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here are many different types of spider webs. Some of the most well-known types of spider webs include spiral orb webs (most common), tangle webs or cobwebs, woolly webs, sheet webs, funnel webs, and triangles.Almost every type of spider has its own type of web, which is why it’s possible to distinguish between spider breeds just by looking at its web.Some webs are regular and well-shaped, while others are highly irregular and not so well defined, making it slightly tougher to define the exact shape of the web.Let’s take a look at the different types of spider webs and which spider species they belong to.An Orb Web. Photo: PixabaySpiral orb webs are very commonly found in gardens and outdoors where the family of spiders called Araneidae live. You’ll find them sitting in the middle of their orb webs during the day.Among the most common species from this group of spiders is the garden orb weaving spider, and the group also includes:Garden Orb WeaverSilk SpiderBolas SpiderSpiny Orb WeaverThis type of spider web looks regularly shaped and you’ll often find it between plants and leaves. It has a symmetrical shape, and the best way to describe it in simple terms is to compare it to a wheel with spokes.When we think about spider webs and the different types of webs, this is probably the first type of webs most people think about.The web is carefully crafted so that it can hold spider eggs in the middle and keep them protected from potential predators. But the web also plays the role of catching the victims, as the “spokes” of the web are covered with special sticky drops so that the victims cannot easily escape once they’re caught inside the web.A Tangle of Cobwebs. Photo: PixabayTangled webs, or cobwebs, should be a familiar sight if you have spiders in your home – and we’re not talking about spiders as pets, but rather the spiders you have in your home, such as domestic spiders.These webs look very unorganized and don’t have a particular shape to them.But this design is not a flawed design by any means – rather, it’s a very meticulously planned, maze-like design which is meant to confuse the victims and get them caught into the web, giving them a very slim chance of escape.You’ll find these webs in corners and between objects of your home, particularly in hidden parts of your home where you don’t often clean up.Indoors, these cobwebs might appear small, but in nature, these webs will extend for several feet. The aim there is to create a web that’s large enough to cover a big area and capture all of the insects and as many animals of prey as possible in an enclosed space.Woolly webs are not a very common sight – that’s because they’re the creation of Desidae spiders, which is a family of intertidal spiders that lives mostly in South America, Australia, and parts of Asia.Desidae live in coastal areas and often have their habitat far away from human civilization, which is why they’re harder to spot.Woolly webs have a thicker type of consistency about them. They’re covered in special silk nanofibers which are electrostatically charged, which causes the target that gets caught inside the web to be stunned and paralyzed.Amazing what nature is capable of producing, isn’t it?The primary role of sheet webs is for capturing smaller insects like flies.They’re essentially created as a flat surface that is meant to get the flies that are flying nearby, but there’s a catch (literally): these webs have a net above them, which aims to bounce the fly down into the web, causing it to get stuck.These webs are created between sticks of grass and bushes, so they’re often found in lower areas of nature. They look like a smaller hammock that you might spot in the grass, and they’re also constantly repaired by spiders once they’re destroyed or damaged.Spiders that create these webs will also constantly try and grow them as much as possible. In some areas where there’s not a lot of human disturbance, you might even see sheet webs covering an entire patch of grass.A Funnel Web. Photo: PixabayFunnel webs are perhaps the most intricate and admirable web designs out there. They are large webs with horizontal lines of silk that can blow your mind when you see them for the first time.As impressive as they look, they have several important roles to play for spiders that create them (Uloborid family).The most important role of this type of web is to help the spider store and secure the eggs that it lays, so that other spiders or predators are not able to access them.Another spider family that creates funnel webs is Agelenidae. They’re one of the most poisonous spiders in the world and they’re also sometimes known as the funnel weaving spiders, thanks to their ability to create these complex funnels.Check out our List of Spiders that Create Funnel Webs.They’re also fast runners, so they are capable of catching their prey by running, but they also sometimes use their web to do that.Triangle webs also belong to the Uloborid family of spiders. As the name suggests, the shape of this web is triangular and the three corners of the web are connected by spokes, which forms a web that allows the animals of prey to get caught inside.These spiders have to create these complex webs, or else they wouldn’t be able to catch other animals. They don’t have venom and this means that they have to rely on other techniques for hunting, including triangle webs.The types of spider webs can tell us a lot about the species of spiders that create them. They’re marvels of nature, and it’s amazing to think how these small creatures can create such intricate and large creations. Of course, they’re not only about looking good, but they have important roles to play for spiders, making webs an indispensable tool that spiders use to survive.But, it’s also interesting to note that not all spiders make webs, and in fact most spiders don’t!I am the founder and owner of Fauna Facts. My mission is to write valuable and entertaining information