



# Mudpuppy's Pond

## Wolf Spiders

by Diane Clark

*What has eight legs, eight eyes, and fangs?*

If you guessed a spider, you're right! But Mudpuppy wants to tell you about a particularly interesting type of spider: ***the Wolf Spider.***

Wolf Spiders live all over Missouri. They like to live outdoors, but once in a while you may find one that has wandered into your house to stay warm.

Unlike most spiders, the Wolf Spider does not spin a web. He's a spider on the move, sometimes tunneling under flat rocks or logs for protection. His favorite foods are ground-dwelling insects and other spiders; in turn, the Wolf Spider is a nice snack for creatures such as lizards.

*Wolf Spiders are found all over Missouri. Even though they have fangs, they are not venomous.*

Photo: MO Dept. of Conservation



Wolf Spiders are not hard to recognize; most in this area are grayish-brown and with dark brown or black stripes. They're usually between one and one and a half inches long. They have eight eyes: the two center eyes of the top row are larger than the others, and there is a row of four smaller eyes below the top row. Their eyesight is very good.

The most interesting thing about Wolf Spiders is, unlike other spiders, the female carries her egg sac with her and is very protective of it. Most spiders leave their egg sacs wherever they chose to lay them, and it's up to the young to take care of themselves after they hatch. But once wolf spiderlings hatch, they crawl up onto Mama Wolf Spider's back and she carries her young around with her, sometimes for as long as two weeks!

### Word Scramble

Unscramble these letters to makes words found in this story.

- RPSEID \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- SNGFA \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- GEG CSA \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- DLIRAZS \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Answers: spider, fangs, egg sac, lizards