AMERICAN ARACHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY

American Arachnology

Newsletter of the American Arachnological Society

Number 96 **April 2026**

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2026 American Arachnological Society Meeting

The annual meeting of the American Arachnology Society will be held in Lincoln, Nebraska July 12-16. Don't miss out – this will be a meeting to remember! This year's meeting is being hosted by Eileen Hebets and her lab. Regular registration deadline is May 14th. This is also the deadline for Abstract submission.

Arrival and check-in will be on Sunday, July 12th. The meeting will kick off with a community science festival – Eight-Legged Encounters. This fun event will be followed by the opening reception.

On July 13th, there will be a Science Communication & Public Engagement panel luncheon. And on that same day will be a Society historical first – an Araneomorph vs Mygalomorph soccer game! Who will win? The large-bodied, hairy, slow moving mygals or the small, quick-spinning araneos – participate or watch the game to find out. It is sure to be a tarsus-claw-biter of a game!

In addition to these fun events, there will be an evening social in a tallgrass prairie reserve and post-congress excursions.

Oh, and there will be talks and posters – can't forget them! On July 13th, Alfredo Peretti of the Institute of Animal Diversity and Ecology at CONICET-UNC, Argentina, will give the opening keynote address "Rarity in reproductive biology: Arachnids as insight." July 14th, Leticia Aviles from the Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, Canada, will give the plenary talk, "Web-building spiders' solutions to the tyranny of geometry." And on Wednesday, July 15th, the 2025 Norman Platnick Award winner, Muhammad Irfan from the School of Life Sciences, Southwest University, Chongqing, China, will give the plenary talk, "Unveiling hidden diversity: Advances in the systematics and taxonomy of Linyphiidae spiders in China."

Also on July 15th, there will be an Early Career Symposium highlighting the research of the following early career scientists: Ryan Bacon from the University of Maryland Baltimore County will present, "Population cross experiments reveal variations in reproductive success in Opiliones." Joe Giulian from East Tennessee State University will present, "Experience matters! How light history reorganizes the spider circadian clock." Emma Jochim from the University of California Davis will present, "Untangling species limits in mygalomorph spiders: Integrating genomics, morphology, and ecology across California." Kathryn Nagel from the University of California Berkeley will present "Behavior, biomechanics, and neurophysiology: the influence of shifting environments on Hawaiian *Tetragnatha*." And Laura Segura from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Gamboa Panama will present, "Natural history, heat, and humidity: Pseudoscorpion behavior in the tropics."

2026 International Congress of Arachnology

The 23rd International Congress of Arachnology (ICA) will be held in Kochi, India in the state of Kerala from 15 – 21 November. This exciting meeting will be hosted by Mathew M. Joseph and Sunil Jose K. of Bharata Mata College and Kuravilangad Bharata Mata College. Kochi is known as the "Queen of the Arabian Sea." This will be the first time the ICA has been hosted in India. Don't miss this opportunity to experience a land of extraordinary cultural diversity, biodiversity, and strong scientific traditions.

Plenary speakers include Charles Haddad of the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein South Africa, who will present "Darkest Africa? Shining light on the spider biodiversity of the world's most understudied continent"; Jutta M. Schneider of the University of Hamburg, who will present, "Germany: Dangerous liaisons: Causes and consequences of monogynous mating systems"; and Rodrigo Hirata Willemart of the University of São Paulo, Brazil, who will present, "The sensory biology of Opiliones, with a comparison with other arachnids."

In addition to these exciting plenary speakers, there will also be three Symposia. 1) How to make Arachnology collections data accessible for research, organized by Kaïna Privit of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris, France; Janet Beccaloni of the Natural History Museum, London, UK; and Paula E. Cushing of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, USA. 2) Movement Dynamics in Arachnids, organized by Ajay Narendra of Macquarie University, Australia and Dinesh Rao of the Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico. 3) Parasitoids and Parasites of Arachnids organized by Michal Segoli and Yael Lubin of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

Registration is open now; prices will increase in June 2026. Do not miss this opportunity to meet with arachnologists from all over the world. The deadline for Abstract Submission is 31 July.

Norman Platnick Award for Taxonomic Research Deadline

The Norman Platnic Award for Taxonomic Research is for outstanding early career PhD researchers (e.g., pre-tenure academics, postdoctoral researchers, early stage industry researchers). The award is based on the

quantity and/or quality of taxonomic publications that have been published or have been accepted for publication. The applicant must demonstrate a strong commitment to morphological taxonomy. The award will be judged on performance relative to timeframe/opportunity (e.g., the existing support available for an applicant's research and/or relevant career interruptions due to other commitments or challenges will be taken into consideration). The award deadline is coming up fast! Applications must be emailed before 11:59 (23:59) Pacific Standard time, 30 April. Follow the link above for more details about application criteria.

Spiders of the Southern Appalachians Course

Sarah Stellwagen, of the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, and Alex Sweger of Hartwick College will be teaching Spiders of the Southern Appalachians Course from 20 – 31 July at Highlands Biological Station. This course costs $1,000 and students can receive 4 credit hours. These outstanding instructors will offer an immersive introduction to spider systematics, morphology, behavior, physiology and ecology. Each day, the students will participate in fieldwork across the Southern Appalachians to experience the incredible diversity found in this ancient and unique region. Visit the link above to register.

