



Have you ever seen a spider wearing a red hourglass? Nope, it's not getting ready for a party, it's a black widow spider! These spiders are easy to spot with their shiny, black bodies and the red markings they wear. They are not very big, about 1.5 inches long, but are known to be quite tough. Their name comes from a slightly scary fact - sometimes, the females eat the males after mating!

Speaking of eating, let's find out what these eight-legged creatures munch on. Black widow spiders are like the mini superheroes of the insect world, they catch and eat other insects that we often find annoying, like flies and mosquitoes. They do this by spinning super strong webs, waiting for their dinner to get trapped. Once the prey is stuck, the spider uses its venom to turn the insides of the insect into a liquid and then slurps it up like a smoothie!

Now you're probably wondering, where do these critters hang out? Well, black widow spiders can be found all over the world, but they especially like warmer climates. They prefer to live in dark, secluded places like woodpiles, boxes, or in the corners of garages. They are not very social, and prefer to live alone except when they are mating.



Okay, so we know they're not party animals, but what about us humans? Well, black widow spiders are not naturally aggressive to humans and will only bite if they feel threatened. Their venom can be harmful, but it's very rare for it to cause serious problems. So, remember, if you ever come across a black widow spider, admire its red hourglass from a distance and let it continue its superhero insect hunting!



Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) What color is the marking a black widow spider has?
 - A. Red
 - B. Green
 - C. Yellow
 - D. Blue

- 2) How do black widow spiders get their name?
 - A. Because they spin strong webs and catch insects.
 - B. Because the female sometimes eat the males.
 - C. Because they have black bodies and red hourglass markings.
 - D. Because they like to live in dark black places.

- 3) How do these spiders catch their food?
 - A. By waiting for prey to fall in a hole
 - B. Strong webs
 - C. By scavenging the remains of dead animals
 - D. By running after their prey

- 4) How big are black widow spiders?
 - A. About 12 inches (1 foot)
 - B. About an inch and a half
 - C. Microscopic
 - D. About 4 inches

- 5) What color is a black widow spider?
 - A. Tan
 - B. Brown
 - C. Black
 - D. Gray

- 6) What do black widow spiders eat?
 - A. Insects
 - B. Fruits
 - C. Meat
 - D. Plants

- 7) Where can black widow spiders be found?
 - A. All over the world
 - B. Only in Africa
 - C. Only in cold climates
 - D. Only in deserts

- 8) Are black widow spiders naturally aggressive to humans?
 - A. Yes
 - B. Only females
 - C. No
 - D. Only males

- 9) How does a black widow spider eat its prey?
 - A. It turn the insides of its prey into a liquid and then slurps it up.
 - B. It crushes the insects with its strong jaws.
 - C. It chews up the insects with its sharp fangs.
 - D. It swallows the insects whole.

- 10) What should you do if you come across a black widow spider in the wild?
 - A. Try to kill it
 - B. Admire it from a distance
 - C. Try to touch it
 - D. Catch it in a jar



Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 11) "I don't eat insects."
- 12) "I love bright and open spaces."
- 13) "Sometimes I eat my mate after we're done mating. Sounds scary, right?"
- 14) "I'm a really big spider, about the size of your hand."
- 15) "My bite is usually fatal to humans."
- 16) "I can't spin webs."
- 17) "I trap my dinner by spinning super strong webs."
- 18) "I'm not really a fan of being out in the open. Give me a dark and secluded place any day of the week."
- 19) "I'm not very big compared to many other spiders. I'm only about an inch and a half long."
- 20) "Webs and venom? I prefer to catch my prey with my bare hands."
- 21) "I enjoy the cold climates."
- 22) "My venom crystallizes the insides of the insects."
- 23) "I like catching and eating insects which people often find annoying like flies and mosquitoes."
- 24) "I prefer living with other spiders."
- 25) "Although my bites have venom, it's not common for it to cause serious harm to humans."
- 26) "I live pretty much all over the world, but especially in warmer areas."
- 27) "Once an unsuspecting critter wanders into my web, I use venom to turn its insides into a tasty bug smoothie!"
- 28) "We males never have to worry about females after mating. We live happily."
- 29) "I'm easy to spot in a crowd. I have a shiny black body with a prominent red marking shaped like an hourglass."
- 30) "Be careful around me. I'm typically not the aggressive type, but if you mess with me, I'll bite you."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 31) Black widow spiders usually live in warm places.
- 32) Black widows slurring their prey like smoothies is gruesome and cool at the same time.
- 33) Black widow spiders catch their food by trapping them in their strong webs.
- 34) Finding black widow spiders hiding in dark corners sends shivers down my spine.
- 35) Black widow spiders aren't very large, they are less than 2 inches long.
- 36) The abdomen of black widow spiders is the most interesting part of their body.
- 37) Black widow spiders will generally only bite humans if they feel threatened.
- 38) Black widow spiders eat other insects such as flies and mosquitoes.
- 39) Black widow spiders, with their shiny bodies and red markings, look cooler than any other spider.



- 61) The venom of a black widow spider is 15 times more toxic than a rattlesnake's venom, how scary!
- 62) Black widows have a shiny black body with a red hourglass-shaped marking on their abdomen.
- 63) How do black widow spiders catch their prey?
- 64) It's astounding how black widow spiders can eat insects up to twice their size!



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| 1. _____ | 26. _____ | 51. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 27. _____ | 52. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 28. _____ | 53. _____ |
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| 5. _____ | 30. _____ | 55. _____ |
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1-10	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50
11-20	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0



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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u> A </u> | 26. <u> true </u> | 51. <u> B </u> |
| 2. <u> B </u> | 27. <u> true </u> | 52. <u> A </u> |
| 3. <u> B </u> | 28. <u> false </u> | 53. <u> D </u> |
| 4. <u> B </u> | 29. <u> true </u> | 54. <u> A </u> |
| 5. <u> C </u> | 30. <u> true </u> | 55. <u> C </u> |
| 6. <u> A </u> | 31. <u> fact </u> | 56. <u> declarative </u> |
| 7. <u> A </u> | 32. <u> opinion </u> | 57. <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 8. <u> C </u> | 33. <u> fact </u> | 58. <u> declarative </u> |
| 9. <u> A </u> | 34. <u> opinion </u> | 59. <u> interrogative </u> |
| 10. <u> B </u> | 35. <u> fact </u> | 60. <u> interrogative </u> |
| 11. <u> false </u> | 36. <u> opinion </u> | 61. <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 12. <u> false </u> | 37. <u> fact </u> | 62. <u> declarative </u> |
| 13. <u> true </u> | 38. <u> fact </u> | 63. <u> interrogative </u> |
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| 15. <u> false </u> | 40. <u> opinion </u> | |
| 16. <u> false </u> | 41. <u> true </u> | |
| 17. <u> true </u> | 42. <u> false </u> | |
| 18. <u> true </u> | 43. <u> true </u> | |
| 19. <u> true </u> | 44. <u> false </u> | |
| 20. <u> false </u> | 45. <u> true </u> | |
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11) "I don't eat insects." (paragraph 2)

12) "I love bright and open spaces." (paragraph 3)