

Pest Profile



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Common Name: Brown Widow Spider

Scientific Name: *Latrodectus geometricus* (Fabricius)

Order and Family: Araneae: Theridiidae

Size and Appearance: *Latrodectus geometricus* spiders are fairly widespread in regions featuring a tropical climate. In the United States, most of the Southeast is home to the Brown Widow Spider. They differ from their well-known family member, the Black Widow, in having grayish-brown coloration, often with white markings on the abdomen. Like the Black Widow, females of the species exhibit an “hourglass” shaped marking on the underside of their abdomens, often yellowish-orange. Females are about 2 mm long and males are about 0.5-1 mm in length. Males are about the same shade as the female, but lack the signature “hourglass.”

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	1.0-3.0 mm in diameter (sac)	Females can produce up to 20 egg sacs in a given lifespan, each containing 250 eggs.
Larva/Nymph	1-3 mm	Spiderlings resemble the adults and molt 5-7 times.
Adult	2-3 mm , female 0.5-1 mm, male	Brown coloration with white markings on upper abdomen, “hourglass” shape present under abdomen on females, large abdomen. Males smaller and of similar color, smaller abdomen.
Pupa (if applicable)		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing

Host/s or Prey: *Araneidae* spp. feeds on small invertebrates.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Mainly a nuisance pest as it spins webs in undisturbed areas of yards, homes, sheds, and other structures. Though females are venomous, they are not as aggressive or likely to bite as other family representatives.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Spiders- Black Widow and other Widow Species. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (8.1.2). National Pest Management Association International.

Reid, L.S., Mancke, R., Culin, J., Benson, E. (2003). Brown Widow Spider. Clemson University Entomology, Soils, and Plant Sciences. Retrieved on July 4th, 2016 from http://www.clemson.edu/cafls/departments/esps/factsheets/medvet/brown_widow_spiders_mv14.html