

Common Spiders and Harvestmen

A series of ID guides to help you discover more of Leicestershire's wonderful wildlife

Spiders and harvestmen are Arachnids and have 8 legs. Spiders have a fused head and thorax whereas harvestmen have gone a step further and fused the abdomen as well. They are predators of small insects, some use webs to catch prey, others stalk, chase or ambush. Though spiders are venomous they are no threat to humans (despite media sensationalism). Harvestmen are named because they are most commonly seen around harvest time in late summer, using their long legs to stalk prey.

When viewing online, simply click on the species name to find out more.



Garden Spider – *Araneus diadematus*

ID: To 13mm. White cross on a brown abdomen (which can also be yellow or red).

Where: Gardens, woods, meadows. Juveniles overwinter and are their largest in Autumn.

Similar: None with the white cross.



Nursery Web Spider – *Pisaura mirabilis*

ID: To 15mm. Long legged. Brown/orange with pale sides. Cream central line on the thorax.

Where: Grassland and dense vegetation. Often sun-bathing. Most months, peaking July.

Similar: None.



Daddy Long-legs Spider – *Pholcus phalangoides*

ID: Very long legs. Slim, tubular body. Loose webs, often at ceiling corners. Shakes violently if disturbed.

Where: Houses and out-buildings.

Similar: None.



Green Leaf Web Spider - *Nigma walckenaeri*

ID: 5mm. Green body and legs. Males have a red/brown head/thorax.

Where: Parks, gardens. Builds a web on leaf surfaces.

Similar: None.

Become a citizen scientist! If you can spot any of these species, why not submit your sighting at www.naturespot.org.uk and contribute to our scientific knowledge of local wildlife. Record data submitted by the public is vital to conservation. Simply register online then follow the guidance on the Submit Records page.

Other common Leicestershire spiders to check out:

[Four-spotted Orb-web Spider](#), [House Spider](#), [Woodlouse Spider](#), [Crab Spider](#), [Zebra Spider](#)



Mouse Spider – *Scotophaeus blackwalli*

ID: To 12mm. Brown with hairy grey abdomen (resembles mouse fur).

Where: Gardens, houses. No web – an ambush predator.

Similar: None.



Sputnik Spider – *Paidiscura pallens*

ID: Spiky white egg cases more easily seen than the tiny pale adult spider (1.5mm).

Where: Underside of Oak and other tree leaves.

Similar: None (egg cases).



Cucumber Green Orb Spider - *Araniella curcurbitina* sl.

ID: To 8mm. Pale green abdomen with red tip. Relies on its colour for camouflage.

Where: Woodland edges, hedges – amongst leaves.

Similar: This is an aggregate of two very similar species.



Walnut Orb Spider – *Nuctenea umbratica*

ID: To 15mm. Flattened body with dark, wavy edged patch on top of the abdomen.

Where: Cracks and crevices, often in gardens.

Similar: None.



***Dicranopalpus ramosus* agg.**

ID: Body to 6mm. Very long legs held out to the sides. Branched pedipalps held forward.

Where: Walls, low vegetation.

Similar: This is an aggregate of two very similar species.



Leiobunum rotundum

ID: 6mm. Round body, very long legs. Female (left) with dark central patch. Male (right) red-brown.

Where: Hedges, low vegetation. July-Nov.

Similar: [Leiobunum blackwalli](#) (has white eye rings).

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Wildlife ID Guides at:
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