about animals and pets for my audience. I hope you enjoy the site! Click to enlarge image Female Blue Mountains Funnel-web Spider, (Hadronyche versuta). Image: Mike Gray © Australian Museum Funnel-web spiders, the most notorious members of our spider fauna, are found in eastern Australia.There are 38 described species of Australian funnel-web spiders and they are currently placed in three genera: Hadronyche, Atrax and Illawarra. They are medium to large spiders, varying from 1 cm-5 cm body length. Males are more lightly built than females. Body colour can vary from black to brown but the hard carapace covering the front part of the body is always sparsely haired and glossy. The lateral pair of spinning organs (spinnerets) at the end of the abdomen are longer and easily visible in Atrax spp. but often shorter in Hadronyche spp and Illawarra.Not all species are known to be dangerous, but several are renowned for their highly toxic and fast acting venom. The male of Atrax robustus, the Sydney Funnel-web Spider, is probably responsible for most of the thirteen recorded deaths and many medically serious bites. This remarkable spider has become a part of Sydney's folklore and, although no deaths have been recorded since the introduction of an antivenom in 1981, it remains an icon of fear and fascination for Sydneysiders. A male funnel-web spider in the genus Atrax. The spur on leg two is characteristic of Atrax species. Image: Mike Gray © Australian Museum Shiny carapaceDeeply curved groove (fovea)No obvious body patternEyes closely groupedFour spinnerets, largest with last segment longer than wideLower lip (labium) studded with short, blunt spinesModified male second leg (a male trapdoor spider has the first leg modified.)Male second leg: an obvious, conical projection or 'spur' on the lower side of the middle segment (tibia) of the second leg (about halfway along) is characteristic of the genus Atrax, exemplified by the Sydney Funnel-web Spider, Atrax robustus. Males in all other funnel-web genera either have a blunt, spine-covered tibial swelling, or a few spines only, on the second leg. Note also the mating organ on the male palp. This funnel-web spider (Hadronyche sp.) was brought into the Australian Museum to be identified. On closer inspection it was found to be encrusted with phoretic mites (the small brown dots covering the carapace). Phoresy is where an animal attaches to another for transportation only. Image: Carl Bento © Australian Museum These spiders are examples of funnel-webs:There are many other spiders that are sometimes mistaken for funnel-webs. Some of the most common in the Sydney area are:Elsewhere in Eastern Australia other kinds of trapdoor spiders and wishbone spiders can have a dark and glossy carapace. Funnel-web spiders live in the moist forest regions of the east coast and highlands of Australia from Tasmania to north Queensland. They are also found in the drier open forests of the Western Slopes of the Great Dividing Range and South Australia's Gulf region. Funnel-webs of the genus Atrax have a much smaller distribution than do the more diverse members of the genus Hadronyche. The Sydney Funnel-web Spider, Atrax robustus, is found from the Central Coast south to the Georges River, extending as far west as Baulkham Hills near the southern end of its distribution. A few records are also known from the Blue Mountains and Wollongong. Newcastle Funnel-web Spider (Atrax christenseni) male. Scanning electron microscope image. Image: Sue Lindsay © Australian Museum In Sydney suburbia, funnel-web spiders mostly live in the moist upland forest areas of the Hornsby Plateau to the north and the Woronora Plateau to the south, where sheltered burrow habitats abound in both bushland and gardens. The dry, flatter areas of Western Sydney and the Cumberland Plain have fewer funnel-webs, their numbers picking up again in the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Three funnel-web species are common in the Greater Sydney region – the Sydney Funnel-web Spider (Atrax robustus), the Southern Sydney Funnel-web (Atrax montanus) and the Southern Tree-dwelling Funnel-web Spider (Hadronyche cerberea). The Blue Mountains Funnel-web Spider (Hadronyche versuta) is rare here but is common to the west and south of Greater Sydney.While Sydney Funnel-webs were never restricted to the leafy north shore region as some would have it, Sydney real estate does give a rough guide to funnel-web density – the more expensive the area the greater the funnel-web population (the dry, sandy eastern suburbs excepted).Within Hadronyche several groups of related species are currently recognised. These species groups are:cerberea group, found entirely south of the Hunter River into Tasmania, except for a single species, the Northern Tree-dwelling Funnel-web Spider, Hadronyche formidabilis, the largest funnel-web spider (body length up to 5 cm)infensa group, found north of the Hunter River region into south-east Queenslandadelaidensis group, isolated in the dry forests of the Gulf Region of South Australia; the only trap-door building funnel-web spiders'lamington' group, several species confined to discrete rainforest areas in New South Wales and Queenslandanzes group, a single, far northern outlier species in rainforests north of Cairns, north Queensland.Illawarra wisharti is a single species in its own genus, isolated in the wet forests of the Illawarra region of New South Wales.Sheltered retreatsFunnel-webs burrow in moist, cool, sheltered habitats – under rocks, in and under rotting logs, crevices, rot and borer holes in rough-barked trees. In gardens, they prefer rockeries and dense shrubberies, and are rarely found in more open situations like lawns.Rain may flood burrows and the temporary retreats of male funnel-webs, causing an increase in their activity. Funnel-webs are very vulnerable to drying out, so high humidity is more favourable to activity outside the burrow than dry conditions. Most activity is nocturnal. Gardeners