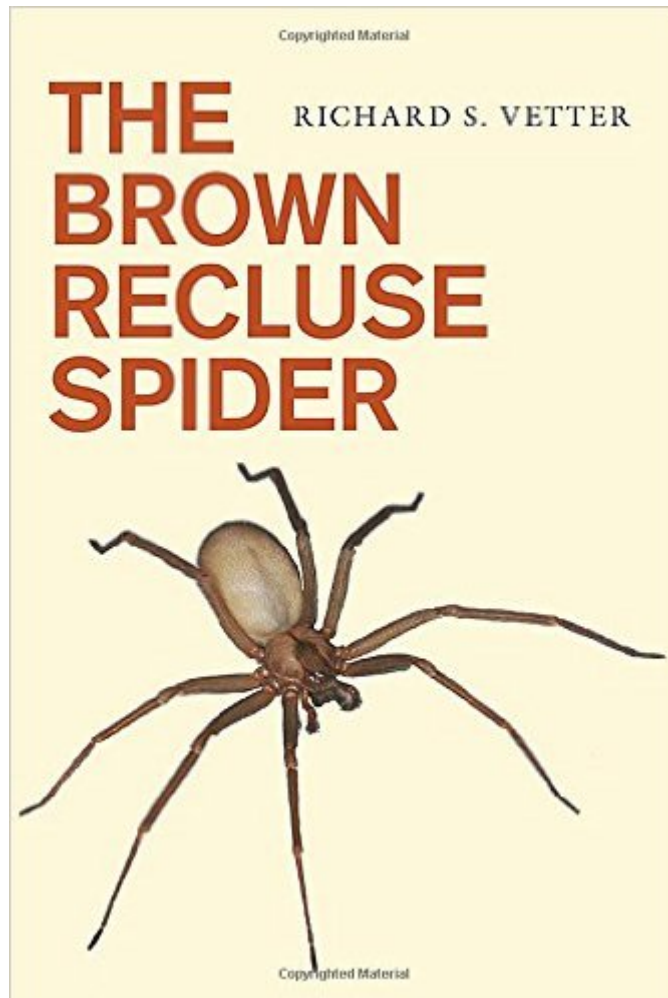


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The Brown Recluse Spider



Synopsis

The brown recluse is a fascinating spider very well adapted to dwelling in houses and other buildings. Because of this very quality and the ghastly reputation associated with the medical consequences of its bite, it has become infamous throughout North America. Although recluse spiders can cause serious skin injuries and, in very rare cases, death, the danger posed by this spider is often exaggerated as a result of arachnophobia and the misdiagnosis of non-spider-related conditions as brown recluse bites. These misdiagnoses often occur in areas of North America where the spider does not exist, making legitimate bites improbable. One of the greatest factors that keeps the myths alive is misidentification of common (and harmless) spiders as brown recluses. With this book, Richard S. Vetter hopes to educate readers regarding the biology of the spider and medical aspects of its bites, to reduce the incidence of misdiagnoses, and to quell misplaced anxiety. In *The Brown Recluse Spider*, Vetter covers topics such as taxonomy, identification, misidentification, life history characteristics and biology, medical aspects of envenomations, medical conditions misdiagnosed as brown recluse bites, other spider species of medical consideration (several of which have been wrongly implicated as threats to human health), and the psychology behind the entrenched reasons why people believe so deeply in the presence of the spider in the face of strong, contradictory information. Vetter also makes recommendations for control of the spider for households in areas where the spiders are found and describes other species of recluse spiders in North America. Although *The Brown Recluse Spider* was written for a general audience, it is also a valuable source of information for arachnologists and medical personnel.

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Customer Reviews

This is THE authoritative account of the brown recluse spider, covering proper identification, its natural history, venom, and the effect of its bite. Written by an arachnologist who has made his life's work understanding where this spider is found (and, more importantly, where it does not occur) and researching the many claims of bites, particularly outside of its range. The book is full of wonderful color photographs and is written in a style that makes an interesting and easy read. Over the past 20 years, Vetter has almost single-handedly reversed the tendency of physicians to diagnose any unexplained skin lesion as a brown recluse bite. Recognized as the leading brown recluse expert in the world, Vetter has condensed a careers-worth of information into a wonderfully compact volume. This book is a must for physicians, pest control folks, naturalists, and anyone who wants to temper their fear of spiders with dependable factual information.

Up front I know Rick Vetter and have published with him (not on this subject, however.) I have always had the utmost respect for Rick's knowledge of the brown recluse and its relatives. He has written a number of journal and more popular articles on these spiders and the effects of their venom. In so doing he has always been a voice of reason and a debunker of myths and misinformation. In this book he has combined all of the data accumulated over his years of study, and illustrated it with wonderful color photos, to summarize everything known about these spiders, together with a lot of important information about their relatives, other venomous spiders, and spiders confused with the recluses (there are more than one species!) or accused of being venomous. He also discusses the problems of diagnosing brown recluse bite, which are many, and debunks many bits of misinformation about these and other spiders. I wish more books on venomous creatures were as informative as "The Brown Recluse Spider!" I recommend this book without any reservation. If you would know the reality about venomous spiders, especially the recluses, read this book!

The most comprehensive book on the *Loxosceles* to date! Well written and extremely logical, I live in Wyoming and teach classes on spiders to the general public, I have not only quoted this book but use it to explain all the misinformation out there regarding the recluse spider. Mr. Vetter has gone above and beyond with the amount of in depth research and brilliantly explains the facts in a way that anyone can understand. I highly recommend this book to anyone who not only wants to know

more about the recluse but spiders in general.

My boyfriend bought this book and it impressed me so much I felt I needed to leave a review. There's a wealth of information in here, including specific ways to correctly and quickly identify a brown recluse, their actual distribution (heads up - much of the US is recluse free), and plenty of info on what actually goes down with recluse bites if that's a concern. Everything else you'd want to know on the brown recluse is included, and at the same time (bonus!) it lays a solid foundation about spiders in general. There are some really fascinating tidbits in here that will make it worth your time. And it manages all this while being a surprisingly easy and enjoyable read, with clear headings and using plain language (there is a minor spattering of technical jargon that can easily be skimmed). If you're scared of spiders, or even mildly interested, this can easily find a place on your bookshelf!

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