



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Mexican Red-leg Tarantula (*Brachypelma emilia*)



Countries: Mexico and Panama

Habitat: Native to the scrublands of Mexico and Panama, the Mexican Red-leg tarantula is a terrestrial species that burrows underground.

Diet: Mexican Red-legs feed on insects, frogs, mice, and even other spiders.

Predators: Lizards, coyotes, birds, snakes.

Behavior: Mexican red-legs, like most terrestrial tarantulas, remain in their burrows and feed opportunistically when prey passes by.

Lifespan: This is one of the longest living species of tarantulas, with females living up to 30 years.

Growth and Development: Males mature in seven-10 years, and females mature in nine-12. 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 six inches, and males are typically similarly sized or slightly smaller.

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

Fun Fact: New World tarantulas like the Mexican Red-leg have urticating hairs on the sides and back of their abdomens that can be dropped or flung if the tarantula is under stress. These hairs are itchy and can be irritating to the noses, mouths, and eyes of predators.