and people digging in soil may encounter funnel-webs in burrows at any time of the year. Blue Mountains Funnel-web Spider burrow entrance (Hadronyche versuta), clearly showing silk triplines radiating out from entrance. Image: Ramon Mascord © Australian Museum The most characteristic sign of a funnel-web's burrow is the irregular silk trip-lines that radiate out from the burrow entrance of most species. These trip-lines alert the spider to possible prey, mates or danger.Indeed if a spider burrow in the ground has obvious silk trip-lines around its rim, you can be fairly certain that it belongs to a funnel-web spider.The silk entrance to the burrow of a Sydney Funnel-web Spider has a more or less well-defined funnel-like silk entrance 'vestibule' within which is a collapsed, tunnel-like structure with one or two slit-like openings. The tunnel leads back into a short surface chamber from which the burrow descends. The burrow is often weakly silk-lined and rarely more than 30 cm deep. The spider (hunting mostly at night) sits just inside the entrance with its front legs on the trip-lines. When a beetle, cockroach, or small skink, typical items of funnel-web food, walks across the lines, the spider senses the vibrations and races out to grab its meal. The prey is quickly subdued by an injection of venom from the spider's large fangs. Funnel-web spiders may also forage on the surface in the vicinity of the burrow.Holes are normally found in moist, shaded areas like rockeries, dense shrubs, logs and leaf litter. A small, neat hole lined with a collar of silk which does not extend more than a centimetre from the rim could belong to a trapdoor spider (the common Brown Trapdoor Spider does not build a 'door' for its burrow). Other possible hole owners include mouse spiders, wolf spiders or insects (most commonly cicadas or ants).The tree dwellersMost funnel-webs are ground dwellers but a few live in trees. The largest of all funnel-webs is the Northern Tree Funnel-web Spider, Hadronyche formidabilis, reaching 4 cm-5 cm body length. These spiders live in the wet forests of New South Wales northwards from the Watagans and into southern Queensland and have been found over 30 m above ground. While many have their retreats in surface-opening branch rot-holes, some spiders appear to live and feed entirely inside the deadwood pipe of large forest trees like Tallow-wood, feeding on beetles and other insects inside this rotting wood habitat. The smaller Southern Tree Funnel-web Spider, H. cerberea, is common in the Sydney and Central Coast regions, but ranges all over eastern New South Wales south of the Hunter River. The abdomen sometimes has a light plum colouration. They make silk-lined retreats in holes and rot-crevices in a variety of rough-barked trees, including Melaleuca (paperbarks), Banksia, Alloasuarina (she-oaks) and eucalypts. The exposed web surface tunnel is disguised by a covering of bark or wood particles. There are often two entrances, each with trip-lines running out across the bark. Prey ranging from beetles to tree frogs are taken by these spiders. Male Southern Tree Funnel-web Spider (Hadronyche cerberea). Image: Mike Gray © Australian Museum After they mature, male spiders leave their burrows and become wanderers, especially during the summer/autumn months, looking for females in their burrows. Chemicals called pheromones in the female's tripline silk help the male locate and identify her burrow. Well before mating, the male spins a small silk sperm web, onto which he deposits a droplet of sperm from his abdominal genital pore. The sperm it is then taken up and stored in the mating organs at the ends of the male's palps.The spur and/or spines on the male's second legs are used to hold the female during mating. During mating, considerable sparring occurs until the female accepts the male. Both spiders rear up with first legs raised against each other, while the male engages his mating spurs across the bases of the female's second legs. The male then inseminates the female by inserting the tips of his palpal organs into the female's genital opening on the underside of her abdomen.The male factorOnly male spiders have been responsible for all recorded funnel-web envenomation deaths – why? The answer lies in a combination of spider behaviour, venom chemistry, and even colonial history.During the warmer months of the year (November-April) male funnel-webs wander about at night looking for females in their burrows. Males wandering in suburban gardens may sometimes become trapped inside houses or garages, especially those with concrete slab foundations where entry points under doors are easily reached.The venom of the male Sydney Funnel-web Spider is very toxic. This is because male spider venom contains a unique component called Robustoxin (δ-Atracotoxin-Ar1) that severely and similarly affects the nervous systems of humans and monkeys, but not of other mammals. The absence of this chemical from female Sydney Funnel-web Spider venom probably explains why bites by these females have not caused any deaths. However, it should not be assumed that bites from females or any funnel-web bites are relatively 'safe' since not all funnel-web species show this gender-based difference in venom toxicity. Over four million people live in the Sydney metropolitan area, the centre of the distribution of the Sydney Funnel-web Spider. This makes the likelihood of human encounters with this spider much greater than in less populous areas like the Blue Mountains and other parts of New South Wales. This is an unforeseen consequence of the 1786 decision to establish a British colony in this region. So now the most populous region in Oceania overlaps strongly with the distribution of one of the world’s most dangerous spider species. An antivenom for the Sydney Funnel-web Spider was first developed for clinical use in 1981 by Dr Struan Sutherland and his team at the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories. No deaths