



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Golden Orb Weaver (*Trichonephila clavipes*)



Country: North and South America

Habitat: Forested areas, but its broad range is seasonably variable as it prefers warmer temperatures and can disperse to be in it.

Diet: Adults feed on flying or jumping animals that get caught in its web, mainly consisting of other arthropods, but have been known to eat reptiles that may become entangled in their web.

Predators: Wasps and birds are the major predators. Also, it is the host for some parasitic wasps, which sting the spider but keep it alive. Those wasps lay their eggs in the spider so that their larva can eat it when they hatch.

Behavior: These spiders are sexually dimorphic with males being much smaller than females. They are known to take up residence in orchards and have been found inside shipping containers of the subsequent produce that was shipped commercially.

Growth and Development: Males approach females to mate while she is busy feeding on another prey animal as means to prevent her attacking him. After mating, the female creates an egg sac on a nearby tree with hundreds of eggs inside. Reproductive height is during August and September, with the emergence of many spiderlings in spring.

Lifespan: This species generally lives about one year.

IUCN Endangered Status: This species is labeled as stable by the IUCN.

Fun Fact: Silk from this spider has recently been tested as a novel way to reconnect severed nerve cells within human bodies.