



HOUSE BILL 595: Adopt Official State Spider.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee: House Wildlife Resources
Introduced by: Rep. Fisher
Analysis of: First Edition

Date: April 24, 2017
Prepared by: Mariah Matheson
Research Assistant

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 595 would adopt the golden silk spider as the official State spider of North Carolina.*

CURRENT LAW: North Carolina currently does not have an official State spider. The State has adopted 12 animals as State symbols, ranging from the State bird (the cardinal) to the State dog (the Plott Hound) to the State insect (the honeybee). Animals that are designated as State symbols do not receive any special protections – the recognition is purely symbolic.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 595 would adopt the golden silk spider, *Nephila clavipes* (Linnaeus) as the official spider of the State of North Carolina.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND: The golden silk spider, *Nephila clavipes* (Linnaeus), is a common orb weaver found in North Carolina. It is known for its golden colored silk, which is used to create a large, finely meshed, sticky web, often three feet in diameter, that is placed in insect flight paths on the edge of woodlands. The golden silk spider bites only if held or pinched, which typically produces only localized pain. The golden silk spider preys on a wide variety of small- to medium-sized insects, including mosquitoes, flies, bees, wasps, moths, and butterflies. Golden silk spider females can grow up to three inches and are among the largest non-tarantula-like spiders in North America. The female golden silk spider is easily recognized by its large, cylindrical orange and brown body with furry tufts on its legs, while the male version is much smaller and is dark brown in color. The golden silk spiders are most active during late summer and fall. During late fall, mature females produce at least two large egg sacs with several hundred eggs surrounded by a basket of curly yellow silk.

Karen Cochrane-Brown
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578