

---

# Brown Spiders

adapted from information presented by Veterinarian Cliff Faver

EQUALLY AS MENACING AS THE BROWN RECLUSE

---



*If it has such an eye arrangement, it's a Loxosceles*

Here is a follow-up to some of the information presented by Veterinarian Cliff Faver about venomous creatures of the desert at a Desert Awareness Committee class. Of particular interest was the Arizona brown spider, commonly known as the Fiddleback Spider. It is one of several frequently encountered in Arizona that are similar to the true brown recluse spider of the Midwest. Ours is *Loxosceles arizonica* and is equally as menacing as is the brown recluse.



According to Robert L. Smith in *Venomous Animals of Arizona*, this genus can be distinguished from all others by the following characteristics: The body of the adult is about 9 mm long, and the leg span is about 25 mm. Color is tan to brown and there is a distinctive violin-shaped darker marking on the cephalothorax, with the neck of the violin pointed toward the abdomen. There are three pairs of eyes on the base of the violin. These are difficult to see without a hand lens. Other spiders that might be mistaken for the brown spider have four pairs of eyes rather than three and do not have the violin.

[Professor Smith](#), who is Associate Professor in the Department of Entomology of the University of Arizona, includes the Arizona brown recluse spider on his list of Arizona's dangerously venomous animals. Its bite can cause severe tissue damage and possible death if not treated by a physician as soon as possible.

