality it is in. The positional accuracy is also lowered to obscure the exact location. The latter option is typically used when users do not want a locality to be known of a sought-after species. iNaturalist may also automatically obscure the location of endangered species.

Another nice feature is that when you click on the name of a family, genus, or species, you have the option to view their global distribution (according to observations uploaded to iNaturalist), read more information about it, review the taxonomy, etc. In the case of the latter, you can also suggest common names used in a specific language. Below is an example of the taxonomy and common names used for *Uloborus plumipes*.



I think this information is enough to get you started, but if there are any queries, there is a very active and helpful forum for the platform that one can use for more information. Part of the fun in using this platform, however, is exploring the many options and information available, so if you have photos to upload for identification or simply to record a species' distribution, go create your iNaturalist account now, and have fun!

Journey with the orb-web spiders of Mpetsane Conservation Estate, Clocolan

By Allen Jones

Spiders are members of the global network of those most powerful matriarchal societies… Whales, elephants, lions, hyenas, even porcupines. Imagine what the combined energy of ALL spiders could achieve for they really do communicate with one another on a level that we don't know. They carry within them deep memories of life, dating back to Triassic times some 200+ million years ago, as spiders existed far beyond humankind's 100 000-year history. Native American folklore says that the spider web gave us the alphabet… Sure enough, every letter can be found within a spider web.

It is very apparent that spiders, no matter what species, are mathematical geniuses. As a consulting structural engineer who has designed structures and buildings all over the world, I am in awe of what these amazing web-dwelling creatures can achieve. I have compared photographs taken over 15 years and they reveal that the same species make identical forms of webs. One can identify not only the species but also the size of the occupant by looking at the web. Can you believe that an orb web with a diameter of just 300 mm contains up to 25 m of silk and that all of it is produced by that remarkable little creature; and even more amazing is that different types of silk are used to create this web. We have every reason to be in awe of them.

Mpetsane Conservation Estate (MCE), and particularly Amohela-ho-Spitskop Conservancy, is situated in the Eastern Free State highlands, some 164 hectares in extent, near Clocolan. Over the past 20 years we have rewilded and preserved our natural endemic indigenous plants and wildlife and no poisons have been used. Our efforts have been rewarded by the variety of insects, spiders, butterflies, dragonflies, amphibians, reptiles, as well as the return of simply amazing natural grassland, wildflowers, and medicinal plants that are in abundance. There is food for all; hence our rich diversity, particularly our beloved spiders, of which 138 species have so far been identified.

Figure 1: Webs seen early in the morning in the grassland at MCE.

There is a definite ratio of spider size to the web size. This changes as the spider grows until fully mature when the web is at its designated size. This appears true for all species of orb-web spiders.

- Tiny spiders 2 mm with body length = 70 mm web with ratio 35:1.
- 6-8 mm body length = 150 mm web with ratio 25:1.
- 10 mm body length = 200 mm web with ratio 20:1.

- 20 mm body length = 300/350 mm web with ratio 15 :1.
- 35mm body length = 400/450 mm web with ratio 12:1.

I have also observed the following about our orb-web spiders at MCE in the Free State:

- All prey debris items are soon removed from the webs, except for *Cyclosa* spp.
- Any damage caused to any webs by prey is quickly repaired to retain the web's structural integrity.
- As they grow, the spiders keep enlarging the size of their webs, but each species knows its limit. Their webs are suited perfectly to their needs.
- We now know that spiders travel for kilometres; larger spiders are unable to balloon and so they literally travel on foot, which is quite an amazing feat since many are not really adapted for walking through grass. They frequently move to a new web site presumably in search of food. Males obviously travel much farther in search of females. It is amazing that they actually find each other; maybe pheromones play a large part in this? It is remarkable that given the countless number of spiders here at MCE, I have only ONCE seen a spider "on the move". Perhaps this is normally done at night. They are certainly vulnerable when on the move.
- Many orb-web spiders are active at night, and they are often seen covered in dew drops early in the morning.
- Not all orb webs are recycled here at MCE and early in the morning many intact webs are seen without spiders (see Figure 1). The few exceptions are *Neoscona moreli* and *Kilima decens*, and lately *Neoscona triangula* have been observed to eat their webs, but generally it is not done. Perhaps our cooler temperatures and altitude of 1 750 m above sea level play a part.
- There definitely seems to be a "season" for different spider species. We have had a time for Pisauridae but hardly see them nowadays. This year definitely belong to *Argiope australis* and the *Trichonephila* species.

Argiope australis (garden orb-web spiders)

When small, they make a beautiful orb web 180 mm in diameter, placed some 200 mm above ground level. The web is a perfect miniature of the adult web, and they hang head down in the centre (see Figure 2c). They are diurnal spiders and some take shelter on grass stalks during the night, while others remain in their webs and are seen covered in dew in the early morning. Webs are abandoned when the spiders move to new sites, while old webs remain in place and gradually degrade.

Large adult *Argiope australis* specimens (40 mm body length) make wonderful orb webs of 400-500 mm diameter attached to grass/plant stalks about 300 mm clear above ground (see Figure 2a). They are also fond of attaching their webs to barbed wire fences, which are perfect to snare grasshopper prey; only rarely is a butterfly or moth caught. The webs are only sometimes decorated with a stabilimentum. They often make webs that are inclined to between perhaps 30-40 degrees or more from the vertical (see Figure 2b). This is clearly intended since the web, again 500 mm or more, does not sag! The thread tensions are perfectly designed to compensate for a spider with prey and to allow for wind effect that will cause the whole web to ripple but NOT break! This is pure genius as any structural engineer will tell you.

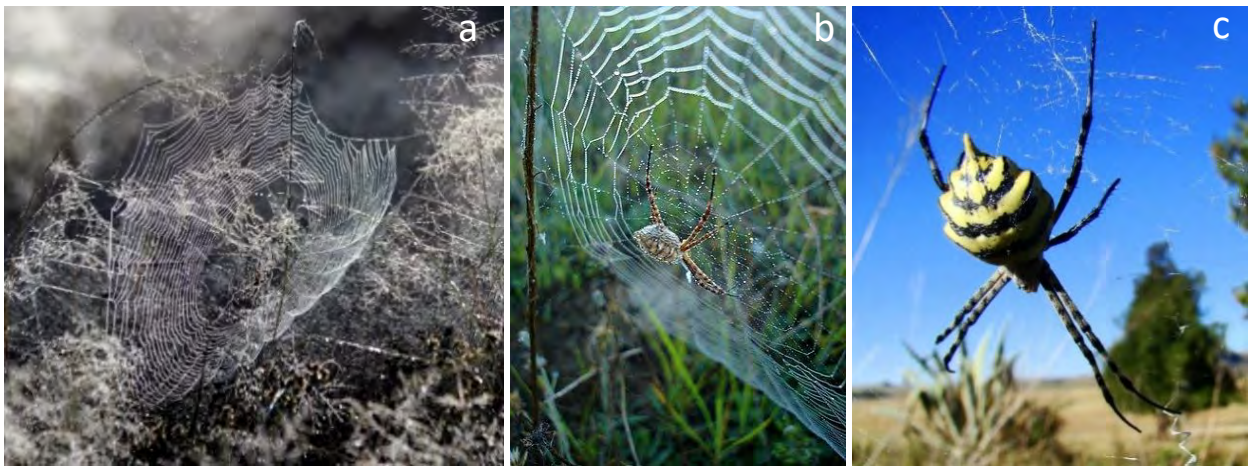


Figure 2a: *Argiope* web. **2b:** *A. australis* in web slightly inclines. **2c:** Female in her web, a common sight.

Cyclosa insulana (garbage-line spiders)

Cyclosa insulana make what is surely the best symmetrical orb web of all. They are "Mistresses of the Webs". They too start small in ratio and grow to maturity with a masterpiece web of some 300-350 mm in diameter, which does contain her prey trophies for all to see, both horizontally and vertically (see Figures 3 a&b). This debris does not appear to detract from her ability to capture yet more prey items.

Figure 3a: *Cyclosa insulana* web. **3b:** Female in her web.

