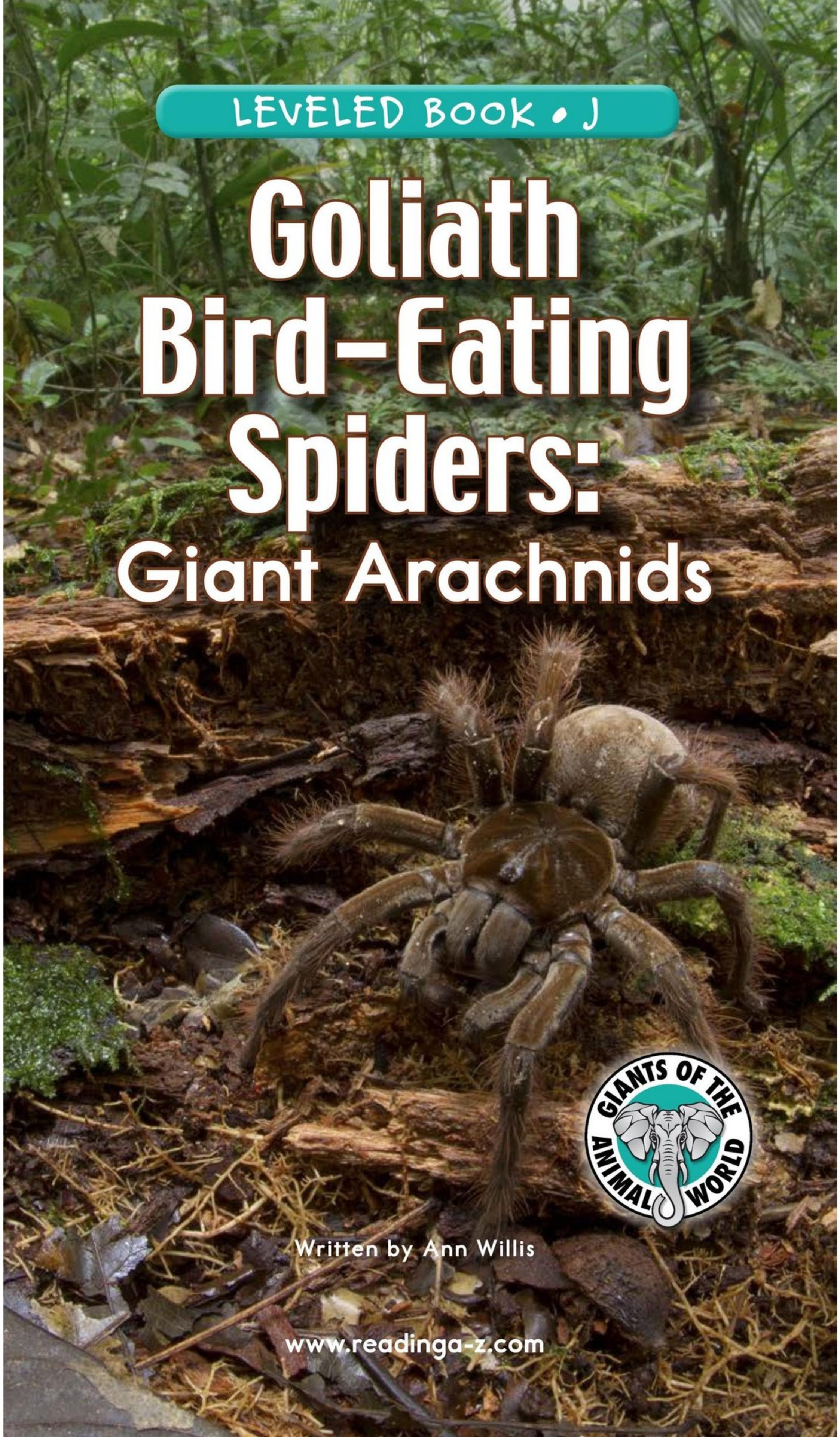


LEVELED Book • J

Goliath Bird-Eating Spiders: Giant Arachnids



A large Goliath bird-eating spider, with a dark brown, segmented body and long, spindly legs, is positioned in the center of the cover. It is resting on a bed of fallen leaves, sticks, and moss in a dense jungle setting. The background is a soft-focus view of a lush green forest.

Written by Ann Willis



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www.readinga-z.com

Focus Question

What advantages does the Goliath bird-eating spider have because of its size?



