



Allpest Pest Awareness

Keeping you informed

Our Pest Awareness Series offers informative, easy to understand information on a range of problem pests. We aim to keep you in control and as well as maintain a safe and healthier environment for you.

Our Pest Awareness Sheet presents facts such as:

- Overview
- Ecology and Habit
- Breeding Cycle
- Health Risk

For more range on the series, please visit our website www.allpest.com.au or call us at 08 9416 0200





Red-back Spider Series (*Lactrodectus hasselti*)

Overview

Among the hundreds of spider species in Australia, many have exaggerated that most spiders are poisonous however, we should be aware that only very few spiders are actually harmful.

In Western Australia, the spider proven to be lethal is the red-back spider. Only the female is considered dangerous but is generally a timid spider, biting only when provoked or in defence. The red back spider is the same spider as the black widow of North America.

Ecology

Red-back spiders seem to like living near humans and build their nests in dry and sheltered areas. The nest is made of messy tangled webs with sticky tracer leads going to the ground that make a “crackle” sound if you run a stick through them.

Lifecycle

Once the female has mated, she produces about 10 white egg sacs, one every 3 weeks or so. Each sac contains approximately 250 eggs. When these sacs hatch, the tiny, pale-green spiderlings balloon away to another place suitable for a nest.

Female redbacks live approximately two to three years whilst males live for about six or seven months and usually die after mating.

Health Risk

Red back spider bites can result in headache, nausea, vomiting, hypertension, fever and in some severe cases, paralysis.

Treatment if bitten

- Remove tight clothing and make patient comfortable.
- Apply a cold pack to the bite
- Seek medical assistance promptly as untreated bite will worsen over 24 hours period and may take weeks or months to heal.



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