have occurred since its introduction. At the same time Sutherland experimentally established the effectiveness of the compression/immobilisation first aid technique for funnel-web bite. Much of the venom for this research was supplied through a funnel-web venom milking program at the Australian Reptile Park near Gosford, NSW. This antivenom has also been effective against other dangerous funnel-web spider species. As well, it has been successfully used in cases of mouse spider envenomation. Antivenom is held at major city and regional hospitals.Other dangerous funnel-web speciesAll suspected bites by any funnel-web spider should be regarded as potentially dangerous and treated accordingly. Besides Atrax robustus several other species have been sporadically involved in life threatening envenomations. They include the Newcastle Funnel-web Spider (Atrax christenseni), Blue Mountains Funnel-web Spider (Hadronyche versuta) and the Southern and Northern Tree Funnel-web Spiders (H. cerberea and H. formidabilis). Despite the availability of an effective antivenom, correct and immediate first aid is still an essential requirement for any Funnel-web Spider (or mouse spider) envenomation. The recommended first aid technique is pressure/immobilisation (as for snake bite) and this must be done as quickly as possible. The pressure/immobilisation technique compresses surface tissues and reduces muscle movement, greatly slowing the lymphatic flow. Spider bites usually take place on a limb. A pressure bandage should be applied as soon as possible after a bite has occurred. This should be applied as tightly as for a sprained ankle, starting from the bitten area and binding the entire limb above the bite. A rigid splint should be bound onto the limb to prevent limb movement. The patient should be kept as quiet as possible and medical attention must always be sought even if symptoms are not immediately apparent. Severe envenomation is always a medical emergency. If safe to do so, keep the spider for positive identification. Despite some popular beliefs, funnel-webs can' t jump. However they can move quickly, and they will rear up when feeling threatened and make sudden lunges when striking. Householders have been surprised by the agility of male funnel-webs, and their sometimes quick escapes from smooth-sided containers (e.g. when the tips of their long legs are able to reach the rim!)Can funnel-webs swim?Wandering funnel-webs spiders often fall into backyard swimming pools and they can stay alive for at least 30 hours underwater. They can't swim but they can trap a small bubble of air in hairs around the abdomen, which aids both breathing and floating. As they gradually get waterlogged, their buoyancy decreases and they sink. Eventually they drown but this is a slow process. It should not be assumed that a non-moving spider at the bottom of a pool is dead as they often recover. This specimen of the notorious Sydney Funnel-web Spider was responsible for the first recorded human death by this species. On 5 February 1927, a toddler sitting on the laundry steps of a house in Thornleigh was bitten on the little finger. It is suspected that the child tried to crush the spider in his hand, which is why the specimen is somewhat squashed. Funnel-web spiders grow up to 3.5 cm in length. They live in cool and humid burrows beneath logs and rocks, across which they spin silken trip lines to alert them to the presence of prey. Although they are one of the most venomous species of spider in the world, there have been no fatalities from Sydney Funnel-web Spider bites since the introduction of antivenom. Image: Carl Bento © Australian Museum dangerous australians arachnids spider dangerous spiders You have reached the end of the page. Thank you for reading. Multiple orb webs built along a fence. Image courtesy of Pixabay (CC0).British wildlifeLisa HendryDusty spider webs are associated with Halloween and creepy houses, but many are beautiful or architecturally accomplished. Did you know that you can tell what kind of spider is lurking by the threads it spins?A web isn't a foolproof way of identifying the spider that made it, but its shape will usually allow you to establish which family it comes from, and it's often possible to be even more specific. Here we outline the main web structures that UK spiders use to catch their prey and the common architects of each kind. A dew-covered spider web in autumn.Image courtesy of Pixabay (CC0).A spider web frozen solid in winter.Image courtesy of pxhere (CC0).Spiders build webs all year round, but autumn is the best time to spot them outdoors. Morning dew and mist droplets suddenly reveal a multitude of hidden webs that were previously virtually invisible thanks to the transparent nature of silk. Autumn is often thought of as spider season for this reason, and because spiders tend to be fully grown at this time of year and searching for a mate, making it more likely we'll see them. Frosty spider webs also make a stunning sight. To get a better look at webs when they're not covered in dew or frost, you can spray a fine mist of water to make their fine details stand out. This won't harm the spider or damage the web - just make sure you use a clean spray bottle with no traces of chemicals.This web will catch insects attracted to the light© ad_soch/Shutterstock.com Spiders use their webs to catch dinner.The choice of location is key to success. Some spiders build their webs across potential insect flight paths. High-traffic areas such as near a light or window that's lit up at night are prime sites. Other species place webs down low where crawling invertebrates are likely to wander by and horizontal webs can catch insects if they fall off the plant they were feeding on. Types of spider web British spider webs can be categorised into seven broad types: orb, sheet, tangle, funnel, lace, radial and purse. Orb webs These are the classic, two-dimensional webs that look like bicycle wheels or dart boards. Orb webs are