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A Big, Hairy Spider

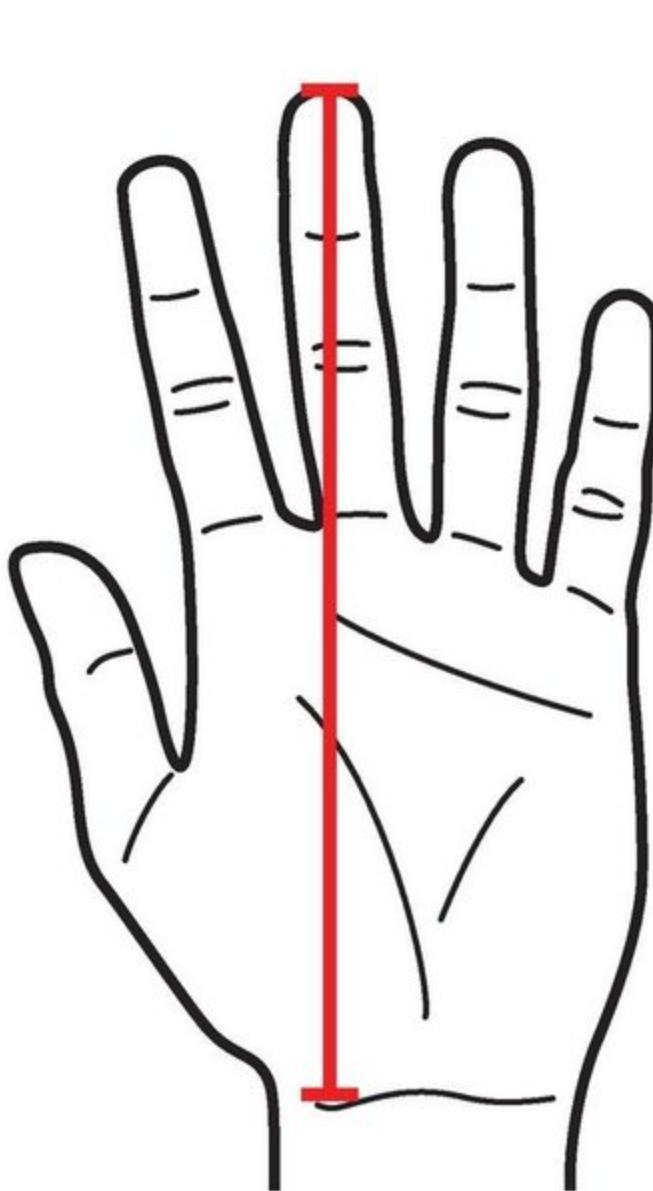
Goliath bird-eating spiders

are very big spiders.

