

Wolf Spiders

Typical Location When Observed: Occasionally indoors on lower floors, although wolf spiders rarely enter buildings. Wolf spiders are usually seen crawling actively on the soil.

Geographic Location: Statewide. The large burrowing wolf spiders are most often seen in grassland areas.

Importance/Damage: Wolf spiders are not dangerous and will bite only if handled. However, they are fast moving spiders, somewhat hairy and several species are large – features that commonly promote spider fears.

Distinguishing Features: Wolf spiders are gray-brown to gray-black and capable of crawling quickly. The center two pair of eyes on the top of the head are enlarged. Sizes range widely among the 85+ Colorado species, from less than ½ inch to 3 inches long.

Female wolf spiders have the unique habit of carrying their egg sac attached to the tip of the abdomen. Recently hatched spiderlings are carried on the back of the mother for a couple of weeks.

Look-Alikes: Wolf spiders are probably most often confused with funnel weaver spiders. The enlarged pair of eyes in the front of the head and the absence of web building separate wolf spiders from funnel weavers. The larger species are sometimes mistaken for tarantulas.

Resources: These spiders are discussed in Extension Fact Sheet 5.512, *Spiders in the Home*.

Scientific Name: Many species

Class: Arachnida

Order: Aranae (Spiders)

Family: Lycosidae (Wolf spiders)



Schizocosa mccooki, a common wolf spider that is over one inch long.



Female wolf spider carrying spiderlings.