

Beneficial Species Profile



Photo credit: Josh Shoemaker

Common Name: Silver garden spider (Silver Argiope)

Scientific Name: *Argiope argentata*

Order and Family: Araneae: Araneidae

Size and Appearance:

The legs are often held in pairs. It spins a flat orb web. Webs of adults usually contain four zigzag arrangements that form an “X” shaped cross. Immatures often build a spiraling pattern. The males are much smaller and less colorful.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		Unusual shape with several points; greenish color.
Larva/Nymph	Smaller than adults	Immatures look like small adults.
Adult	Total body length (not including legs) F: 12 – 16 mm M: 3.7 – 4.7 mm	Much of the top of the female’s body is covered with reflective silvery hairs (pictured above left). There are three pointy looking bumps along each side of the abdomen. Males are much smaller (see right picture above with both male and female).
Pupa (if applicable)		N/A

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Spiders digest their prey outside the body. This is done by regurgitating digestive fluid into the prey. The dissolved tissue of the prey is then sucked up. Argiope spiders generally first wrap their prey, then inject venom and digestive fluids once it is immobilized. Some spiders, including orbweavers, use their chelicerae to mash their prey as they eat.

Host/s:

This spider feeds on insects that become trapped in its web. Spiders in the family Araneidae have relatively poor vision and use vibration to sense their prey.

Description of Benefits:

This is a tropical species and found in warmer areas of the southern US. It is found in gardens around shrubs. They feed mainly on insects, including many insects considered pests, such as moths, wasps, mosquitoes and flies.

References:

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