



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Giant Wood Spider (*Nephilia maculata*)



Country: Southeast Asia, and Indo Pacific Islands

Habitat: They can be found in woodland and forested areas.

Diet: They feed primarily on large flying invertebrate animals but are capable of feeding on most animals able to be caught in its web including vertebrates.

Predators: Birds and other larger animals.

Behavior: These spiders are known to congregate and form their individual webs close to each other compared to various other species of orb weaving spiders. These spiders are skilled hunters. Once an insect is caught in the web, the spider will quickly immobilize it with silk and then proceed to consume it.

Growth and Development: Females are large and grow to a body size of 1-2 inches with males growing to less than ¼ of an inch. Mating involves a complex courtship ritual, where males cautiously approach females to avoid being mistaken for prey. After mating, the female can produce an egg sac containing hundreds of eggs, guarding the egg sac until the spiderlings hatch.

Lifespan: Females typically live for several months to a little over a year. Male spiders have a significantly shorter lifespan compared to females. They usually live for only a few months, just long enough to find a mate, engage in courtship and mating, and then often perish shortly after mating.

IUCN Endangered Status: The status of the species is listed as stable by the IUCN.

Fun Fact: Scientist cannot determine the exact reason why this species is so drastically sexually dimorphic, but the two hypotheses are: females exhibit gigantism or that males exhibit dwarfism.