

## **RBG launches eight-legged exhibition, Spiders Alive!**

**Royal Botanical Gardens' latest winter exhibit brings visitors face to face with amazing arachnids**

**BURLINGTON ON, January 18, 2019** – Families looking for an affordable, wild getaway this winter, need only travel to Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) to experience the beauty of *Spiders Alive!* From January 19<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>th</sup>, RBG's latest winter exhibit makes its first appearance in Canada and features exotic spiders and other fascinating arthropods from around the world.

At *Spiders Alive!* visitors can weave their way through a world of incredible creatures and discover what makes spiders so unique — and surprisingly beautiful. *Spiders Alive!* puts guests face-to-face with over 17 live arachnids and other wild species—from the goliath bird-eating spider to the desert hairy scorpion—examining their anatomy, evolutionary history, and signature traits. The eight-legged exhibition also features intriguing videos, larger-than-life models and insight into how scientists aim to protect global spider populations.

RBG's own interpretive programming brings the exhibit home with *Critter Corner*, an area where visitors can experience a variety of local crawling, many-legged friends, and discover the important roles they play in our own backyards.

Family programming features days and weekends packed with kids' events and interactive presentations. Adding to the excitement is a full line-up of public programs, school programs, Family Day activities and March Break camps. Special events include After Dark: Spiders Alive, a 19+ evening program that transforms the exhibit into a nighttime experience.

Spiders Alive! was developed by the American Museum of Natural History and brought to Royal Botanical Gardens by Peeling Productions.

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For more information, visit [www.rbg.ca/spiders](http://www.rbg.ca/spiders)

### **Admission/Hours:**

**Members:** FREE

**Adult:** \$16

**Senior (65+):** \$13

**Student/youth:** \$13

**Child age 4 to 12:** \$9

**Child under age 4:** FREE

**Family (2 adults, 2 children under age 18):** \$37

**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; daily

### **For media inquiries, contact:**

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# Exhibited Species

- 1. Indian Ornamental (*Poecilotheria regalis*)**
- 2. Metallica Tarantula (*Poecilotheria metallica*)**
- 3. Ivory Ornamental (*Poecilotheria subfusca*)**

The ornamental tarantulas are as colourful as tropical birds, a sharp contrast to the fearsome, dark, and dangerous creatures many imagine.
- 4. Trapdoor Spider (*Liphistius dangrek*)**

These spiders spend most of their time in underground burrows, emerging mainly to grab prey. Their rear half is segmented, a trait visible in some of the earliest spider fossils.
- 5. Wolf Spider (*Hogna antelucana*)**

This active hunter searches for food on foot, aided by sharp vision and its ability to sense vibrations – like those of the beating wing on an insect or the patter of steps on the soil.
- 6. Fishing Spider (*Dolomedes okefinokensis*)**

Large fishing spiders rest their front legs on the surface of the water on the shoreline trying to sense vibrations—like those of the beating wing on an insect or the patter of steps on the soil.
- 7. Desert Hairy Scorpion (*Hadrurus arizonensis*)**

The largest scorpion in North America (reaching 10 to 18 cm), this arachnid beats the daytime heat of its desert home in burrows and hunts in the evening, feeding on insects, spiders, lizards, and even an occasional small mammal.
- 8. Tailless Whip Scorpion (*Damon variegatus*)**

Not actually a scorpion, this arachnid waves its first pair of legs around to feel its way. This species makes a cameo appearance in the movie *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, in which one character wrongly suggests that its bite is lethal.
- 9. Giant Vinegaroon (*Mastigoproctus giganteus*)**

Like a skunk, this arachnid shoots a foul-smelling spray from its abdomen if disturbed.
- 10. Mediterranean Brown Recluse (*Loxosceles rufescens*)**

This spider is identified by a dark, violin-shaped mark on its head. Its venom can cause a deep wound in humans that takes weeks or even months to heal and can produce symptoms such as nausea and a fever.
- 11. Western Black Widow (*Latrodectus hesperus*)**

