From Fear to Fascination – Learning to Love Spiders.

Much maligned and misunderstood, the spiders of Australia are among some of the most amazing creatures on the planet. Beyond our fear of commonly known Funnelwebs and Redbacks, are the likes of the Sparklemuffins, the Alien Butt Spider, the Disco Mirror Ball Spiders, and the dancing Peacock Spiders.

A new publication from CSIRO Publishing, A Field Guide to Spiders of Australia by Robert Whyte and Greg Anderson, delivers the most comprehensive guide ever published, including 1350 stunning colour photographs and covering 836 species.

“It can take as little as five minutes to completely cure arachnophobia” says author Robert Whyte, an honorary spider research scientist at Queensland Museum. “For years now we have been curing arachnophobia with the harmless Golden Orb Weaver, which doesn’t even have a defensive bite.”

Unsurprisingly, there are plenty of myths surrounding spiders, including the recurring falsehood that bites from White-tailed spiders will trigger flesh-eating bacteria. A Field Guide to Spiders of Australia dispels those myths (the dangers of spiders are mostly bogus) and showcases just how fascinating, beautiful and clever Australian spiders really are. Covering in detail 86 spider families, and 836 species it will help you identify more spider species than ever before and transform your fear into fascination.

OUR LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP

- Spiders are an indicator of ecosystem health. Advances in science are also turning spider venoms into lifesavers for humans, with applications being developed to treat cancers and strokes.

- No-one has actually died from a spider bite in Australia for more than 30-years, but plenty of people have been injured panicking at the sight of a Huntsman!

- Some spiders are just as beautiful as butterflies. An Australian Peacock Spider with a furry blue face, the Maratus personatus was named “the World’s cutest spider”!

- Spiders can do incredible things – some spiders can fly; others mimic other species like ants and wasps to avoid predators; and Disco-mirror ball spiders can rapidly change colour.

A Field Guide to the Spiders of Australia is full of stunning facts and images with countless new species identified for the first time. These are not just Australian firsts, but world firsts.

“Read no further – unless you are willing to fall in love with spiders. Submitting to the pages that follow could change your life...”

Tim Low, excerpt from the Foreword, A Field Guide to Spiders of Australia

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A Field Guide to Spiders of Australia by Robert Whyte & Greg Anderson

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