



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Spiny Crab Orb weaver (*Gastercantha cancriformis*)



Country: Found throughout North America, Central America, and parts of South America, particularly in the United States, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Brazil.

Habitat: These spiders prefer gardens, forests, and shrubby areas where they can build their orb-shaped webs among trees and shrubs. They are often found in warm, humid environments.

Diet: Like most spiders, Spiny Orb-Weavers feed on small insects that get trapped in their webs. Their diet includes flies, mosquitoes, beetles, and other small arthropods.

Predators: Common predators of these spiders include birds, lizards, and other larger spiders.

Behavior: Spiny Orb-Weavers are known for their unique, spiny, crab-like appearance. They are not aggressive toward humans and typically hide during the day to avoid predators. They build circular webs, which they use to catch prey, and they tend to stay in the center of their web, making them easy to spot.

Growth and Development: Like other spiders, Spiny Orb-Weavers go through a series of molts as they grow. Spiderlings emerge from egg sacs and go through several instars (growth stages) before reaching adulthood.

Lifespan: The average lifespan of a Spiny Orb-Weaver is around one year. However, their lifespan can vary depending on environmental conditions and predation.

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

Fun Fact: The Spiny Orb-Weaver is easily recognized by its distinctive spiky, crab-like body shape, which can be various colors including white, yellow, red, or black, often with contrasting spots or spines. This unique appearance helps deter predators and provides camouflage.