One of the few species harmful to people in North America, the black widow can be identified by the red hourglass shape on its underside.
- 12. Mexican Red Knee (*Brachypelma smithi*)**

This stunning tarantula, which lives mainly on the Pacific coast of Mexico, resides in burrows, hurrying out to prey on insects, small frogs, lizards, and mice.
- 13. Goliath Bird Eater (*Theraphosa stirmi*)**

One of the bigger spiders in the world, it preys on snakes, mice, and frogs but, despite the name, rarely birds.
- 14. Golden Orb-web Spider (*Nephila pilipes*)**

Found in the Southeast Asian rainforest, this large spider has yellow on its abdomen and spins a golden web.
- 15. Orb Weaver (*Argiope* sp.)**

Members of this genus are found all around the world and spin large webs that often contain striking designs. Charlotte's Web author E.B. White, who consulted with a Museum curator while writing the classic children's book, named the main character Charlotte A. Cavatica after a common orb weaver, *Araneus cavaticus*.

**16. Funnel-web Grass Spider (Agelenopsis sp.)**

This spider spins a sheet-like web attached to a narrow tube, or funnel. Sitting at the mouth of the tube, the spider waits to strike after feeling vibrations of prey crossing the web.

**17. Southern House Spider (Kukulcania hibernalis)**

The large charcoal-colored females make flat, tangled webs in dark corners and under overhangs and shutters to catch insects.

## Daily Programming

Weekdays	Weekends
<b>Eight-Legged Race</b> 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	<b>Eight-Legged Race</b> 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
<b>Toddler Time</b> 10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.	<b>Puppet Show</b> 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.
<b>Mini Explorers</b> 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	<b>Meet the Critters</b> 11:30 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. 2:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.
<b>Spider Special</b> 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	<b>Storytime</b> 12:30 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.
	<b>Special Guest (Sundays only)</b> 1 p.m. to 1:25 p.m.
	<b>Outdoor Walk</b> 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.
	<b>Discovery Show</b> 3:30 p.m. to 3:50 p.m.

*\*Weekday programming runs Monday to Friday except on PA Days, holidays, Pyjama Party Fridays, and March Break when the weekend schedule will apply.*

*The daily schedule is subject to change to accommodate special presentations and visiting guests.*

## Event Descriptions

**Toddler Time**

*Younger audiences, 20 minutes, weekdays only\*.*

Warm yourself up by participating in interactive songs, rhymes, and stories.

**Mini Explorers**

*Younger audiences, 20 minutes, weekdays only\*.*

Drop in for some hands-on activities to explore many-legged creatures.

**Storytime**

*Younger audiences, 15 minutes, weekends only\*.*

Stop by for a hopping good time as we read our frogs themed stories and learn more about these amazing animals!

**Outdoor Walk**

*Recommended ages 5+, weekends only\*.*

Follow us for a 30-minute guided walk in Hendrie Park to learn more about how spiders beat the cold.

**Spider Special**

*All ages, weekdays only\*.*

Stop by to learn about a spider's diet. Can you stomach it?!

### **Puppet Show**

*Younger audiences, 15 minutes, weekends only\*.*

Watch our animal friends tell their own tales and learn what makes them so special.

### **Meet the Critters**

*All ages, 20 minutes, weekends only\*.*

Join us for an intimate encounter with a few of our crawling, many-legged friends.

### **Discovery Show**

*All ages, 20 minutes, weekends only\*.*

Discover the wonders of spider adaptations in our engaging demonstration.

### **Eight-Legged Race**

*All ages, self-guided, daily*

Spiders have many amazing adaptations, from balancing on silk threads to pouncing on their prey. Test your spider skills in eight activity stations!

### **Special Guests**

RBG is pleased to welcome special guests to share their expertise and passion about spiders and friends! Join us every Sunday at 1 p.m. for a new guest speaker each week. We will also have bonus special guests for special occasions. Check back often as we will be regularly updating our list!