Kilima decens and *Neoscona moreli* (grass hairy field spiders)

When their body length is about 5-6 mm, they make identical orb webs approximately 100-125 mm in diameter. As they reach maturity with a body length of approximately 10 mm, their webs are about 200-225 mm in size. The webs are set up at the tips of the supporting grass stalks about 400 mm above ground level, which is ideal to catch moths as they fly from grass cover. Prey landing in their webs are generally small moths, grasshoppers, and very rarely peanut beetles. They are either nocturnal or diurnal spiders; individuals appear to choose. However, they are usually active at sunset when large numbers can be seen busily building webs to catch small moths that rise from the grassland. They are gregarious creatures and cheerfully work away side by side along hiking trails and foot paths. They are also found covered in dew during the early morning. Webs are cleared away and new webs are created daily.

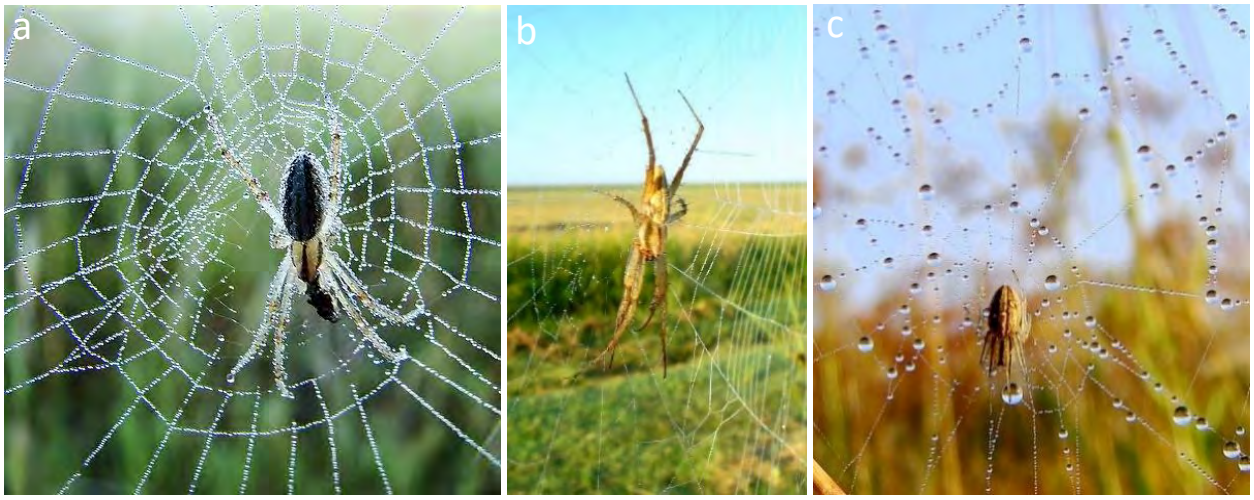


Figure 4a: *Neoscona moreli* female early morning. **4b:** *N. moreli* male in web during the day. **4c:** *Kilima decens* early morning.

Leucauge decorata and *L. festiva* (silver vlei spiders)

Surely a child had a hand in their design; who else would have put silver and green and red on such a creature (Figures 5b&c). These beautiful colourful spiders are always a delight to the eye, and it is not unusual to find several sharing a web; as many as three spiders have been recorded.

They are larger species, and their symmetrical orb webs begin at about 150 mm diameter for a spider of 8 mm until the spider reaches maturity of 20 mm and the web size is increased to 300-350 mm in diameter and they often make webs that are inclined from the vertical (Figure 5a). Grasshoppers and small moth prey are quickly dispatched, eaten, and like most other spiders, they quickly clean the web of debris, presumably so as to not highlight their presence. They are diurnal spiders, and the webs remain intact for some time before they are abandoned for a new site.

Figure 5a: *Leucauge* web in grass. **5b:** *L. festiva* female. **5c.** *L. decorata* female.

Trichonephila fenestrata and *T. senegalensis* (golden orb-web spiders)

They are very gregarious spiders and just occasionally you will find a lone spider. They are usually happy to share space with dozens of others. At MCE in 2021-2022, they build up a huge community of often more than 50 spiders, each just a few millimetres apart, yet they co-exist peacefully (see Figure 6a). They will take over a complete tree or large bush and construct a network of individual webs, yet they are often all suspended from the same main support line. They even tolerate different species in close proximity. Clearly, they too communicate since they just suddenly appear together in large numbers and, again, they

have to walk to their new site and create a new web. In 15 years of "walking with spiders" here, I have only witnessed one incident of cannibalism. Just recently in a confined area under shade cloth, a large *Trichonephila fenestrata* female caught and ate another. Possibly a case of extreme distress because of a lack of other food and clearly a case of cannibalism under duress.

Figure 6a: Large group of *Trichonephila*. **6b:** *T. senegalensis* female. **6c:** *T. fenestrata* female.

Neoscona triangula (red-spot hairy field spiders)

These intriguing spiders, not often seen, have given me more questions than answers. These are nocturnal spiders, building their webs just after sundown, and usually clearing away the webs just before sunrise. The webs can be quite large orb webs about 300-400 mm in diameter, with long bridge lines often 1-1.5 m in length attached to plant stalks (see Figure 7a). Their main diet appears to be moths, the remains of which are regularly cleared from the web. I have observed a few spiders that made a "perfect" vertical half orb, and again one rolled up a web (see Figure 7b) and repaired and reused the same silk the following evening. They remained in place for 22 days at most, then moved to another site; three of them took over an apricot tree.

Figure 7a: *Neoscona triangula* in an orb web. **7b:** Female removing her web early in the morning.

There is a whole world about spiders that we are ignorant of, such as how they communicate among themselves and between different species. They know where to build their webs. Choosing a suitable supporting plant, moving to new sites, outgrowing their webs, travelling and then building the new web. They are simply amazing creatures, technically brilliant, fearless with prey, yet I have NEVER seen two spiders fighting or even displaying aggression to each other no matter how close together. LESSONS FOR HUMANS HERE!!!

I know that the spider web is far more than a device for catching food. It is also an antenna for tuning into the whole world and is such a successful design; I see evidence of this daily.

In these times when the world has “turned on its head” and is in desperate need of peace and stability for all, don’t ever lose sight of wonder, awe, and beauty; they will save us.

I wish that I could communicate more clearly with our spiders. Interspecies communication is beginning to happen “big time” here on earth and there is some remarkable evidence available.

I am amazed at the efforts and results achieved by Tomas Saraceno (see Arachnophilia.net), the Max Planck Institute in Berlin, Oxford Silk Laboratory, and others. It is apparent that South Africa is at the forefront of spider science and knowledge of species, especially thanks to growing public interest that is dispelling old myths and negative opinions. I am still in awe when I see a tiny match-head-sized spiderling create a perfect 75 mm-diameter orb web with no guidance from an adult and then proceed to catch prey.

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Acknowledgements: I am indebted to Ansie and Charles, who have helped to identify some 138 species to date and for their generosity in sharing their passion and extensive knowledge freely. Without their coaching, I would have remained ignorant of these wonderful creatures.

Tribute to Peter Webb

On 11 January this year, we lost a giant among men and a true naturalist, Peter Webb, who passed away from pancreatic cancer. I didn't know Peter, and I've never met him, but I had so much respect for him. Paging through Ansie's field guide or scrolling through the SANSA photo guides, I would see at least one of his photos on almost every page. As a developing macro photographer and spider enthusiast, I always admired how many different spiders he found and photographed; not to even mention all the other animals, such as bees, birds, other arthropods, etc. While I didn't know him, I felt that we clearly shared a passion for the natural world and capturing it on camera to share with the rest of the world – especially the smaller things that people tend to miss (or step on).

As the editor of this newsletter, I like to include a piece about one of the many macro photographers on our Facebook page. When I found out about Peter's illness last year, I thought that I should contact him and ask him to write a little more about his photography. However, I felt that it would be disrespectful to bother him during such a difficult time, so I left the issue there...

