

# Hobo Spiders

Scientific Name: *Eratigena agrestis*

During late summer and early fall it is normal for spiders to enter buildings and homes. This includes hobo spiders which have long been prevalent in Montana. Common misconceptions about the hobo spider often cause unnecessary concern.

## Things to know:

- Spider bites are rare. Generally, their fangs are small and lack the musculature to pierce the human skin. They typically only bite if threatened or if trapped in clothing, shoes, etc.
- There is no conclusive evidence that hobo spider venom causes necrosis in humans; and a large body of scientific research that proves it does not.
- The most common cause for necrotic lesions (wounds not healing) in the West is a bacterial infection called MRSA (Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) infection. MRSA and other bacteria can enter the body through punctures which could include a spider bite, as well as many other more likely wounds. If a wound from any bite or scratch becomes inflamed, or if soreness persists, medical care should be sought as secondary infection that enters the body through the wound may need to be treated.



Figure 1. Female hobo spider.  
Photo by L. Kerzicnik



Figure 2. Male hobo spider. Photo by L. Elliott, Bugguide.

- Hobo spiders are not known to be naturally aggressive in their native area or in the United States. Their nickname, the aggressive house spider, comes from an errant translation of their scientific name, *Eratigena agrestis*. The Latin translation of *agrestis* is not aggressive, but rather “rural” or “in the fields”.