



# Oklahoma School IPM

## Brown Recluse Spider



The brown recluse spider is also known as the fiddle back or violin spider. It is found indoors and outside across Oklahoma.

**Description:** They have a dark violin-shaped marking on top. The color ranges from tan to dark brown and about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (dime) to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (quarter) in size. Young spiders resemble adults, but are lighter in color. Brown recluse spiders do not make a web.



**Location:** Brown recluse spiders avoid people. They prefer dark, quiet, and cluttered areas like closets, drop ceilings, and cabinets. These spiders also hide in furniture and clothing.

They are most active at night and feed on silverfish, crickets, and other insects. Most people are bitten on their hands or feet when handling infested items. Care should be taken when cleaning cluttered areas or lifting containers from the bottom.

**Life Cycle:** Adults may live up to five years. Egg cases are off-white, round, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in diameter silken cases found in dark sheltered areas where spiders live. Egg laying occurs mostly through May and August.

**Monitoring:** Shed skins and live spiders indicate infestations. Place glue traps in dark corners.

**Cultural Methods:** Sanitation reduces spider habitat. Eliminate spider food source (insects) since they are predators. (Moisture and food and drink spills attract insects.)

- Vacuum egg sacs from under furniture.
- REDUCE CLUTTER!
- Replace cardboard boxes with plastic containers.
- Properly, seal doors, windows, and screens to prevent spiders from entering from outside.
- Maintain a twelve- to eighteen-inch barrier between the building and landscape plants to reduce spider entry.

**Pesticides:** Cooperation from all staff is needed by the pest management professional for successful treatment. Empty closets and cabinets. Remove switch plate covers and other items as requested. Treatment for brown recluse spiders is long-term. Insecticides kill spiders and the insects they eat. Residual pesticides kill spiders after initial spraying.



## EXTENSION