I would find it presumptuous to talk about the man if I didn't know him, so the following are four short eulogies written by some of the people who knew him very well. All I can say from my side is thank you, Peter, for showing people that the small things matter... The eulogies are by Kim Porteous (Peter's daughter), and three of Peter's spider-loving friends: Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman, Vida van der Walt, and Robin Lyle, with a last word by Astri Leroy on the memorial service held on 11 March.

Kim Porteous

From left to right: Gareth Webb (son), Laurie Webb (wife), Kim Porteous (daughter), and Peter Webb.

Dad LIVED a life of passion. As a family we shared in his passion for gardening, pets, birding, snakes, frogs, trees, antique furniture, African beadwork and artefacts, sketching, painting, butterflies, moths, spiders, music, bees, true bugs, dung beetles, leafhoppers, caterpillar rearing, sales, second-hand stores, YouTube videos (particularly of bad Russian driving), photography … and all the people who entered our lives because of these. While a single passion would take preference at times, they were all always there. Life with Dad was not mundane. As Road Dahl said, "Above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it." Dad believed in magic.

For me, Dad was all colour, endless grand ideas with mediocre implementation, always up for an adventure, a dance, or a cuddle, secretly Turkish and Turkish delight, befriender of stray humans not dogs, encourager of all species of pets, special code keeper to my rage button, the most South African non-South African, the guide to my soul's happy place in nature, my biggest fan and critic, 37 years of bump-your-nose practical jokes, superhero senses, giver of my seasickness gene, an overactive anthropomorphic imagination – everything had a voice and a story, believer that all cars were 4x4s, most sciencey non-scientist, quiz master, exclusive back road traveller, very very very slow walks, obsessively clean teeth and nails, moderate hoarder, worst people photographer but best nature photographer, a child-like soul, and uniquely my dad.

The response to Dad's illness and passing and the outpouring of love from friends, colleagues, and acquaintances across his lifespan exposed his superpower to truly connect with people regardless of age, gender, means, occupation, interest, or geography. Dad loved his people, so thank you to his people for loving him back.

He has left behind a significant legacy, however, he has also left behind an unfillable void.

- Kim Porteous -

Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman

From left to right: Robin Lyle, Peter Webb, and Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman.

In 2009 Peter was one of the first photographers who contacted me to participate in the South African National Survey of Arachnida (SANSA). He became a very important SANSA team member as he was an excellent field worker who not only photographed spiders but also observed and collect voucher specimens for us to confirm identifications.

He loved to spend all his free time in the field, and he was a true naturalist with knowledge of many living creatures and plants. In Gauteng he was involved in the SANSA Spider Monitoring in Cities (SMC) project. He was involved in five green areas surveys in and around Pretoria. The results will be published in future newsletters.

His pet project was the sampling of a piece of pristine grassland in an urban area near his house in Irene. Over a period of six years, he was able to sample 271 species from the small area and he showed the importance of regular sampling.

He was a very good observer, which led to several articles that have been published in SANSA Newsletters on species behaviour and he was also co-author of scientific papers. I am very grateful to Peter as without his >50 000 photographs he has donated, I would have been unable to produce all the books, guides and papers that I had produced.

- Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman -

Vida van der Walt

Peter with a small collection of his finds.

I met Peter more than nine years ago in November 2012. I drove to a piece of Irene veld on a Thursday morning, intent on finding a little jumping spider I saw in photos online. The photographer of those beautiful photos was Peter, and according to the information on the website, he photographed that spider in the Irene veld, opposite GEM village. With the help of Google maps, I made my way there that day, only to find that I was not alone.

A Land Rover was parked to the side and someone was walking in the distance. As I got out of my car, I realised that the stranger in the veld just might be the photographer of the photos that brought me there. By that time, he had noticed the newcomer, and as he walked closer, I asked him, "Are you perhaps Peter Webb"?

That chance meeting was the start of a beautiful friendship that I will cherish forever. In Peter I had found a kindred spirit, with a shared love of, and fascination with, the little creatures of nature that people so often overlook.

Time spent with Peter was a joy, he always had something interesting to share, often the excitement of a new spider or insect he found, or some intriguing behaviour he observed. On collection trips nobody could match Peter when it came to collecting specimens, both in number and variety. His impeccable manners, and the kindness and respect he showed to any strangers we met during these trips made an everlasting impression on me.

Peter's big contribution to science, with his extensive documenting and discovery of new species, is well known in the scientific community. Knowing of my special interest in jumping spiders, Peter took great care in keeping any he collected aside for me, and a large number of the jumping spiders I photographed were spiders Peter found and kept for me. I never found that special little spider in the Irene veld that day, but Peter did, a year later, that he presented to me on my birthday.

Peter made me happy, he made me laugh, he inspired me, and I learned so much from him.

A young Charles Darwin wrote in a letter to his cousin, "I am dying by inches, from not having anybody to talk to about insects." If you can hear me, Peter, I am dying by inches from not having you to talk to about spiders, insects and all the other little creatures of nature.

I so dearly miss you my friend, and I hope to find you in another veld in the afterlife. I can almost see you there, surrounded by what you love, discovering and documenting all that you find.

- Vida van der Walt –

Robin Lyle

As I sit and try to put my thoughts and feelings onto paper, I realise that Peter was a true naturalist. He had a love for all things big and small, and most importantly, it was an infectious love. With this love, he taught me that a bad day in the field is always better than a good day in the office. Being outdoors was so much a part of him.

Peter has contributed to the field of arachnology in so many ways. His photographs and field notes will carry on his love for the outdoors. It is just a small part of the love he had for nature.

I had the wonderful opportunity to go to the field with Peter on more than one occasion. The fun and laughter we shared will always be dear to my heart. One day, after taking out pitfalls at a site, we had a sundowner. His words to me were: “Remember to slow down.” It is something that has stuck with me since. Slow down and take in the moment. Slow down and enjoy the sounds of nature. Slow down and just be. This is something I will carry with me always.

Rest well, my friend. I will miss you.

- Robin Lyle -

Peter photographing a small scorpion in a common position for him: flat on the ground.

On Friday 11 March, a memorial service was held for Peter. To view the service, visit the following link:

https://vimeo.com/686557844/9d7cb1ef2f

Astri, our chairperson, attended the service and wrote the following:

Astri Leroy

On 11 March I attended the memorial service led by the family pastor for Peter Webb at Ouma Ilse's Tea Room, Smuts' House Museum in Centurion. Peter had many friends spread over both professionals and non-professionals in the fields of entomology; so, together with family and friends, it was a who's who of those interested in or working on invertebrates. There were lots of lepidopterists of course because Peter's first love was butterflies and moths. However, arachnologists were well represented too. Prof. Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman, who is unable to stand for a long time, asked Robin Lyle to read out her thanks and appreciation for his friendship and for the immense contribution he made to arachnology and popularising it with his superb photos and the many useful observations he made of spider behaviour. Without those pictures, many publications, including the Field Guide to Spiders of South Africa, would not have happened. One of his legacies is the collection of more than 50 000 spider images taken all over the country, which he bequeathed to the National Collection of Arachnida.

Peter proudly showing a goliath beetle, *Goliathus albosignatus*.

For many years Peter and I moved in the same circles but it was only quite recently that I got to know him as a friend and I find it really sad that there wasn't time to get to know him better. I'm sure a field trip with Peter wouldn't just have been interesting; it would also have been fun and instructive. He knew a lot about a lot of things! I always admired his boundless enthusiasm for the natural world and the small things that inhabit it. Not only was he extremely knowledgeable but because he was a good people person, he could enthuse others. His bee hotels are scattered all across the country, and his photos adorn many publications.

I phoned him shortly after his illness was diagnosed and ever the realist, he told me that it was his ticket out, and then we spoke of spiders, and beetles, butterflies, and the veld for quite a long time. That was Peter – may he enjoy all the little things in the place to which he's gone.

On behalf of the Spider Club, and on my own behalf, my deepest sympathy goes to Laurie, Kim, and Gareth for their loss.

- Astri Leroy -

The following are a very small selection of some of the photos Peter took of spiders. While it's not a selection of his best photos, most of these were first records at the time he took them.