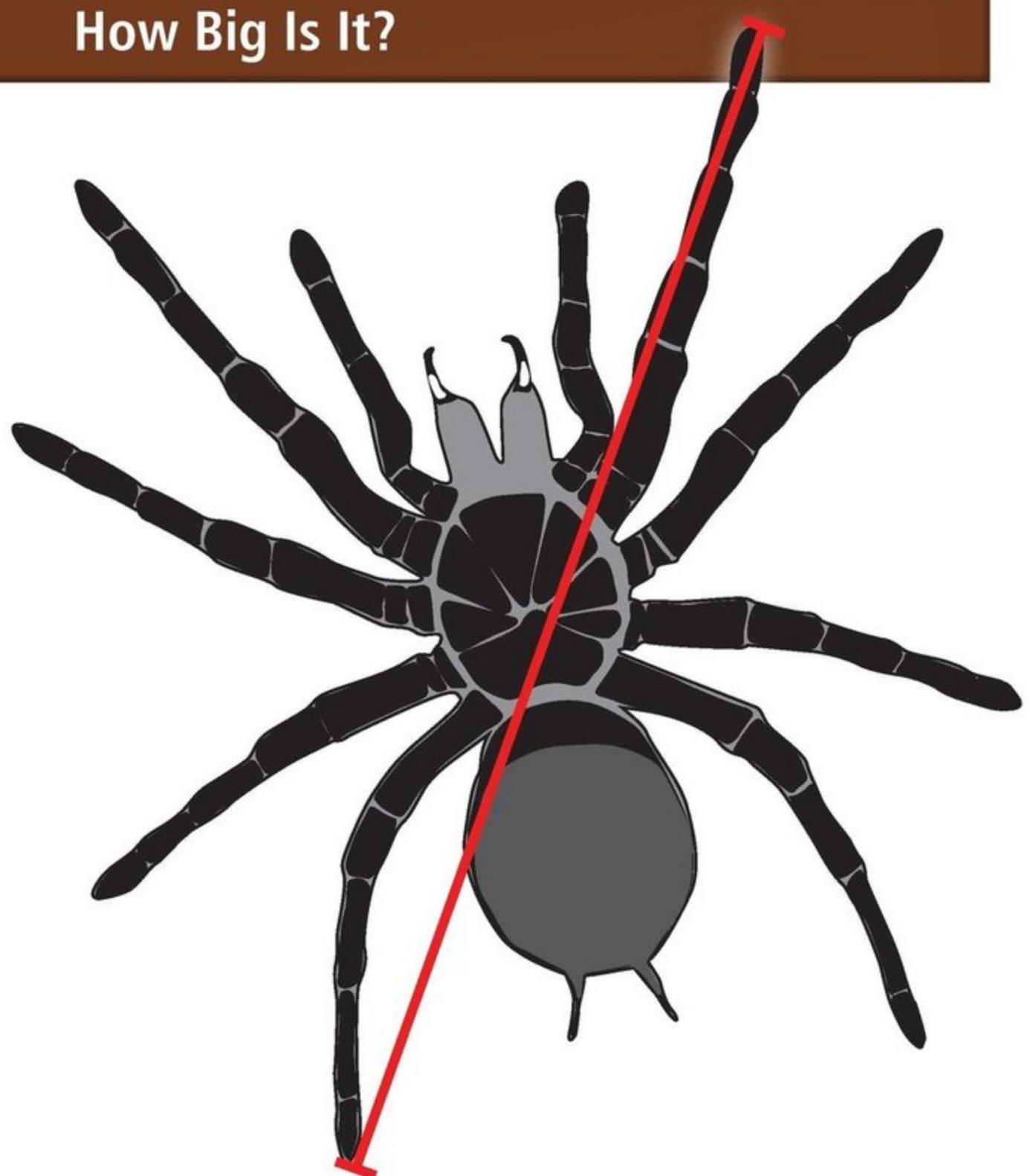
They are about the size
of a dinner plate.

They weigh more than any
other spider in the world.

How Big Is It?



Human hand
length: 7.44 inches
(18.89 cm)
width: 3.3 inches (8.4 cm)



Goliath spider
diameter: 12 inches
(30.48 cm)
weight: 6 ounces (0.17 kg)



Goliath tarantulas are light tan or reddish in color. Some parts of the spiders are darker brown.

Like many spiders, Goliath spiders have eight legs and eight eyes. Even with that many eyes, they can't see very well. Their bodies are covered with many tiny hairs.

Two Body Parts

Spiders have two body parts.

The mouth, **fangs**, and legs are
in the front part.

The back part is for making **silk**.