constructed with radial threads that function as a scaffold. The spider then lays down sticky threads in a spiral.Classic orb webs look like a bicycle wheel© AMAM1990/Shutterstock.comFour UK spider families make this kind of web. Three coat the silk with sticky glue to hold captured prey in place: Araneidae, Tetragnathidae and Theridosomatidae. The fourth, Uloboridae, instead spins its web out of cribellate silk. Jan Beccaloni, the Museum's arachnid curator, says 'Cribellate silk is very woolly. It acts like Velcro, sticking to the legs and bristles of captured insects.' A member of the Araneidae family, the garden orb-weaver or garden cross spider (Araneus diadematus) is probably the best-known orb-web spider. True to its name, the garden orb-weaver is very common in gardens throughout the UK, but it occurs in a wide variety of habitats. Jan says, 'Its web is a wonderful feat of natural engineering and can be very large, as much as 40 centimetres in diameter.' The webs of garden orb-weavers tend to be almost vertical and stretched across undisturbed spaces that are busy with insects such as flies, wasps and beetles© Giedre Vaitekune/Shutterstock.comClose-up of the garden orb-weaver, Araneus diadematus. The abdomen of this spider is usually well-marked with a pattern of whitish spots that form a cross. Females can grow to 1.5cm long.Image courtesy of Pixabay (CC0).A new web takes about two hours to build. Step one is to drift a silk line across a gap on the breeze. After strengthening this supporting strand with extra threads, the spider adds the radial and spiral threads. To finish up the web, the spider removes the central knot of threads and replaces it with a lattice.Web of Zygiella x-notata, with the typical missing sector top left© Anders Sandberg (CC BY 2.0), via FlickrThe spider waits in a head-down position at the centre of the web or lies hidden among nearby vegetation where it remains in contact by means of a signal thread. When an insect flies into the web the spider approaches the source of the vibrations, bites it and wraps it in silk, to feed on later. The missing sector orb weaver (Zygiella x-notata) constructs a very similar web, but one sector is left completely free of spirals. A strong signal thread passes through this sector to where the spider sits in its retreat. They're commonly found on the outside of window frames. Webs spun by Tetragnathidae spiders, the long-jawed orb weavers, follow a similar pattern to Araneus webs, but there is a hole in the centre. This is often where the spider takes up position, spanning the hole with its four hind legs. The webs can be in pretty much any orientation, not just vertical. Theridiosoma gemmosum builds a web derived from the typical orb shape. These small webs have an open hub and resemble an inside-out umbrella. The species is rare, found on low-growing plants near water in southern Britain. Wasp spider Some orb-weaver spiders add decoration to their webs: an extra band of silk called the stabilimentum. This is particularly striking in the case of the wasp spider (Argiope bruennichi). It incorporates a zig-zag of dense, white silk down the centre of its web. What this is for still isn't known, but there are a few ideas.A wasp spider on its orb web, with prey stuck to the stabilimentum© AlisLuch/Shutterstock.comJan explains, 'It's thought that some spiders may use a stabilimentum for camouflage. It may make them harder to spot on their web. Some spiders even attach the husks of their digested prey. 'Another popular hypothesis is that the stabilimentum helps attract insects to the web. 'A third suggestion is that the vivid patterns act as a warning to large animals, such as birds, that might otherwise accidentally destroy webs in their path. It looks like the stabilimentum has different functions depending on the species.' When an orb web becomes badly damaged, or loses its stickiness because of the effects of wind and rain, the spider rolls the threads into a ball and eats them to recycle the silk components. This usually happens every day or two. Diagram showing how Hyptiotes paradoxes keeps its triangular web taut, ready to snare prey.Image from Wikimedia Commons. Hyptiotes paradoxus builds an unusual web that has earned the spider its common name, the triangle spider. If a circular orb web was a pizza, the web of Hyptiotes paradoxus would be a single slice. The spider also has quite a distinctive appearance. It is a fairly rare spider, present in England and Wales but not Scotland. Jan adds, 'Your best chance of seeing it is likely to be on yew trees in graveyards.' Hyptiotes uses its distinctive web as a snare. The spider sits on a nearby twig and holds taut a thread that runs to the tip of the triangle. Any unlucky prey caught on the web's fuzzy cribellate silk soon finds itself completely entangled as the spider immediately releases the thread, turning the web into a net, and then tightens it around its victim. Garden centre spider A relatively new arrival to Britain, probably imported on pot plants from the Netherlands, the feather-legged lace weaver (Uloborus plumipes) has spread throughout much of the UK over the past 25 years. It has set up home in garden centres - where winter temperatures don't drop below freezing - and so it is often referred to as the garden centre spider. The garden centre spider, Uloborus plumipes, on its cribellate silk web, which acts like Velcro and stops prey escaping© Jiri Prochazka/Shutterstock.comThe orb web of Uloborus plumipes is similar to that of Araneus diadematus but usually more horizontal - sometimes across the tops of plant pots - and the threads are fluffier. The spider is an expert in camouflage, resembling dried vegetation when at rest. Since the web often looks a bit scruffy, it gives the impression of an abandoned web with dead plant material stuck to it. Even the spider's egg sac looks like a dead holly leaf. Researchers studying Uloborus plumipes have shown that cribellate silk is extremely fine (just