

**All tarantulas live in burrows**, which they dig with their fangs and front legs — unless an abandoned burrow is available. Burrows are about the diameter of a quarter and are lined and sometimes covered with spider silk.

**Female tarantulas live as long as 25 years.** After mating, a female lays a hundred or so eggs that hatch into spiderlings the following spring.

**Tarantulas are nocturnal**, spending most of their time underground even while hunting. A hunting tarantula waits in its burrow for an insect to walk by. The spider then rushes out and grabs it.

**Tarantula venom** is very mild and won't harm you — unless you're the size of a small lizard or cricket.

PHOTOS: JENN ROE, KAREN SHACKLETON

To receive this publication in an alternate format, call Mount Diablo State Park at 925-673-2891, TTY RELAY SERVICE



[www.mdia.org](http://www.mdia.org)



# Tarantulas

*Protect these gentle giants.*

**Late summer and fall is a time when tarantulas are most at risk.** That's when the male tarantula, four to seven years of age, leaves the safety of its burrow to wander about in search of a mate. It dies later that same season.



If you are lucky enough to see a tarantula, do not touch it. It may look tough, but a tarantula can be injured if handled. Please observe from a distance.

**California State Parks strictly forbids disturbance of all wildlife in the park.**

You might see a tarantula with a bald spot which is created in its own defense by flicking abdominal hairs



into the nose and eyes of its predator.