

Beneficial Species Profile



Photo credit: Erin Bauer, University of Nebraska.

Common Name: Black and Yellow Argiope aka Golden Orb-weaver (California), Yellow Garden Spider, Yellow Garden Orbweaver, Writing Spider, and Zipper Spider

Scientific Name: *Argiope aurantia*

Order and Family:

Order: Araneae

Family: Araneidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	Egg sac: 25mm in diameter	Between 300 and 1400 eggs are laid in brown, papery egg sacs made of silk and hung in the center of the female's web.

Immature	Smaller than adults	Immature Black and Yellow Argiopes generally resemble small adults; there are no major changes in anatomy or structure as they grow except for the eventual development of reproductive organs.
Adult	female: 14-28 mm male: 5-9 mm (sizes do not include legs)	The Black and Yellow Argiope has a shiny, black egg-shaped abdomen with bright yellow or orange markings. The cephalothorax, forward part of the body, is covered with short, silvery hairs. Its legs are mostly black and have red or yellow markings. Like other orb-weavers in its family, the Black and Yellow Argiope has three claws per foot, one more than most spiders. Orb-weavers use this third claw to help handle the threads while spinning. The Black and Yellow Argiope also has a venomous bite that immobilizes prey that is caught in its web, but generally doesn't harm humans. Webs made by a Black and Yellow Argiope will have a vertical zigzag band above and below the middle of the web.

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Piercing-Sucking

Host/s:

The Black and Yellow Argiope prefers to live in sunny areas among flowers, shrubs, and tall plants. It can be found in many types of habitats, including gardens and old fields, though is not common in the Rocky Mountains or the Canadian Great Basin.

Description of Benefits (predator, parasitoid, pollinator, etc.):

Like all spiders, Black and Yellow argiopes are predators. They spin an orb web to capture small flying insects such as aphids, flies, grasshoppers, wasps, and bees.

References:

Bartlett, T., & McLeod, R. (2004, February 16). Species Argiope aurantia - Black-and-Yellow Argiope. Retrieved April 06, 2016, from <http://bugguide.net/node/view/2025>

Hammond, G. (2002). Argiope aurantia. Retrieved April 06, 2016, from http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Argiope_aurantia/