a few nanometres thick - much thinner than most other silk) and the spider electrostatically charges the threads by combing them with specialist hairs on its hind legs. These densely woven, thin, horizontal sheets look like silken hammocks adorning grass and low bushes. Bugs fall onto the hammocks or get knocked down when they collide with a tangle of threads above the sheet. Jan says, 'The sheer numbers of sheet webs visible on a dewy morning can take your breath away.'Dew revealed a multitude of sheet webs on this holly bushSheet webs collect insects that fall onto them from above© Irelandimages/Shutterstock.comSheet webs are usually built by the Linyphiidae. This is the largest family of spiders in the UK, with 280 species. It includes the tiny money spiders said to bring good luck if you find one wandering over you. The smallest species tend to build their sheet webs on depressions in the soil, others on low vegetation and some on tree bark. The money spider hangs beneath its web, waiting for dinner to land above. Like their name suggests, these webs look like a messy tangle of threads. They're often found in houses and collect dust as they age. Although they look like haphazard constructions, they're still effective at catching prey. These 3D webs are built by four families of UK spiders: the Dictynidae, Pholcidae, Theridiidae and Nesticidae (a single species). There are seven species of Dictynidae spider in the UK. They create small, tangled meshes of cribellate silk, often building them over flower heads and under leaves, and also among leaf litter. Daddy-long-legs spider Pholcus phalangioides is the member of Pholcidae you're probably most likely to encounter, as it has become increasingly familiar as a house spider in Britain. Fifty years ago it was quite rare here. A prolific breeder, it is now becoming very common, spreading northwards and living in centrally heated rooms all year round. Pholcus phalangioides is a pale, delicate spider with long thin legs that hangs upside down on its flimsy, untidy web in the corners of rooms or behind furniture. If disturbed, the spider bounces up and down and becomes a blur. It makes a good houseguest, consuming woodlice and other unwanted household pests. It also eats large spiders.Pholcus phalangioides is a dainty looking spider© LFRabanedo/Shutterstock.comDespite its puny appearance, Pholcus phalangioides can take on large house spiders and win.Image courtesy of McZul (CC0), via Wikimedia Commons.The noble false widow spider, Steatoda nobilis, on its messy tangle web© thatmacroguy/Shutterstock.com The comb-footed spider family, Theridiidae, includes the much maligned false widow spiders (Steatoda species). Their webs are loose 3D frameworks of criss-crossing sticky threads. Steatoda webs are usually found in buildings, sheds and garages or nearby under stones, in walls and garden fences. Two of the most commonly observed species are the noble false widow (Steatoda nobilis) and the cupboard spider (Steatoda grossa). By day, Steatoda nobilis hides away in a silken retreat. This more densely woven section looks a bit like a funnel. From dusk onwards, it hangs upside down on its untidy web, which it usually builds at high level. This non-native spider prefers south facing aspects and conservatories. The native Steatoda grossa prefers to make its messy web in dark corners among clutter in garages and sheds. It characteristically hangs or moves about this web upside down. Funnel webs They're made by just one family in Britain - the Agelenidae - which includes the labyrinth spider (Agelena labyrinthica) and house spiders (Tegenaria and Eratigena species). The overall shape resembles a funnel. Living low down among grass, brambles, gorse or heather, the labyrinth spider typically spins a large sheet of closely woven silk that extends from a long tubular retreat at the rear.Labyrinth spider with prey at the entrance to its funnel web© Tony Mills/Shutterstock.com Despite their name, house spiders can be found outside around hedges, rock faces and rabbit burrows, not just in houses. However, these do tend to be the spiders that unnerve us when they come dashing across our floors or become trapped in our baths - particularly in autumn when males go looking for a mate. Some, including Eratigena atrica, Eratigena duellica and Tegenaria parietina, grow particularly large - with legs spans of around eight centimetres, and as much as 17 centimetres in T. parietina.House spiders live outside as well as in buildings. Their funnel webs can include large sheets of silk as well as a tubular retreat. The webs can become very dusty.© Federico Crovetto/Shutterstock.comHouse spiders spin large sheets of closely woven silk which funnels into a long tubular retreat at one edge. If their web is at the entrance to a hole, they just produce a collar of silk rather than a large sheet. Several generations of spiders can refurbish the webs and they can attain considerable size and dustiness in an undisturbed cellar, shed or garage. These are what people often think of as cobwebs. Lace websAmaurobius spider, with its lace web spread across wood© Jacqueline Kelsall/Shutterstock.comLace webs are similar to funnel webs in that they also have a tubular retreat where the spider hides, but they are made of 'woolly' cribellate silk and the threads are more loosely spaced, looking more like lace than a silk sheet. Only three species of lace web spider live in the UK. They all belong to the genus Amaurobius. The webs are often spread out flat around gaps on walls, fences and window frames - particularly those of Amaurobius similis and A. ferox, while A. fenestralis webs tend to occur on dense vegetation like gorse, under stones and around cracks in tree bark. Radial webs This style of web has single lines of silk radiating away from a silken tube. The lines function as trip wires that alert the spider hiding inside the tube to prey wandering past. It dashes out at frightening speed. Unlike most other types