



BUTTERFLY PAVILION

Western Black Widow (*Latrodectus hesperus*)



Country: United States of America, Canada and Mexico

Habitat: Western black widow spiders are commonly found in a variety of habitats, including outdoor areas like gardens, woodpiles, and sheds, as well as indoor spaces such as basements, garages, and crawl spaces. They prefer dark, sheltered areas.

Diet: Small insects and invertebrates

Predators: Birds, Praying Mantis', Parasitoid Wasps, and other Spiders.

Behavior: These spiders are primarily nocturnal hunters and spin irregular webs close to the ground or in crevices. They wait for prey to become ensnared in their webs, which they then subdue with their venom.

Lifespan: Males live around 1 to 1.5 years, Females live 1.5 to 3 years on average.

Growth and Development: Female black widow spiders are the most recognizable and potentially dangerous. They are usually shiny black and have a characteristic red or orange hourglass-shaped marking on the underside of their abdomen. The males, on the other hand, are much smaller and less conspicuous, often with a series of red or white markings on their abdomen.

IUCN Endangered Status: The status of this species is undocumented

Fun Fact: Female Western black widows are known for their potent venom. It contains neurotoxins that can affect the nervous system of their prey. While their bites are not usually fatal to healthy humans, they can cause severe pain, muscle cramps, and other symptoms.