

Triangulate Cobweb Spider

Scientific Name: *Steatoda triangulosa*

Order: Araneae (Spiders)

Family: Theridiidae (Combfooted or Cobweb Spiders)

Identification and Descriptive Features: The triangulate cobweb spider is a fairly small species, with a body ranging from 4-6mm. The abdomen is brown and marked with white and yellow roughly triangular spots on the top. Irregular markings occur along the sides of the abdomen, which is covered with fine hairs. The cephalothorax is brownish orange and legs are yellow, darkening at the ends.

Occurrence in and around Homes: The triangulate cobweb spider is often the most common cobweb making species in Colorado homes, although easily overlooked because of its small size. The cobwebs it produces are usually located in dark corners of houses, basements, and outbuildings. Indoor breeding may occur and it can be found year-round in homes.

Life History and Habits: Like other members of the family, the triangulate cobweb spider produces a tangled, irregularly constructed web. The spider is almost always found suspended within the web or at the edges of it. Flying insect prey snared by the webs are swathed in sticky silk.

Mating and production of the egg sacs takes place from late spring through early fall. The egg sacs are made of loosely woven white silk, and about 30 eggs are visible inside each sac.

Medical Importance: This species is harmless to humans. No cases of adverse reactions from the bite of this species have ever been recorded.



Figures 1, 2. A triangulate cobweb spider female (top) and adult male (bottom, next to a penny). The top photograph is courtesy of Joseph Berger and BugWood.org



Figure 3. A female triangulate cobweb spider. Photograph courtesy of David Shetlar, The Ohio State University.



Figure 4. A male triangulate cobweb spider. Photograph courtesy of David Shetlar, The Ohio State University.



Figure 5. Triangulate cobweb spider with egg sacs. Photograph courtesy of Jim Kalisch, The University of Nebraska.