Top left to right: *Segregara* sp. and *Orchestrella longipes*. **Middle left to right:** *Argiope tapinolobata*, Theridiosomatidae, and Prodidomidae. **Bottom:** New *Paradonea* sp.

Top left to right: *Themacrys irrorata* and *Mahembea hewitti*. **Bottom left to right:** *Leptopholcus gracilis* and *Ursa turbinata*.

Spider of the month

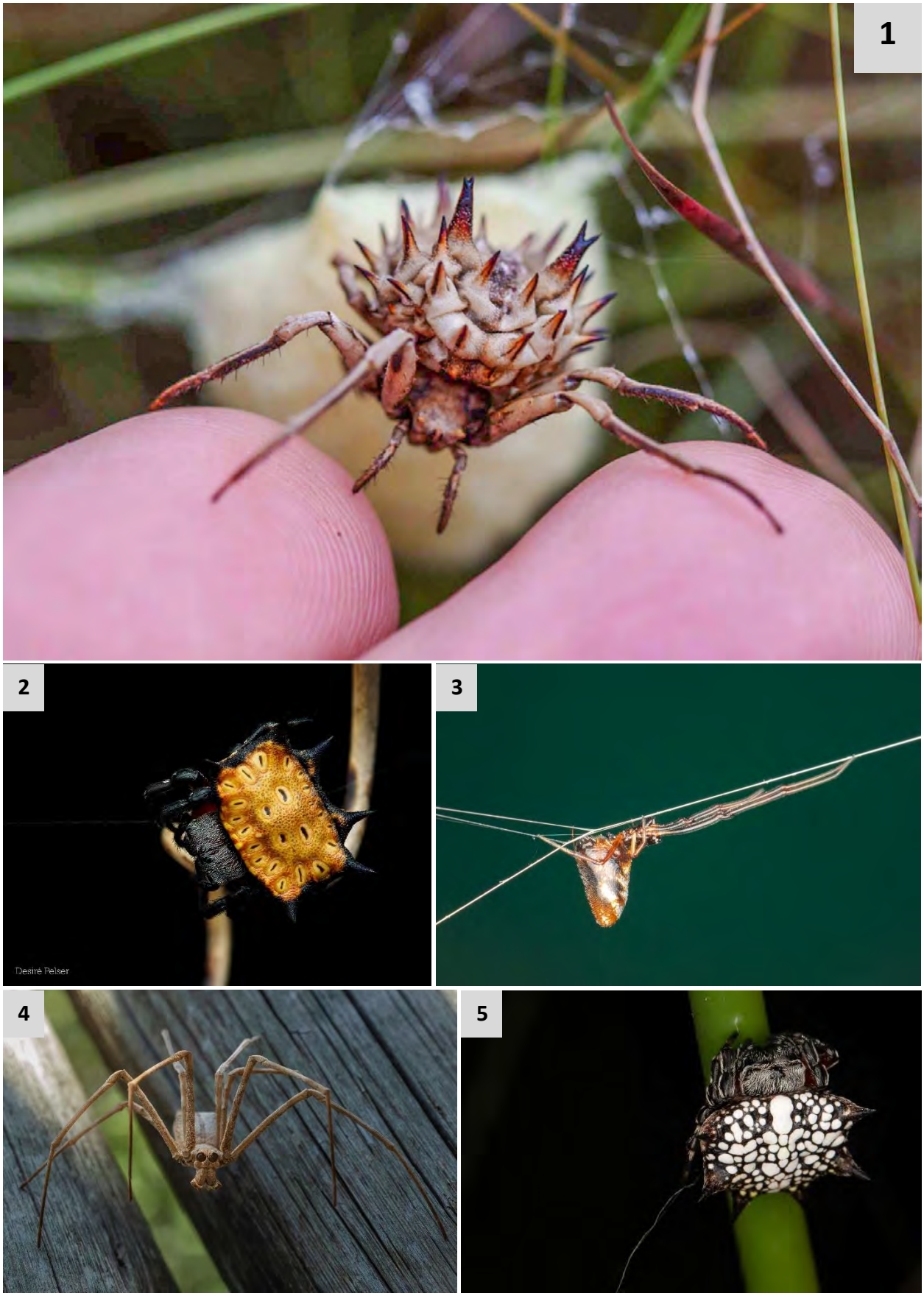
JANUARY

(1) Green lynx spider (*Peucetia* sp.), Desiré Pelser. (2) Ladybird araneus hairy field spider (*Araneus coccinella*), Robert Wienand. (3) Huntsman spider (Sparassidae, maybe *Palystes* or *Parapalystes* sp.), Cecile Roux. (4) Grass lynx spider (*Oxyopes* sp.), Dawie Broekman. (5) Hyllus jumping spider (*Hyllus brevitarsis*), Desiré Pelser. (6) Gold-banded thyene jumping spider (Thyene natalii), Jarrod Todd.

FEBRUARY

(1) Crowned lynx spider (*Hamataliwa* sp.), Robert Wienand. (2) Leigh's jumping spider (*Thyenula leighi*), Jarrod Todd. (3) Flower crab spider (*Thomisus* sp.), Bruce Blake. (4) Beetle crab spider (*Mystaria mnyama*), Ruan Booysen. (5) Giant jumping spider (*Hyllus treleaveni*), Hannes Claassens.

MARCH



(1) Hedgehog spider (*Pycnacantha* cf. *tribulus*), Geoff Lockwood. (2) Biscuit box kite spider (*Isoxya tabulata*), Desiré Pelser. (3) Dew drop spider (*Argyrodes* sp.), Odette Curtis. (4) Ogre-faced spider (*Deinopis* sp.), Frank Gaude. (5) Black-and-white box kite spider (*Isoxya cicatricosa*), Odette Curtis.

HONORARY MENTION

These are a few spiders that didn't win Spider of the Month, but that deserve to be showcased.

Left: A grass lynx spider (*Oxyopes* sp.) with her newly-hatched babies. Photo by Bruce Blake. **Right:** A mushroom theridiid (*Phoroncidia* sp.). Photo by Jarrod Todd.


Left: A brown button spider (*Latrodectus* cf. *geometricus*). Photo by Cecile Roux. See page 10 for photos of the other white *Latrodectus* spiders she found. **Right:** A field spider, probably a spiky field spider (*Pararaneus* sp.). Photo by Chris Galliers.

Left: A flower crab spider (Thomisus sp.) in her folded-leaf retreat. Photo by Bruce Blake **Right:** A male ant-mimicking jumping spider (*Myrmarachne marshali*) busy grooming himself. Photo by Rudi Steenkamp.

Anka se goggastories

deur Anka Eichhoff

Astri het dit goed gedink dat ons weer ’n Afrikaanse stuk of twee in die nuusbrief insluit, en het my verwys na Anka Eichhoff se *Goggastories*, wat ’n paar stories oor spinnekoppe insluit. Die volgende paar stukke is direk vanaf Anka se blog. Ons sal van haar ander stories in toekomstige nuusbriewe insluit. Om haar stories te lees, besoek haar webwerf by https://www.kyffhauser.co.za/Goggastories.htm

Vioolspinnekoppe (*Loxosceles spp.*) …

…sorg oor en weer vir sensasionele stories in koerante en tydskrifte. Dis grusame stories oor ‘n vioolspinnekop in ‘n teepot, wat vyf mense dodelik vergiftig het, en dis foto’s en vertellings oor swerende wonde, wat die hele liggaam vergiftig. In baie van die stories steek seker ‘n greintjie waarheid, maar dodelik is die byt beslis nie; onaangenaam wel. Ongelukkig word vioolspinnekoppe dikwels vir allerhande velinfeksies verantwoordelik gehou (en doodgemaak), omdat daar geen geloofwaardige ander oorsaak gevind of gesien kan word nie.