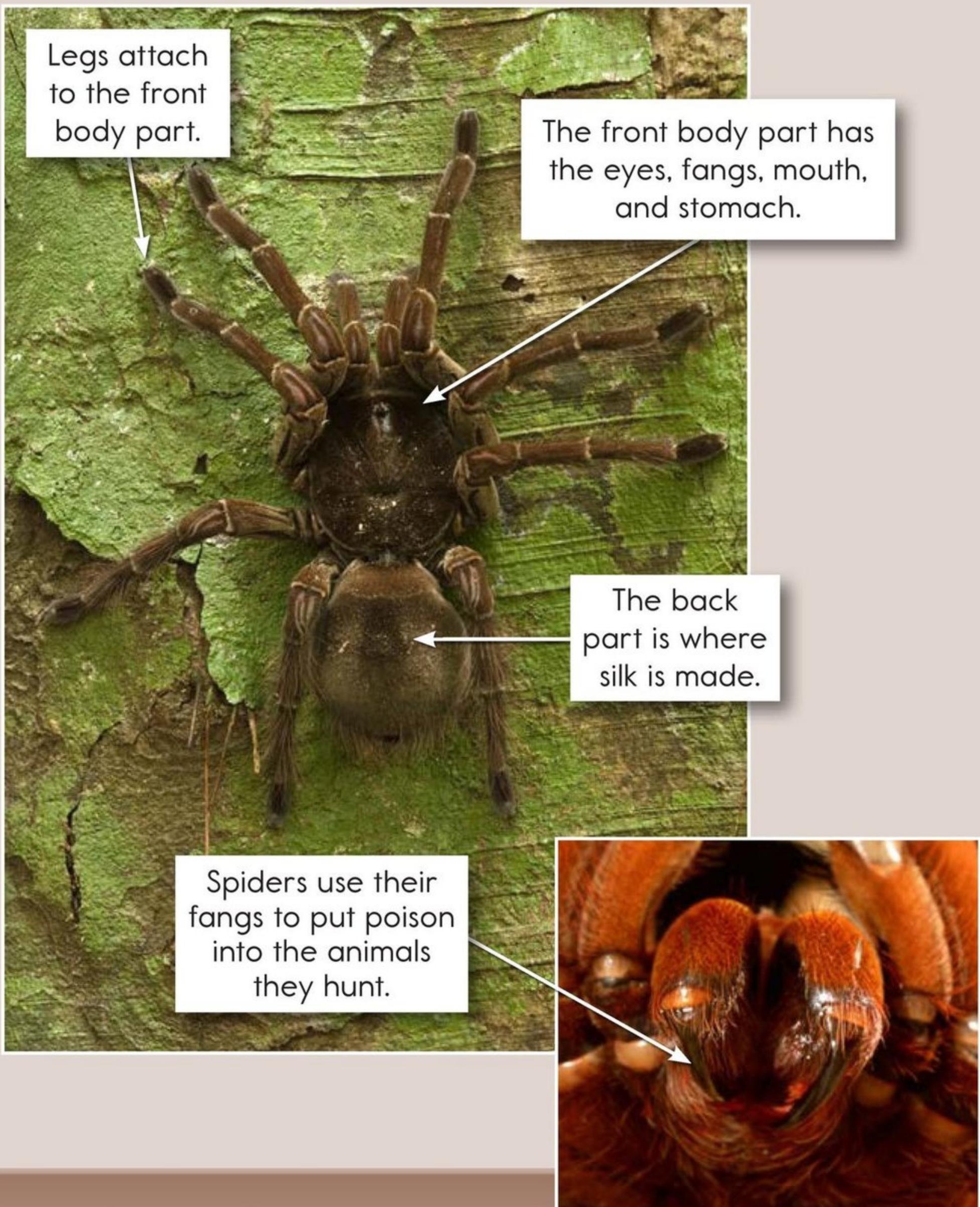




This spider is about the same size as a hand. The spider can get even bigger.

A spider with its legs can be
about 1 foot (30 cm) across.
That's as long as a ruler!

What Makes a Tarantula a Spider?



All spiders have

- eight legs
- jaws with fangs
- silk
- a hard covering on the outside
- eyes (most have eight eyes)
- hairs on their bodies for sensing the world around them

Home in the Rainforest

Goliath spiders live in rainforests.

The forests are in hot and wet parts of the world.

The spiders make their homes in **burrows** under the ground.

Where Do Goliath Bird-Eating Spiders Live?



