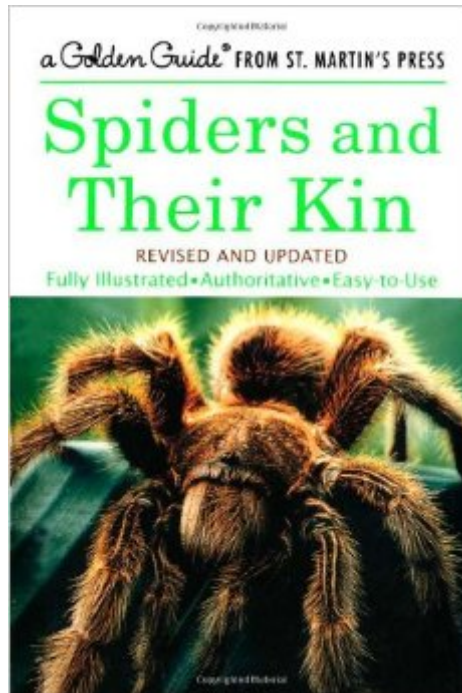


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Spiders And Their Kin (A Golden Guide From St. Martin's Press)



Synopsis

Enjoy and Learn! Expert Knowledge! Easy-to-Read! This introduction to the diverse yet little known world of spiders is packed with concise, accurate information. With full-color pictures and readable text, this guide identifies representative species and describes: Their characteristics and habits Growth, courtship and enemies Where they are found Includes information on poisonous species and how to collect, preserve, and raise spiders.

Book Information

Series: A Golden Guide from St. Martin's Press

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Customer Reviews

Last week I woke up when a spider bit me on my forehead. It was a shallow, burning pain rather like someone had injected a weak solution of hydrochloric acid under my skin. About a third of my forehead was flushed red when I first looked in a mirror, but the redness subsided within a few hours, leaving a dime-sized lump that is still visible a week later. I used "Spiders and Their Kin" to tentatively identify the mangled remains of the spider as a small Brown Recluse ('*Loxosceles reclusa*'). Just in case I needed to go see my doctor, I put the spider into a baggie and froze it. Luckily, my forehead didn't dissolve---according to the Levis, "In severe cases...the wound grows deeper and does not heal for several months." At any rate, "Spiders and Their Kin" is a handy book to have around. I bought a copy for my sister when she found what she thought was a Black Widow in her garage, and I also got a copy for myself in order to identify the gigantic black and yellow spider that was hanging head-down in my Japanese Spiraea (it was---or maybe I should say, she

was a Black and Yellow Argiope ('A. aurantia'). When I first bought this book, just looking at the cover made me itch. However, it is filled with fascinating little tidbits about Arachnids and their kin. I used to think that Hairy Mygalomorphs were the ugliest spiders on Earth (most especially the ones with ten inch leg spans), but now my vote goes to the Pirate Spiders ('Mimetidae'). Luckily, they are small spiders (4 - 6 mm), so you would have to use a magnifying glass to get the full impact of one of these hairy little dudes. It is really rather impolite of me to make fun of 'Mimetidae,' since they help beautify my backyard by eating other spiders.

I was introduced to the early "Golden Guides" in the 1950s. My very first book on insects was in this series and I wore out numerous copies of the various titles. Of these I have always especially admired H. W. and Lorna Levi's "Spiders and Their Kin." This little guide had (and to a large degree still has) the most complete systematic treatment of any of the taxa covered in the "Golden Guide" series. Few books were available on these fascinating creatures when this work was originally published and "Spiders and Their Kin" was a considerable improvement. The drawings of spider eye arrangements were especially helpful for identification. Unfortunately time does not stand still and the reprinted version of this book is somewhat behind in its treatment of spider families. There has been some attempt by St. Martin's Press to revise the classification (the sac spiders are shown to belong to several families), but some of the other families have also undergone major changes (e.g. "Ctenizidae" is now at least three families) and "brown spiders" (a name I really do not like- I prefer "violin spiders" as more descriptive) are now members of the Sicariidae. Neither of the last two changes made it into the revised book, either because they occurred after the corrected copy was submitted or because they were overlooked. The current revision does include the statement that urocteids and oecobiids have been united under the Oecobiidae - as it turns out, having a cribellum is a primitive trait and does not indicate relationships very well- but mistakenly indicates that the "oecobiids" are larger than "urocteids". It also still has the two "families" on different pages, so the revision did not include a rearrangement of the figures.

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