

NATURE'S NEWS

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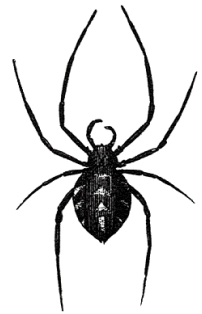
A Newsletter for Parents, Teachers, and Students participating in Four Winds Natural Science Workshops

Spiders: Web-weavers and Wanderers

Hanging under eaves and in windows, tucked in the cracks on tree bark, hidden in tall grass, spiders and their silky threads can be found nearly everywhere you look in late summer. Whether wanderers or web weavers, spiders abound in nearly every habitat on Earth. There are about 2,500 spider species in North America, all different and each well adapted for its role as a small but effective predator.

Spiders and insects are related in that they are both arthropods. However, spiders differ from insects in body structure; they have two main body parts and eight legs.

Spiders are amazing creatures, many capable of spinning intricate, strong webs for trapping food. Spiders produce silk from their abdomen and may use it to spin a web, as a coating around egg masses, or as a securing thread to prevent a fall or aid in escaping from predators. Some spiders use silk to line a burrow or to trap air under water. A close look at spiders and at webs reveals a fascinating relationship between structure and function.



SPIDER WEB PORTRAIT

Make a web portrait by mounting a spider's web on black paper that has been sprayed with hairspray. Find a web that is no longer in use by a spider. If the web appears occupied, leave it alone and look for another.



Lightly sprinkle the web with talcum powder to make it stand out. Then spray the web from both sides. Work quickly because the spray needs to be slightly tacky. Gently bring the black paper

up and under or behind the web, and catch the web onto it. Wait for the paper to dry and voila! you have a preserved web.

NEWS FROM SCHOOL



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