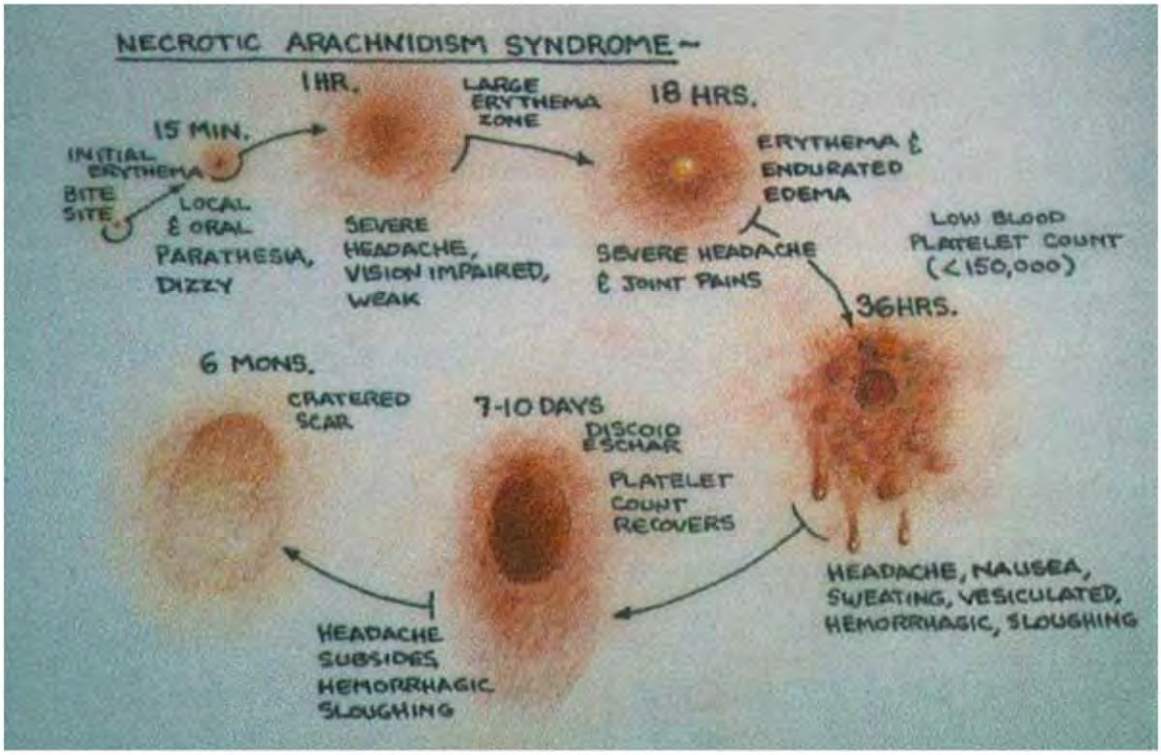
Die vioolspinnekop is redelik onopvallend, nie baie groot nie (lyf tot 1 cm lank) en word nie dikwels gesien nie, omdat dit in die nag jag en bedags in ‘n donker plekkie soos onder boombas, droë blare, klippe, of in muurkrake skuiling soek. Die ene wat ek opgejaag het, het in die tregterweb van ‘n tregterweb-spinnekop tussen bouklip-afval geskuil Dit lyk nogal na die ou huis-Pietlangpoot (*Smeringopus spp.*) wat ons almal ken in ons huise.

Loxosceles spesie. Vioolspinnekop

Smeringopus spesie huis-Pietlangpoot

Met uitgestrekte pote het die vioolspinnekop ‘n deursnee van ongeveer 3 tot 4 cm, waar die huis-Pietlangpoot s’n seker dubbeld so groot kan wees. Die vioolspinnekop se bene is ook ietwat stewiger as Pietlangpoot s’n; syne is dun en laaank. Die vioolspinnekop dwaal alleen snags rond op soek na prooi, waar die Pietlangpoot in sy ruimteweb sit en wag dat daar ‘n insek invlieg en verstrengel raak. Vioolspinnekoppe maak nie juis webbe om daarin te sit nie, dalk net waar hulle skuil en/of waar die eierkokon geplaas word; dis eintlik meer ‘n aanduiding van ‘n web as ‘n volwaardige een.

Pietlangpote spin 'n web om daarin te bly, sit en wag vir kos, vreet, vervel, produseer eiers/kleintjies, pas hulle op en dan gaan hulle daar tot niet. Vioolspinnekoppe se byt is giftig en veroorsaak gewoonlik 'n pynlike wond wat lank neem om te genees, (sien onderstaande illustrasie). Pietlangpoot is vir mense nie giftig nie.



Die gif tas die weefsel aan en laat dit sweer; dit neem lank om te genees. Dikwels word die weefsel nekroties, d.w.s. beginne sweer.Vioolspinnekoppe **is nie aggressief nie.**Hulle byt net (vir mense), as hulle gedruk word. Hul habitat is grasveld (of grotte). Hulle kom ook in woonhuise voor. Daar sal 'n mens dit in donker plekke soos die hoek van 'n kas of laai kan kry.

Alles rondom die spinnekopbyt en hoe gevaarlik dit is: Die uitwerking van die gif hang onder andere af van:

- die algemene gesondheidstoestand van die slagoffer,
- die plek op die liggaam waar die byt sit (bv. naby 'n aar, by sensitiewe area al dan nie),
- die psigiese toestand van die slagoffer (vrees, paniekerigheid, rustigheid, ens.),
- of die byt deur 'n spinnekopmannetjie of wyfie toegedien is (wyfies het gewoonlik meer gif) en
- of dit kort voor of na vevelling gebeur het (dan is die gif min, want hulle vreet dan nie).

Waar sit nou die **viool**, wat aan die diertjie sy volksnaam gegee het en waaraan ons dit kan uitken? Wel, ek weet nie, of ek op die kopborsstuk (karapaks) sal kan soek na die viool nie, dis by die meeste spesies onopmerkbaar.

Kyk eerder na die algemene liggaamsbou: *Loxosceles* is kleiner en lyk ietwat stewiger as die huis-Pietlangpoot. Buitendien **kan dit nogal vinnig op die grond vorentoe hardloop** Pietlangpoot se bewegings vorentoe lyk eerder stokkerig en beslis nie vinnig nie.

'n Mens moet maar in elk geval klein diertjies soos spinnekoppe en insekte versigtig hanteer, veral as jy nie weet wat dit is nie.

Inligtingsbronne: Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman vir identifisering (Dankie!)
GOGGAgids (Erik Holm, Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman)
Spiders of the Kalahari (Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman, Almie van den Berg)
Filmer's Spiders (Martin R. Filmer revised by NORMAN LARSEN)
Spinnen-Sex und mehr Spinnenbiologie , Mensch und Spinne (Rainar Nitzsche)
http://www.ptaooshunters.co.za/index.php/latest-news/edenvale-news/106-conservation/117-vioolspinnekop-word-vir-baie-blameer
ARC-Plant Protection Research Institute fact sheet series: Biosystematics 2014:7 Violin Spider
Foto :IMG_1755, www.spiderbitenecroticarachnidismsyndromechart,
https://www.emedicinehealth.com/spider_bite_brown_recluse_spider_bite/article_em.htm
Foto met spinnekop en bierbotteldoppie by Google gekry, nou onvindbaar
Teks en foto's van *Loxosceles* spesie en *Smeringopus* spesie: Anka Eichhoff
(Julie 2018) Bygewerk Maart 2022

Nessies van klip en webgordyne met klip …ietsie oor klipnes-spinnekoppe

Wie sou kon dink, dat spinnekoppe regtig in staat is, om "kliphuisies" te bou?! Hierdie kliphuisies laat 'n mens dink aan 'n Eskimo-igloe. Die koepelagtige ronde huisie word teen klip vasgeplak. Binne-in is dit uitgevoer met spinnekopsy. Aan die bokant is 'n ingangsgaatjie. Die klipnessie dien as skuilplek vir die ma-spinnekop en die eiertjies word daar gelê en in 'n kokon toegespin. Ek kon nie agterkom, of die mannetjies ook 'n igloe-skuiling het of nie.