of web that entangle prey, this one simply alerts the spider to its presence. They hunt nocturnal insects such as moths and cockroaches, as well as bees and wasps. Only a single family of UK spiders makes this kind of web: Segestriidae, which only has three species living in Britain. Jan says 'This family has a unique leg arrangement. The hind legs hold on to the inside of the tubular retreat and the other three pairs face forward, touching the radial threads.'The trip wire threads are clearly visible on this radial web© crabchick (CC BY 2.0), via FlickrA tube web spider waits on the radial web it has built in a hole in a wall, ready to pounce on prey© David Short (CC BY 2.0), via Wikimedia Commons The tube web spider (Segestria florentina) is the largest of the UK species of Segestriidae, with females growing more than two centimetres long. The spider is black or dark brown. The base of its jaws (chelicerae) are often a striking iridescent green. Although restricted to southern England and Wales, mainly around old ports, reports suggest this originally Mediterranean species is spreading further inland. These spiders tend to like living in crevices in old walls. 'They sometimes even excavate a bit of the old masonry to make a hole in which to spin their tubular web,' adds Jan. Purse webs Only Atypus affinis builds this type of web and is known as the purse web spider. This spider is the only tarantula relative in the UK. Its fangs are orientated differently from those of other UK spiders, projecting downwards.The long silk tube of this purse web is covered in soil and debris, camouflaging it© Marshal Hedin (CC BY-SA 2.0), via FlickrThe purse web spider, Atypus affinis, is the UK's only tarantula relative© Federico Crovetto/Shutterstock.comAtypus affinis digs a long underground tunnel and lines it with silk. The long silk tube has a usually sealed end that extends above ground, where it lies on the top of soil at the base of grass, looking a bit like a sock or purse. This part of the web becomes well-camouflaged by soil and debris. This is part of the spider's cunning hunting strategy, explains Jan: 'The spider hangs upside down inside the sock shape. If anything crawls across the outside, the spider reaches through and grabs hold, piercing the tube wall and the victim with its fangs. It then drags the subdued prey through the web into its lair and repairs the hole.' Spider webs are some of the most amazing feats of engineering in the animal kingdom. Through evolution and biological programming, spiders have learned how to make extremely effective webs.Seeing a spider web in or near your house may raise some red flags. You may be wondering what kind of spider makes that kind of web, and if you should be concerned and take pest control action.Or, you may just be curious about the different types of spider webs out there, as some seem to be very different from others. Regardless, this post will tell you everything that you need to know.How Many Types Of Spider Webs Are There?There aren’t any scientific resources that explicitly state how many different types of spider webs exist. However, virtually all types of webs have been documented and studied to some extent.It’s from this research that we can determine that there are six main types of spider webs, with three addition types of webs that serve unique purposes.Some of these webs are extremely common, while others are only made by a few different genus or species of spiders. So, it may be a treat to see some of these webs in the wild!There are 9 types of webs that spiders produce:Orb WebTangle Web / CobwebFunnel WebSheet WebTriangle WebMesh WebSperm WebMolt MatEgg Sac6 Primary Types Of Spider WebsThere are six main types of spider webs. By “main types”, we mean webs that spiders use to live and store food in, hide in, and hunt with.Some of these webs are a lot more common than others, and some are a bit more loosely-defined.1. Orb WebOrb spider web between flowersDescription – This is an extremely common type of spider web, and one that most people think of when they picture a spider web. It’s estimated that these webs came to be around 100 million years ago when flying insects started to evolve.This web is comprised of a very strong external frame that’s joined in the center to create spokes. These spokes are then joined together with a spiraling elastic thread to create a large surface area for capturing prey.Some orb webs have additional designs outside of the standard spokes and spirals, but their purpose is unknown. It’s inferred that these flourishes are either used to better disguise the web, attract prey, or both.How it works – The main frame of this web, the outer border and inner spokes, is constructed with elastic, sticky thread and droplets that are used to capture prey with ease.These webs are constructed vertically in areas that get significant flying insect traffic. The most effective webs can capture upwards of 250 insects per day!Spiders – These webs are primarily associated with the family Araneidae, or orb-weaver spiders. These spiders are primarily found outside, and many genus and species within it are non-threatening in terms of their venom.2. Tangle Web / CobwebCobweb in old barnDescription – Cobwebs are very commonly seen indoors in areas that don’t get much traffic, especially in corners. However, they’re not to be confused with collections of dust/dirt that can also be found in corners.While they appear messy and disorganized, they’re actually created that way. They’re frequently anchored to the top of a structure and have many different threads hanging down off of it.These webs commonly collect a lot of dust and dirt, adding to their dirty appearance.How it works – The convoluted design of cobwebs is what makes them so effective. There are sticky droplets at the end of the dangling strings that sit right at floor level, acting as a snare.When an insects walks across this thread and breaks it, it’s simultaneously stuck and lifted up into the