

# Mexican Red Rump Tarantula (*Brachypelma vagans*)



**Diet:** Mexican Red-legs feed on insects, frogs, mice, and even other spiders. Pretty much anything they can overpower.

**Habitat:** Native to scrublands of southern and Southeastern Mexico and down into other parts of Central America, the Mexican Red-rump tarantula is a terrestrial species that burrows underground. They have also been established as a non-native species to Florida.

**Predators:** Lizards, birds, snakes, or other large carnivores and/or insectivores.

**Behavior:** Mexican Red-rumps, like most terrestrial tarantulas, remain in their burrows and feed opportunistically when prey passes by. They are generally docile, but can be quick to start.

**Lifespan:** Females of this species have been known to survive for 15 years or more.

**Growth and Development:** Once mature, the males will abandon their burrows in search of females and typically die soon after mating. Adult females have a leg span of approximately 6.5 inches, and males typically similarly sized or slightly smaller.

**Endangered Status:** The species number is declining but it is labeled as least concern on IUCN. However, the Mexican Red-rump is listed under Appendix II of CITES to prevent illegal removal and international trade.

**Fun Fact:** The venom peptide GsMtx-4 is being investigated for the possible treatment of cardiac arrhythmia, muscular dystrophy and glioma. These tarantulas were also used in traditional medicines of the Ch'ol Maya people in southeastern Mexico; by medicine men killing the spider, and then crushing it into a powder to be mixed with other ingredients. The strained liquid was then drunk.