

Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #89



Crab Spider

Arachnid

HABITAT

Common spider found across the world in many habitats including forests, fields, gardens, and meadows. Found on plants and in leaf litter or on the ground. Have you seen one?

DIET

Eat mainly insects including flies, moths, bees, crickets, and grasshoppers I once spotted one mid-meal as it was eating a caterpillar. They are ambush predators. Instead of weaving a sticky web to catch prey, they wait quietly before ambushing their next meal.



HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A COLOR-CHANGING CREATURE?

Maybe you have heard of octopuses rapidly changing colors to blend into their surroundings. Or birds changing colors and becoming brighter during mating season. Or a chameleon slowly changing colors to show how it's feeling. But what about color-changing spiders? The first time I saw a crab spider, I almost did not see it at all. I was admiring a tall, white flowering plant when my son noticed a small white spider crawling up it. The spider looked just like one of the little white flower blossoms! He told me that this type of spider can change colors to blend in with flowers. I had never heard of it before, but he was right!

The specific spider we saw was a goldenrod crab spider. I recently found another (pictured on the bottom left), which was yellow with pinkish markings. Unlike the white one I nearly missed seeing until my son pointed it out, I saw this yellow one right away. It stood out against the backdrop of bright green pine needles. The crab spider can only change its color slightly. It cannot turn green to blend in with the pine, so it sticks out like a highlighter when on a pine tree.

Crab spiders blend in, looking like another flower on a stem, so they can stay safe and sneak up on prey. But we are never meant to blend into our surroundings. God says that as we follow him, we should look different from the world around us. John 15:19 says, "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as it loves its own. But I have chosen you out of the world, so you don't belong to it..." When we choose to follow Jesus as our savior, we don't belong to the world and so we should not act or talk like those who do not love and follow God. Instead, God's love transforms us. The closer we follow Jesus, the more we might stick out from our surroundings, and that's ok. Romans 1:16 reminds us to not be ashamed. We follow a God who saves, and that's worth sticking out for so others can see his love.