
Cobwebs

by: Jim Blackburn

A SURE SIGN YOUR HOUSE IS BEING CLEANED



Crab-like Spinybacked Orbweaver
Gasteracantha cancriformis
photo by Dawn Miller-Walker

My wife Marla called my attention to the fact that we've got fewer cobwebs both inside the house and outside around the windows and doors this year. I didn't have any explanation but it did start me thinking about spiders and their cobwebs.

Did you know spiders are one of the best predators on insects? If you've got cobwebs in the house – then you've got insects! Just think. They're not going to live in your home if they can't find something to eat. They kill several times their weight in household insect pests and flies. And if you destroy the webs and discourage the spider then what are those insects that they feed on going to do?



Yes. Cobwebs in the house are commonly viewed as a sign of poor house cleaning. But those insects they feed on must be there too and are usually hidden in blankets, storage, cracks, in your books, etc., and are generally active behind the scenes! Shouldn't we think if we've got cobwebs that there is someone else present that may be really damaging and need more of our attention?!

I don't usually see the spiders around the house, but there was a large fellow, about two inches, often seen in the morning in the bath. Kind of white with what looked like brown boots on its feet. Would be on the wall sometimes but usually in the shower. Could step around it, but haven't seen it lately. Hope it's doing its predatory job.

My response to seeing a spider has been to stomp on it, but I'm rethinking that. Marla, when finding one trapped in the tub, usually takes a piece of paper and scoops the fellow on it and takes it outside and releases it.

If you, like us, like the feel of silk clothes, we've spiders and their spinning to thank.

Now I'm beginning to view spiders and their cobwebs as my allies against insects too. Rather than deploring the cobwebs I'm beginning to look behind the scene to find what they're feeding on around the house!