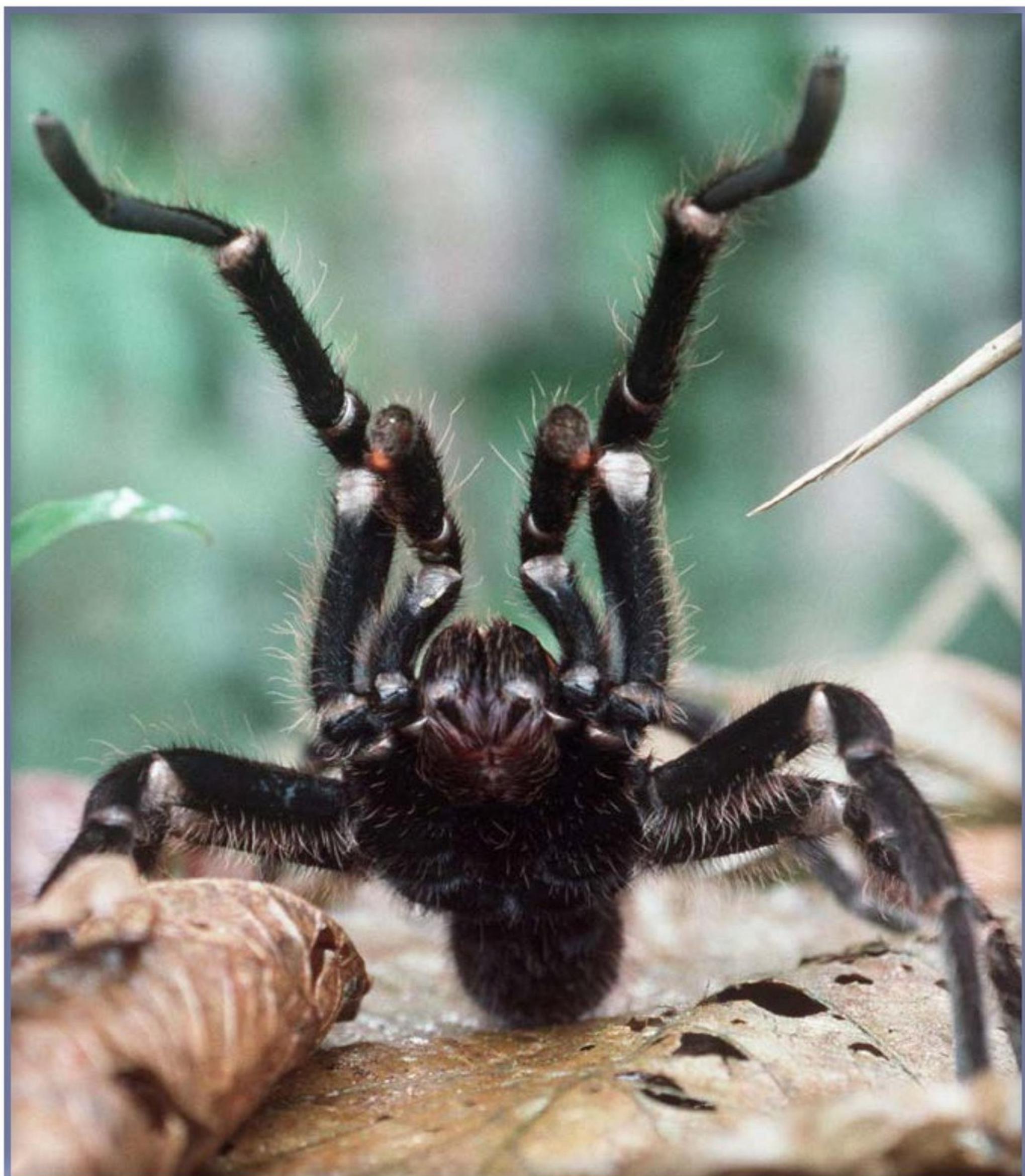


This Goliath spider is resting in its burrow.

What's for Dinner?

Goliath spiders are great hunters.
They hunt at night for mice, insects,
and other small prey.
The hairs on their body help them
sense when a small animal is near.

When Goliath spiders hunt,
they get close to a small animal.
Then they grab it with their strong,
hairy legs.



When Goliath spiders feel afraid, they stand up on their back legs.



This Goliath spider has found its prey.

Poison Fangs

Giant Goliath spiders have
a special weapon.

Their fangs are filled with **poison**.

When they bite an animal, the poison
makes the animal stop moving.

Humans don't need to worry
too much.

A bite from a Goliath spider hurts
about as much as a wasp sting.

Watch Out for Enemies

Even big spiders have enemies.
Hawks, owls, and snakes
sometimes eat Goliath spiders.
An insect called a *spider wasp*
can kill them, too.



This spider wasp is dragging a Goliath spider back to the spider burrow.



A Goliath spider looks after her young. The babies will change color as they grow.

Growing Up

Baby spiders hatch from eggs.

They look like little adults.

They must **shed** their outside skin

to grow bigger.

They shed their skin many times
during their lives.



Goliaths are not good climbers. They are too big to climb as well as smaller spiders.

Learning from Spiders

Huge, hairy Goliath spiders
are very special.

They have an important job
in their forest homes.

We can learn a lot from them!

Glossary

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| burrows (n.) | holes dug in the ground by an animal for use as a home (p. 9) |
| fangs (n.) | long, sharp, and sometimes hollow teeth (p. 6) |
| poison (n.) | something that is harmful or deadly if it enters one's body (p. 12) |
| prey (n.) | an animal that is hunted and eaten by a predator (p. 10) |
| shed (v.) | to drop skin, feathers, hair, or antlers; to throw off (p. 14) |
| silk (n.) | strong threads made by a spider or silkworm (p. 6) |

Words to Know

burrows
fangs
poison

prey
shed
silk

Front cover: A Goliath spider near its burrow entrance in a rainforest

Title page: Adult female Goliath spiders are bigger than males.

Page 3: Goliath spiders during mating season in South America

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Giants of the Animal World
Level J Leveled Book
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