

Date: May 19, 2022
From: Melanie Hollenshead
Regarding: Spider Behavior Presentation

One of your members asked whether spiders eat Imported Red Fire Ants?

I could not remember specifics. So I promised to review sources and send back an answer.

Lactrodectus mactans (Southern Black Widow) is a predator of Fire Ants. Up to 75% of their prey are ants. (I cannot confirm how many of those are Fire Ants.) However, Fire Ants are listed as prey.

Oecobius navus (Wall Spiders) are common sheet weaving spiders found indoors around windows and corners of rooms. These small spiders prey on ants that get into the house through window frames. Fire Ants are one of the species they will consume.

The Wall Spiders are harmless guys that can live in fairly close proximity of one another. I have found up to 8 around a single bathroom window in a “clean, neat” house. They are very beneficial!

Xysticus species (Brown Crab Spiders) are known as predators of Red Imported Fire Ants. This information was found on the web at:

“Natural Enemies of Fire Ants”, <https://ant-pests.extension.org/natural-enemies-of-fire-ants/#predators>

This was a cooperative project between the Extension Foundation, the Cooperative Extension and the US Dept. of Agriculture – National Institute of Food & Agriculture.

If any of your members are in the Brazoria County area, let me know. My chapter loves to show people around. And I love to take people of Spider Walks and Spider Hunts!

We are just south of Houston and will be active in the Annual TMN State Conference.

Melanie