Interessant is ook, dat op dieselfde klip met klipigloes wespenessies voorkom wat van buite amper so lyk, net groter en langwerpig is, omdat hulle uit meer as een sel of kamertjies bestaan en hulle is hard; dis onmoontlik om dit tussen die vingers stukkend te druk.

Verder was daar ook 'n spinnekop-igloe met 'n leë papiedop → daarin. Aangesien daar baie wespes is wat op spinnekoppe parasiteer, is die waarskynlikheid groot, dat dit 'n wespe se papiedop kan wees. Dus is dit moontlik, dat daar twee verskillende wespe-spesies naby hierdie klipnes-*Diores* bly, naamlik die ene wat sy nes messel en met klein klippies vermom en die een wat sy eier in die spinnekopnes of op die spinnekop self lê en sodoende op die spinnekop parasiteer.

Dit is geïdentifiseer as *Diores namibia* Jocqué, 1990, en behoort aan die familie Zodariidae. Sy liggaamslengte is ongeveer 1 cm, dis nagaktief, voed waarskynlik op termiete en/of miere, en skuil bedags in die klipigloe. Ek het hulle naby Kamanjab (noordweste van Namibië) aan die voet van granietkoppe teen groot klippe van 30 cm tot 1 m hoog bokant die grondoppervlak gekry. Soms is daar sommer 'n paar kliphuisies langs mekaar. Van die boustene van die kliphuisies is amper so groot soos die spinnekop self. Kan ons 'n klip optel wat so groot is soos onsself???

Van ‘n heel ander aard is die spinnekoppe in die familie Hersiliidae. Hulle spin gordyne bestaande uit systringe, waarin groterige sand- of modderkorrels en droë plantmateriaal (indien beskikbaar) ingewerk is. Die hele web bestaan uit talle stringe wat van bo aan die onderkant van ‘n klip, houtstomp wat nie plat op die grond lê nie of in ’n grotagtige holte in die harde rivierbank afhang. Die stringe is in menigte rye agtermekaar aangebring, dus het die “gordyn” diepte (is nie plat nie) en die spinnekop kan tussen die stringe skuil.

↙So lyk die bewoner van die klip-plant-en-veertjies-gordyn (daar was ook veertjies in een gordyn. By die gronddam was die gordyn slegs van modderbolletjies en spinnekopsy gemaak).

Hierdie mooi spinnekop van die familie Hersiliidae behoort aan die genus *Tyrotama.*

Nog‘n spesie uit die familie Hersiliidae bly ook onder groterige klippe, maar die spinnekop self en die web lyk anders.→

Hier sit die wyfie langs haar klipwebkonstruksie, wat in ‘n ringvorm teen die klip lê, as die klip opgetel word, (hoe dit lyk as dit van die klip na onder afhang, weet ek nie). Op die kant van die groot klip ‘n entjie van die web het ek ‘n eierkokon gekry wat lyk soos ‘n “klipeiertjie”; moontlik is dit hierdie spinnekop se eierkokon.

Inligtingsbronne: Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman (Baie dankie!), GOGGAgids (Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman,Erik Holm)

Teks en foto’s: Anka Eichhoff (September 2018) bygewerk Maart 2022

Ons bly saam onder dieselfde klip…wie is wie?

Balbyters, *Camponotus fulvopilosus* is die wetenskaplike naam, is seker aan almal van ons bekend; nie soseer oor hul byte nie, maar oor ons **bang is vir byte**! Die werkermiere byt glad nie, maar hulle kan vyande afweer, deur hulle met skerp suur te bespuit. Die soldaatmiere sal wel van die sterk knypers gebruik maak, as iets/iemand die nes wil versteur. Hierdie groot miere bly saam in redelike klein kolonies, gewoonlik onder klippe, ou boomstompe of aan die voet van kleinerige struike of bossies. Dikwels sit daar luise bo teen die takke, wat dan ook deur die miere "gemelk" word. Die miere gaan na die luise en betas en streel hulle met die voorste paar pote, wat veroorsaak, dat die luise 'n soet sap uitskei. Die soet sap ('n soort "energiser") word deur die miere gedrink en verskaf genot, vloeistof en energie.

Wat hierdie miere nog besonders maak, is dat hulle in gebiede (die Namib byvoorbeeld) met baie hoë temperature kan oorleef. Hoe warmer dit is, hoe vinniger kan hulle beweeg en hoe groter is die kanse om prooi te vang en/of van 'n vyand weg te kom. Hulle verskil ook van ander miere deurdat hulle nie in spesifieke paaie loop nie. Elkeen vat maar sy eie pad en bring kos nes toe as dit iets gevang het.

Werkermier dra dooie kollega

Werkermier steek haarself weg deur die geel rug weg te draai

In een balbyterkolonie is daar een koningin, werkermiere wat kos aandra en die eiers en nimfies versorg, en soldate wat vir die veiligheid sorg. Hulle sien 'n mens gewoonlik by die nes-ingang rond.

By so 'n kolonie balbyter-miere het ek toe eendag ene gesien wat 'n bietjie anders lyk; ek dink dit was die manier van beweeg, wat my aandag getrek het. Toe ek die dingetjie soek, sien ek dis 'n **spinnekop!** Die wetenskaplike naam is *Mexcala rufa*. Dit bly in die onmiddellike nabyheid van balbytermiere. Hoekom? Hulle boots die miere na om deur moontlike vyande as die onsmaaklike balbytermier misgis en so gespaar te word. Dat die miere so 'n spinnekop sal vang, kan nie uitgesluit word nie. Ek het ook al 'n uitgesuigde balbytermier op die spinnekop se skuilweb gesien. Dalk loop hulle maar groot draaie om mekaar.

Hier boots sy 'n balbytermier na, deur sy die eerste paar pootjies hoog op te lig. ➘
En sy **kyk** vir my met haar twee groot oë, wat voor teen die kop sit. Die twee groot oë voor, die beweeglikheid van die kopborsstuk en die manier van voortbeweeg (hulle spring) is tipies vir alle springspinnekoppe (*Salticidae*), maar hierdie wat ek gesien het, het **nie** gespring nie, hulle het gehardloop; dalk spring hulle nie om hul vermomming nie weg te gee nie.

↙Skuilplek teen die klip.

Toe ek dit gevang en by die huis in 'n glasbak laat oornag het, het dit 'n tent-skuiling gebou.

By die balbyterkolonie, waar ek hierdie spinnekop gevang het, was altesame vier of vyf wat ek kon uitmaak (hulle is baie vinnig!).

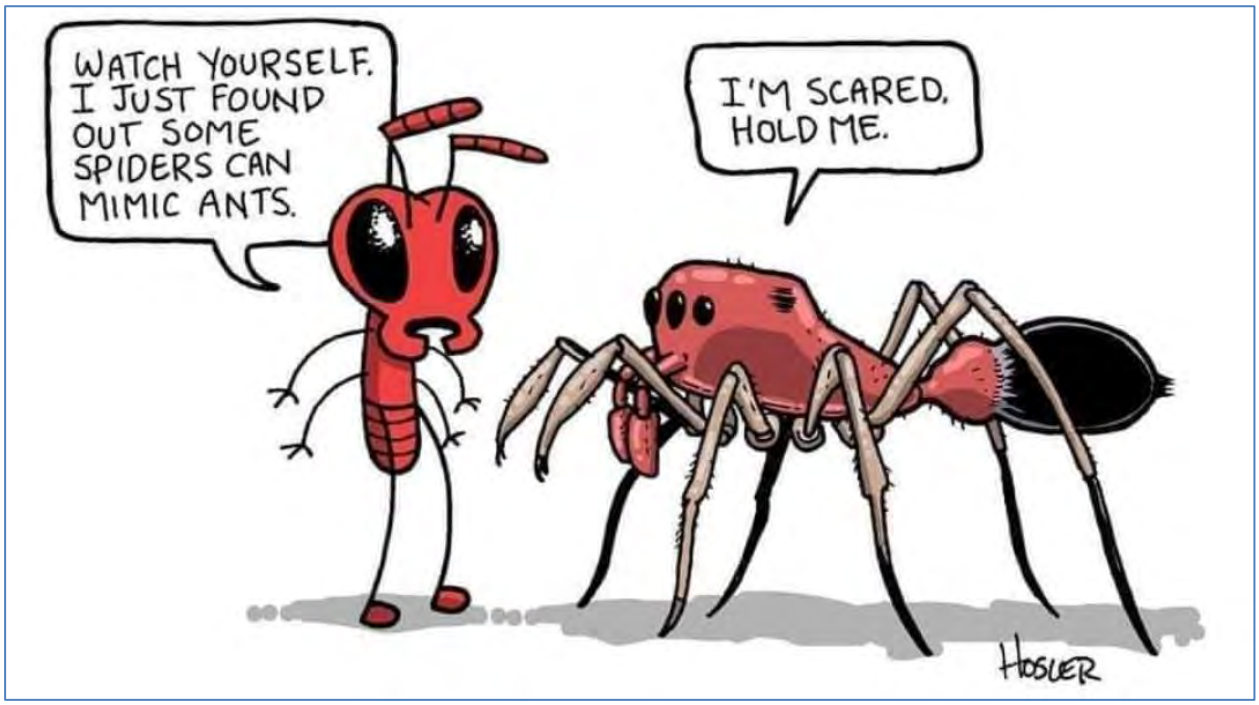
Wys hulle dalk vir ons hoe 'n buurmanskap kan werk... in plaas van teen mekaar, **langs en-met mekaar?**

