

A Bug's Life

Black widow spider

Family: Theridiidae; Genus - *Latrodectus*

Fun facts

- Found outdoors in low vegetation, under furniture, outbuildings, barns, garages and other warm, dry areas
- Build messy webs with strong silk
- Bites may occur if spider is accidentally pressed against body
- Venom is neurotoxin, medically important

Identification

Spider: 3/8" long for females, smaller for males, shiny black, globular abdomen, female has red hourglass-shaped mark on the underside of abdomen, males and immature females often more colorful

Management

- Turn lights off at night so not to attract prey organisms to the building
- Manage vegetation outside buildings
- Remove debris such as logs, rocks, boards, and litter to limit hiding spots
- Not aggressive to humans, but if bitten, seek medical attention and bring spider



Only females have red hourglass



Messy cobweb

Photos: J. Green