An Update on the "Stripe Migration"

As you probably know, the AAS has changed the way that it processes membership. What is the status of all that, you may be wondering, and what do the changes mean to me? The change took longer than we had anticipated, but it has now been implemented. Membership payments are now done through Stripe instead of PayPal. In the new setup, membership is handled as a subscription. It will automatically renew every year unless canceled. Also, membership is no longer linked to the calendar year. So, if you sign up in June, your membership runs through next June, not just till the end of the year. We will of course remind you that your renewal is coming up (and issue a refund if you let us know in a timely way that you did not want to renew). We believe that auto-renewal will make it easier for everyone, since we've noticed over the years that people often were not sure if they were current members or not. We also found that people could not always remember what username they had set up. So – as is increasingly common elsewhere online – your username is now your email address. (An exception is lifetime members, whose old accounts were "grandfathered in.") While we were working with our website developers on the change, membership signups and renewals were paused. So, if you didn't renew yet this year, you still need to do that. See next article for instructions. We hope that the new setup will be friendlier and more convenient for you, as well as more modern and less labor-intensive for the Society.

Of course, your feedback and suggestions are welcome as always! Send your thoughts to membership secretary Alex Berry (membership@americanarachnology.org) or webmaster and treasurer Nina Sandlin (treasurer@americanarachnology.org).

When you voted in the recent ElectionBuddy, there was a question: "Have you renewed your membership for 2026?" If you "voted" no to this question, please renew your membership as soon as possible! See the next article for instructions.

Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Our membership operation was paused for several months (unfortunately longer than planned!) while we migrated to the new Stripe new system. This means that – through no fault of their own – nobody was able to renew for 2026 until February.

If you have not had a chance to get paid up for 2026, please take a moment to do that now: https://www.americanarachnology.org/society/membership/join/

You should receive an email with a temporary password to activate your account. Use it to change your password and enter your personal information (a one-time process on the new system). Note that your email address is now your username. If you don't receive the email or have any difficulty logging in, please reach out to membership secretary Alex Berry (membership@americanarachnology.org) or webmaster Nina Sandlin (treasurer@americanarachnology.org) – or both! – and they will be happy to assist you.

We value your membership and want to make sure you continue to enjoy all its benefits! If you have questions about the process, we have created a Membership Payment FAQ page to answer some of the most common ones.

Thanks to Donors!

Invest in Arachnology – Donate to the American Arachnological Society! We are a 501(c)(3) organization so your donations (if you are in the US) are tax deductible. As announced in issue #93, the AAS recently established two named donor levels: Golden Hypochilid donors who give $500 or more to the society, and Salticid Donors who give $100 or more to the society. You can also donate to support the annual meeting. We are also grateful for anyone who decides to make a lifetime commitment to the society by becoming a Lifetime Member. Below we thank our 2025-2026 donors:

Golden Hypochilid donors: Ann Rypstra and Jason Bond

Silver Salticid Donors: Susa Masta

And welcome to our new Lifetime Members: Zia Nisani, Tyler Brown, and Gustavo Silva de Miranda.

Sponsored Memberships

The AAS provides free memberships to faculty and students from developing nations. You can contribute to this fund, whether to sponsor a specific individual from a qualifying nation or to expand the funding we have available for this purpose. Of course, you can also "sponsor" a needy arachnologist irrespective of their geographic locale, simply by paying directly for their membership. It's simple. Start here, just as you would for your own membership, but be sure to put *their email address* into the box at the top.

Wildcat Donation Drive of Unknown Origin

In October 2025, AAS was the beneficiary of a sudden mysterious windfall of nickel-and-dime donations. Our PayPal account received 51 separate $5 or $10 contributions from individuals, which together totaled $422.06 ($192.20 to the General Fund and $219.86 26 to support research). All these grassroots donors had untraceable generic Gmail/Yahoo/Outlook type addresses and no discernible affiliations. Most of them elected to cover the fees! (One $10 donor wrote in to ask for an official receipt, which of course was duly and gratefully supplied on our lovely official letterhead.) Thus far, no instigator of this wildcat donation drive has come forward. If you or someone you know organized or inspired this remarkable outpouring, many thanks!! (And if just reading about it inspires you to pull a similar stunt, well we certainly won't try to stop you ;-)

Getting the Print Version of the Journal of Arachnology

Can I still receive the print version of the *Journal of Arachnology*? Yes, you can still do that. It is no longer part of a membership category. But members can get it as a separate subscription for $90 a year. (Note that printing and shipping – even with the less-expensive and faster "print-on-demand" process – come to a little more than that, so it is still a subsidized offering.) Currently the journal is running somewhat late. The last issue of volume 53 should be out this month, and the first issue of volume 54 is expected in June. Log in to the members area to purchase a subscription – or to read the latest content at no extra charge.

Arachno-Podcasts

Brian Patrick has a weekly podcast series focused on spiders.

Paula Cushing recorded a podcast focused on Solifugae for the Xerces Society.

Time for Joy with Sandy Levine recorded a YouTube interview about spiders (also with Paula Cushing).

Marshal Hedin recorded an Araneology episode on the Ologies podcast series with Alie Ward.

Most of you who know me know that I've been working on jumping spiders for a long time, over five decades actually. They are fascinating little creatures who are very much like miniature cats.

How to Take Care of Your Jumping Spider

G.B. Edwards, salticid expert, has written a fun care guide for those who keep jumping spiders. *How to Take Care of Your Jumping Spider* is a print-on-demand publication that can be ordered from **https://DrSalticid.com/shop/** Through December 14, you can use a 20% off discount coupon (gbe20). The book is 8.5x11 inch, perfect bound (paperback), 72 pages of content with lots of color photos.