

# SPIDERS



This common Garden Spider is a beneficial insect.

## INSECT TIDBITS

Spiders control thrips, aphids, caterpillars, plant bugs, leafhoppers, cucumber beetles, ants, grasshoppers, scarabs, flies, and termites. Spiders are the best biocontrol agents known.

Spiders are nearsighted and can see only a few inches. If they are running towards you, they don't know it.

The black widow rarely leaves its web and bites only in self-defense. The male does not bite.

## PREVENTION

- **Keep inside areas free of clutter** and accessible to weekly vacuum or sweeping. Spiders need to hide. Outdoors keep plants away from the house, especially near open windows. Keep woodpiles away from the house and clear up clutter. Without food, spiders will look elsewhere for homes. If you kill all the spiders in a junk pile, the next day more will move in. So move the junk!

## CONTROLS

- **Vacuum** up the spider and web. If you are nervous about the spider escaping, you can seal the bag in a plastic bag and then dump them. If you don't want to dump a half used bag, seal the bag in plastic and put in the freezer, or out in the sun for two days.
- **Trap spiders gently** in a plastic dish and release them outside – remember that spiders eat many of the most destructive kinds of insects and should not be killed if possible.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**, please contact the Central Coast Environmental Health Project (CCEHP) at (805) 963-1622 ext. 111, or the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner at (805) 681-5600. Information compiled by the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo (ECOSLO) and the San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's office on behalf of the CCEHP.