Inligtingsbronne: Updated Field Guide to Insects of South Africa (Mike Picker, Charles Griffiths, Alan Weaving)
Insectopedia (Erik Holm)
Spiders of the Kalahari (Ansie Dippenaar-Schoeman & Almie van den Berg
antsofthecape.blogspot.com/p/formicidae-sugar-ants.html...
Artikel deur Barbara Curtis in Cimbebasia Nr.10 (Do ant-mimicking spiders prey on their Camponotus models? 1988)
www.http://wsc.nmbe.ch.December2017
Galina Azarkina (identification of spider)

Teks en foto's: Anka Eichhoff (Oktober 2018) bygewerk Maart 2022

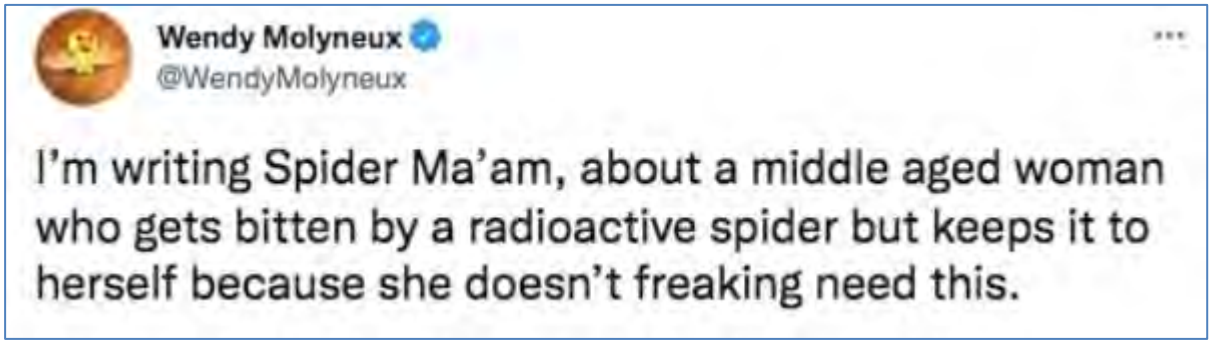
On a lighter note

Like news bulletins on television, we like to conclude the newsletter on a lighter note. There weren't many humorous posts on our Facebook page, so here is a bonanza of spider-related cartoons.

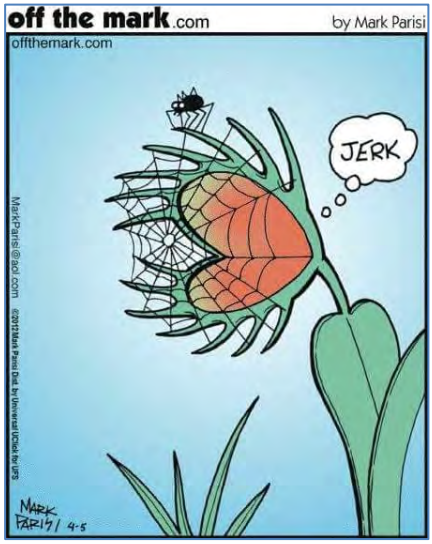

WATCH YOURSELF. I JUST FOUND OUT SOME SPIDERS CAN MIMIC ANTS.
I'M SCARED. HOLD ME.
HOSLER


SAFELY ENDANGERED
DON'T WORRY, I'M NOT GONNA KILL YOU
I'M JUST PUTTING YOU OUTSIDE
ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!
I'LL NEVER FIND MY FAMILY AGAIN

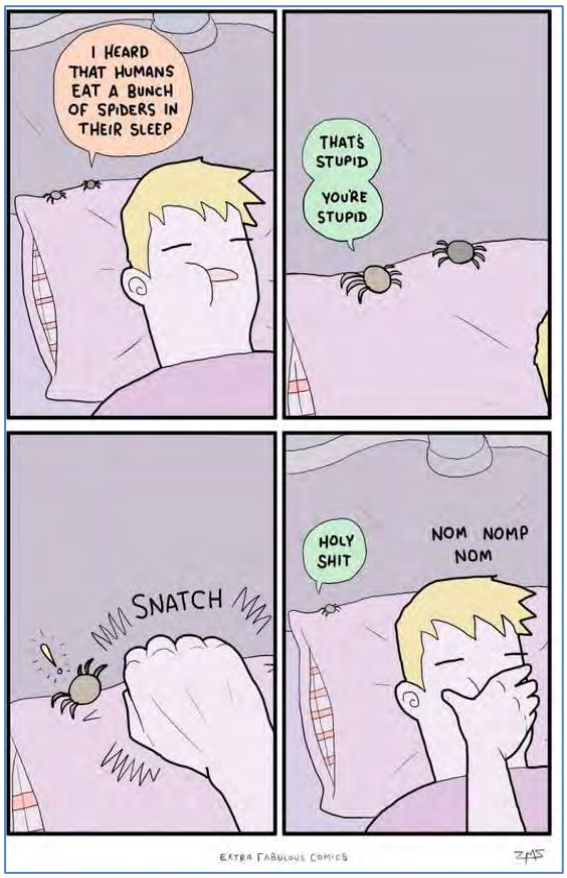

How I feel when I move a spider outside instead of killing it...
I am one with nature and the universe...
How the spider feels about it...
What just happened?
Beatrice the Biologist

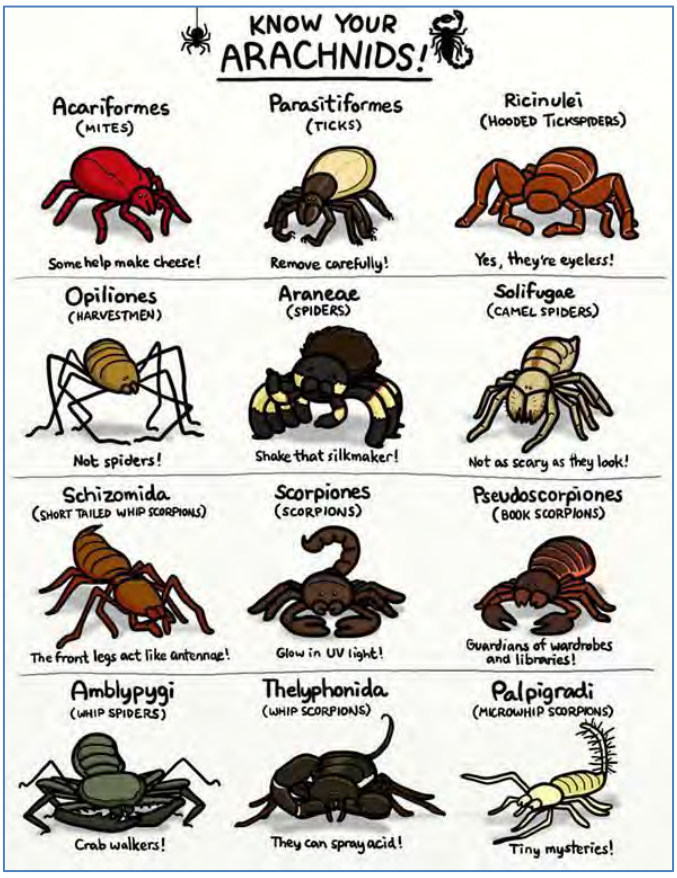

Wendy Molyneux
@WendyMolyneux
I'm writing Spider Ma'am, about a middle aged woman who gets bitten by a radioactive spider but keeps it to herself because she doesn't freaking need this.