web by the contracting thread. Once it reaches the web, it’s quickly subdued by the spider.Spiders – Primarily made by spiders in the Theriidae family. This family includes very common and harmless house spiders, but it also includes very venomous spiders like the black widow.3. Funnel WebFunnel spider web in bushDescription – The aptly-named funnel web is, as you could guess, shaped like a funnel. Expanses of thread span over a variety of distances, and they meet in the middle where they form a cylindrical hole.This hole is where the funnel-weaver spider hides out and reaps some of the great benefits of this web design.How it works – There are several interesting perks of this web design. First and foremost, it offers great protection for its creator, as the spider can hide in the difficult-to-access center.Additionally, it’s the perfect ambush structure. Insects walk across the mat-like web, get tangled up, and are then subdued by the spider that quickly rushes out of its hole when it senses vibration.Spiders – Agelenidae spiders, or funnel-weaver spiders, construct these webs. This isn’t to be confused with funnel-web spiders — creatures that are considered some of the most dangerous spiders in existence!Many Agelenidae spiders are entirely harmless, such as the common Grass Spider. They also tend to be very fast and agile so that they can quickly subdue their tangled prey. They’re also quite photosensitive.4. Sheet WebSheet spider web over small plantDescription – These interesting webs take the classic web design and turn it horizontally. You can find these hammock-like webs draped over grass, bushes, or other structures.Some of these webs lay very flat over grass, while others are dome-shaped.How it works – The spiders that construct these webs simply hang upside-down from them and wait to ambush any insects that walk below. Flying insects often hit the threads and fall down to the spider.While these webs are frequently damaged, they tend to be permanent structures unlike most other spider webs. Any damage is quickly patched up before it gets too bad.Spiders – This type of web is associated with the Linyphiidae family. This is the second largest family of spiders and contains extremely small species with most posing no threat to humans.5. Triangle WebTriangle spider web indoorsDescription – Triangle webs are, just as their name suggests, built in the shape of a triangle in a vertical fashion. There are typically four main anchor points, with one on one side and three on the other.Three strands of silk are connected with thread to create a very simple web.How it works – While these webs are unique in their design, they’re even more unique in their function. The thread used for these webs is fuzzy and actually entangles and smothers insects.Spiders – The Uloboridae family of spiders is associated with this type of web. They use such an interesting hunting strategy because they’re the only family that doesn’t possess venom glands.Thus, the smothering ability of the web makes up for the lack of an effective bite from these spiders.That lack of venom also means that these spiders are not threatening in the least.6. Mesh WebMesh spider webDescription – Mesh webs are essentially cobwebs but located outside. They could actually be considered cobwebs, but they’re defined differently for clarity’s sake.They aren’t entirely similar to cobwebs, though. Mesh webs are a bit more orderly in construction, and they’re often built under leaves and rocks or in grassy fields.How it works – The function of these webs is very similar to cobwebs. They possess snare threads, and also work to entangle prey that touches the web.Spiders – The Dictynidae family is responsible for mesh webs. This is a unique family of spiders that isn’t discussed much but possesses over 560 species.3 Special Types Of Spider WebsThere are three additionally types of spider webs that serve unique purposes outside of housing and hunting.Two of these three webs are primarily created by tarantulas, and they’re difficult to observe even in captivity. Therefore, it’s not likely you’ll come across these first two webs.7. Sperm WebTarantula using a sperm webDescription – Sperm webs are often small, tubular webs that are very easy to miss. They’re constructed very quickly and taken down and destroyed even faster as spiders are very secretive of these webs.How it works – These webs are created by mature male spiders to transfer sperm from the epiandrous fusillae to the palpal bulbs.Essentially, they’re created right when a spider is preparing to mate.Spiders – Most, if not all tarantulas create these sperm webs, along with some other spiders.8. Molt MatTarantula molting on a molt matDescription – This is predominantly a tarantula-made web. They’re thick mats of webbing that are laid out on the ground where a tarantula intends to flip over onto its back and begin molting.Unlike sperm webs, these webs tend to be left after a molt is completed.When a tarantula is constructing one of these mats, a molt will likely begin in the next few days.How it works – Molt mats serve two main purposes for tarantulas. First and foremost, they provide a comfortable place for the tarantula to begin the uncomfortable process of molting. This is important as freshly-molted spiders are very fragile.This mat also allows tarantulas to detect vibrations which will alert them if any predators are nearby.Spiders – Tarantulas are the main spiders that utilize this type of webbing.9. Egg SacTwo egg sacs attached to a spider webDescription – When spiders lay eggs, they lay quite a few at a time. Numbers of eggs range from two to 1,000. In order to contain all of these eggs, female spiders create an egg sac.Egg sacs come in a variety of different shapes, ranging from discs to perfect spheres. They also range in color from white to dark brown to black.They’re created by females that lay eggs on a silk mat, cover them with another silk mat, and then wrapping that all up in a ball.How it works – Egg