



# FACT SHEET

## **FACTS ABOUT SPIDER PAVILION RESIDENTS**

- Orb weaver spiders, such as those found in the Spider Pavilion, spin circular, wheel-shaped webs. They spin at night. By day, they retreat into the corner, keeping one foot on a silk line to feel for the vibrations of a trapped insect.
- Orb weavers' webs feature the stabilimenta, a white zigzag band of silk through the web's center. It is thought to serve as a lure for insects, a marker to warn birds from flying into the web, and a camouflage for the spider when it sits in the center of the web. Webs, incidentally, usually connect to some escape chute onto the ground or into a shrub.
- All true spiders can spin silk, but not all spin webs. They might use it to wrap and store prey, spin a nighttime shelter, or swing on their silk. Spiders that take to the air can control how high they float and where they land by regulating the length of the strand.
- The banded garden spider is one of the Pavilion's residents. This is the most common "garden spider" found in the western U.S., producing concentric webs that resemble those made by the namesake of the children's classic, *Charlotte's Web*.
- Golden silk spiders, also mainstays of the Pavilion, spin webs that appear gold in sunlight. The golden color attracts bees in the sun, and in the shade, provides good camouflage against background foliage. These webs are complex, and usually renewed daily — probably because the stickiness of the silk wanes with time.
- The Spider Pavilion features a few tarantulas in terrariums. The name "tarantula" comes from the town of Taranto, Italy, whose residents would do a long dance called "the tarantella" to sweat out the spider bite's poison. (Ironically, the spider that Europeans originally called a tarantula was not a tarantula at all. It was a wolf spider.)