

# Got brown widow spiders? Entomologists seek the public's help for a summer research project

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Ventral view of an adult female brown widow spider, *Latrodectus geometricus*. PHOTO CREDIT: DONG-HWAN CHOE, UC RIVERSIDE.

Entomologists at the University of California, Riverside are requesting the public to send in live brown widow spiders for a summer research project aimed at controlling the spread of the spiders.

"If you have live brown widow spiders around the outside of your house or apartment, in your garage or backyard shed, we are interested in receiving them by the end of July," said Dong-Hwan Choe, an assistant professor of [entomology](#), who is leading the research project. "Only spiders are needed, no egg sacs."

Because brown widow spiders are hard to distinguish from juveniles of their close relative, the [black widow spider](#), the public is advised to visit this UC Riverside website for help in identifying the spiders found before they are brought to UCR.

How to bring or ship the critters to campus:

— Place the brown widow spider in an unbreakable container (such as a prescription pill container) with some wadded up paper towel for the spider to grab on to while it is being sent to UCR. Ideally, the paper towel should take up about half of the inside of the container. Only one spider per container; otherwise the spiders will eat each other. No [air holes](#), water, or prey items need to be provided for the spider.

— Bring the container to Room 378, [Entomology Building](#). A labeled box will be available outside this room for leaving the containers. Or [mail](#) the container to Rick Vetter, Brown widow spider project, Department of Entomology, 900 University Avenue, Riverside, California 92521.

For further information, please call Kathleen Campbell at (951) 827-5729. More information about brown widow spiders can be found [here](#).

Provided by University of California - Riverside

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