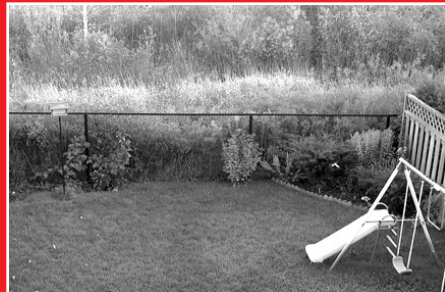


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Having spiders in your home is a bit like a visit from your relatives— some are more welcome than others

Their webs may be annoying, but according to Orkin, Inc., many spiders actually have household benefits, such as helping reduce unwanted insects in your home. For some homeowners, this contribution can outweigh the fear spiders evoke.

"Most of the spiders you see in the home are harmless," said Karen Romel, Technical Specialist for Orkin Canada. "There are a few types that can be dangerous, because their bites cause serious reactions, but those spiders are fairly rare in Canada. What's important to know is that an abnormal amount of spiders in your home could signify a larger pest problem altogether."

Some spiders actually kill other bugs, such as cockroaches and mosquitoes, which can spread disease. Additionally, wolf spiders help to rid lawns and gardens of common pests. Yet it's often difficult to distinguish such "helpful" spiders from their more harmful counterparts.

Spiders such as the yellow sac can be harmful because their bites inject venom that poses a threat to you and your family. Yellow sac spiders are quite common in Canada and are usually responsible for confirmed spider bites. (Although spider bites are reported frequently, they are often misdiagnosed.) Encounters with

black widow and brown recluse spiders are very rare in Canada.

Spiders typically only bite if they are handled or trapped and feel threatened, but it's still a good idea to be familiar with these unwelcome pests. Following is identifying information on each:

- **Yellow Sac:** This spider has yellow coloring; its abdomen is often much brighter than its head or legs.

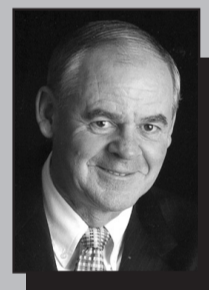
- **Black Widow:** Females (the only ones that bite) are shiny black, with a red hourglass-shaped mark on their abdomens.

- **Brown Recluse:** This spider is yellowish to brown in color, with a dark-brown violin-shaped back marking; legs are long and thin with fine hair.

Homeowners can take some steps to prevent unwanted spider invasions by removing food sources and discouraging nesting by keeping low-traffic areas, such as cellars or closets, clear.

However, when spiders make frequent appearances in your home, it's best to trust an experienced professional to identify the species and determine the best way to control your pest problems. For more information on spiders, visit www.pco.ca or call 1 800 800-ORKIN.

—News Canada



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