

Avicularia avicularia



Pinktoe tarantula

Scientific classification

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Arthropoda

Subphylum: Chelicerata

Class: Arachnida

Order: Araneae

Infraorder: Mygalomorphae

Family: Theraphosidae

Genus: Avicularia

Species: A. avicularia

Binomial Name

Avicularia avicularia

(Linnaeus, 1758)

Avicularia, sometimes called the pinktoe tarantula, is a species of tarantula native from Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Trinidad and Tobago to Peru, Bolivia and Brazil. This species is sometimes called the Guyana pinktoe, or South American pinktoe.⁵³

The mature pinktoe tarantula has a dark-colored body and pinkish feet. Juvenile specimens, however, have pinkish bodies and dark-colored feet and undergo a reversal in their coloration as they approach adulthood at 4–5 years. A fully grown Pinktoe tarantula can grow up to six inches in length. They have a short lifespan, with males living 2–3 years, and females living between 6–9 years.^{53,54}

Diet

The pink-toed tarantula consumes mostly insect prey and is an aggressive feeder. Some of its prey includes crickets, wax moths, grasshoppers, roaches and small tree frogs (Schultz and Schultz, 2009). They sometimes consume small lizards like Anolis but vertebrates usually are not a major contributor to its diet.

Behaviour

The defence behaviour of the pink-toed tarantula is similar to most tarantulas. When threatened, it raises its first two pairs of legs and produces a hiss which can be heard clearly a few metres away. The pink-toed tarantula also has a defence mechanism against small flies. These flies feed on the remaining prey left in the burrow, and the fly larvae were also found on the feet and legs of the spider.⁵⁵