



Spider Behaviour: Flexibility and Versatility

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Spiders are often underestimated as suitable behavioral models because of the general belief that due to their small brains their behavior is innate and mostly invariable. Challenging this assumption, this fascinating book shows that rather than having a limited behavioral repertoire, spiders show surprising cognitive abilities, changing their behavior to suit their situational needs. The team of authors unravels the considerable intra-specific as well as intra-individual variability and plasticity in different behaviors ranging from foraging and web building to communication and courtship. An introductory chapter on spider biology, systematics and evolution provides the reader with the necessary background information to understand the discussed behaviors and helps to place them into an evolutionary context. Highlighting an under-explored area of behavior, this book will provide new ideas for behavioral researchers and students unfamiliar with spiders as well as a valuable resource for those already working in this intriguing field.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book somehow mends the past neglect of these eight-legged anthropods and makes a strong case for considering them as a valuable behavioral model. Recommended."

J. M. Gonzalez, Choice

"Spider Behaviour: Flexibility and Versatility presents an excellent summary of the state of behavioural research on spiders that a broad range of readers will find stimulating. Herberstein deserves congratulations for conceiving of and editing such a fine book."

Linda S. Rayor, Animal Behaviour

"This volume boasts a dream team of authors, including rising stars and field luminaries, each summarizing their respective fields. The book emphasizes the flexibility, versatility, and sheer diversity of spider behavior. Generally, it takes on the daunting task of summarizing all of spider behavior with remarkable finesse. One of the volume's most impressive feats is its attention to the recent literature in rapidly moving subfields. Doubtlessly the text is destined to serve a valuable reference for both arachnologists and behaviorists. Personally, I know I will be assigning this volume to both undergraduate and graduate students for years to come. I suspect so will many others."

Jonathan N. Pruitt, The Quarterly Review of Biology

"... well written and very well edited ... I thoroughly enjoyed reading the book, and recommend it for anyone wishing to gain a good understanding of spiders in general, and their behaviours in particular."

B. Staffan Lindgren, Bulletin of the Entomological Society of Canada

About the Author

Marie Elisabeth Herberstein is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Macquarie University, Sydney. Her research investigates a range of behaviours in spiders including web building, learning, mating (including sexual cannibalism) and the use of deceptive signals.

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