



## BUTTERFLY PAVILION

### Six-Eyed Sand Spider (*Sicarius hahni*)



**Country:** Namibia and South Africa

**Habitat:** They occur in sand, on sand dunes, under rocks and rock overhangs and generally in the vicinity of antlion pits in the deserts of Southern Africa.

**Diet:** Feed primarily on insects and scorpions

**Predators:** Birds, snakes and desert mammals

**Behavior:** The Sand Spider is covered in small hairs, called setae (a stiff hair, bristle or bristle-like process or part of an organism), which serve to hold particles of sand. This provides effective camouflage even when the spider is not buried. The Sand Spider lives in the desert and hunts by ambush rather than by spinning a web. Unlike most ambush hunters, it does not dig a burrow. Instead, it buries itself just under the surface of the sand.

**Lifespan:** Approximately 8 years.

**Growth and Development:** Sand Spiders reproduce through eggs laid in silk bundles called egg sacs. Spiders often use elaborate mating rituals to allow the male to approach close enough to inseminate the female without triggering a predatory response.

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

**Fun Fact:** Toxicology studies have demonstrated that the venom is particularly potent, with a powerful hemolytic/neurotoxic effect, causing blood vessel leakage, thinning of the blood and tissue destruction.