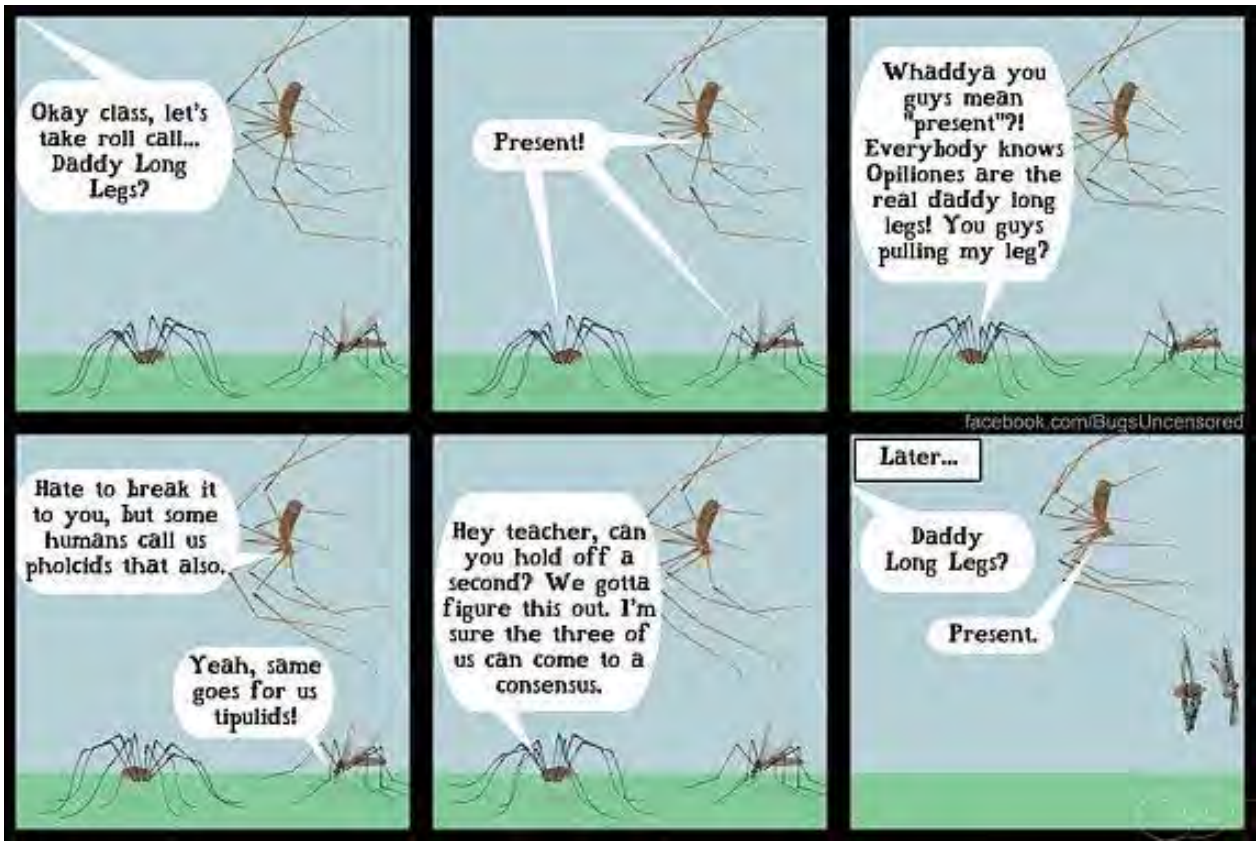

THE WOLF SPIDER MOTHER CARRIES HER HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN ON HER BACK WHEREVER SHE GOES.
MOM, WATCH THIS!
WERE YOU WATCHING?
SHE HIT ME!
MOM, WHERE DO DONUTS COME FROM?
'CAUSE HE HIT ME!
WHERE ARE WE GOING AGAIN? MOM?...
ARE WE THERE YET?
LIQUOR STORE
WE'RE GOING DIRECTLY TO THE LIQUOR STORE.
©AHEARN zoodrawscomic.com


off the mark.com
by Mark Parisi
offthemark.com
JERK
MARK PARISI 4-5


I MADE IT WITH MY BUM


I HEARD THAT HUMANS EAT A BUNCH OF SPIDERS IN THEIR SLEEP
THAT'S STUPID
YOU'RE STUPID
SNATCH
HOLY SHIT
NOM NOMP NOM
EXTRA FABULOUS COMICS


KNOW YOUR ARACHNIDS!
Acariformes (MITES)
Some help make cheese!
Parasitiformes (TICKS)
Remove carefully!
Ricinulei (HOODED TICKSPIDERS)
Yes, they're eyeless!
Opiliones (HARVESTMEN)
Not spiders!
Araneae (SPIDERS)
Shake that silkmaker!
Solifugae (CAMEL SPIDERS)
Not as scary as they look!
Schizomida (SHORT TAILED WHIP SCORPIONS)
The front legs act like antennae!
Scorpiones (SCORPIONS)
Glow in UV light!
Pseudoscorpiones (BOOK SCORPIONS)
Guardians of wardrobes and libraries!
Amblypygi (WHIP SPIDERS)
Crab walkers!
Thelyphonida (WHIP SCORPIONS)
They can spray acid!
Palpigradi (MICROWHIP SCORPIONS)
Tiny mysteries!


Okay class, let's take roll call... Daddy Long Legs?
Present!
Whaddya you guys mean "present"?! Everybody knows Opiliones are the real daddy long legs! You guys pulling my leg?
facebook.com/BugsUncensored
Hate to break it to you, but some humans call us pholcids that also.
Yeah, same goes for us tipulids!
Hey teacher, can you hold off a second? We gotta figure this out. I'm sure the three of us can come to a consensus.
Later...
Daddy Long Legs?
Present.

Events

So far, we only have one spider walk confirmed, but we are planning more. Please keep an eye on our Facebook group (https://web.facebook.com/groups/101951926508391/) or on our website (https://www.spiderclub.co.za/events/category/events/). Alternatively, register as a member of The Spider Club of Southern Africa (https://www.spiderclub.co.za/register/) to receive email notifications about any confirmed events.

We ask for a donation for attendance at field and certain other events: ***R50 per adult and R10 per child 11 years and under, cash only, with the option of paying R150 PER FAMILY for annual subscription.*** *Some venues will also require an entrance fee that must be paid by each individual. For field trips we will supply vials, magnifiers, plastic pill bottles, and some other basic collecting equipment, but please bring your own if you have as well as any reference books, a picnic lunch, adequate water, a hat, and good walking shoes.* ***Book on info@spiderclub.co.za or 067 833 2191 or on our Facebook page****. When booking, please give us your cell phone number and we will set up a WhatsApp group for the event.*

Join our community on Facebook to meet like-minded people and stay updated on upcoming events https://www.facebook.com/groups/101951926508391/

Watch this space!

Keep your eyes on your e-mail and our Facebook page as other events may be organised, sometimes at quite short notice. We will attempt to give you fair warning. And remember that Norman Larsen is at the Cape Union Mart Adventure Centre, Canal walk in Cape Town for the first three Saturdays and the last Sunday of the month between 11 am and 12 pm to demonstrate and talk about SPIDERS!