



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Giant Lichen Orb Weaver (*Araneus bicentarius*)



Country: Eastern parts of the United States and Southeastern Canada

Habitat: These spiders are commonly found in wooded areas and forests where they can effectively hide against tree bark due to their camouflaging appearance.

Diet: Their primary diet consists of flying insects such as moths, flies, and small beetles that become ensnared in their webs. Feeding on such a diverse range of prey helps maintain a healthy ecosystem by controlling insect populations.

Predators: Their predators include larger animals such as birds.

Behavior: Rather than staying in the middle of their web, they sit at the edge of their web waiting for their prey. When males approach for mating to avoid being mistaken for prey, they engage in a cautious courtship ritual. This involves carefully approaching the female and using vibrations and signals to communicate their intentions.

Growth and Development: These spiders exhibit sexual dimorphism, with females being larger and more colorful than males. Females tend to have a larger, rounder abdomen, while males have a longer, more elongated abdomen.

Lifespan: Generally, spiders of this species live for about one year.

IUCN Endangered Status: The status of this species is undocumented.

Fun Fact: They are named for its resemblance to lichen, with their coloration and markings, which helps it camouflage on tree bark and other surfaces.