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Badge Huntsman Spiders, *Neosparassus* sp.

Badge Huntsman Spiders

Scientific name: *Neosparassus* sp.

Alternative name/s:
Shield Spiders

Author(s)
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A female Badge Huntsman Spider, *Neosparassus* sp. Image: Mike Gray



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Fast Facts



Classification

Species	sp.
Genus	<i>Neosparassus</i>
Family	Sparassidae
Order	Araneae
Phylum	Arthropoda



Number of Species

19



Size Range

Body Length: 20mm

Introduction

The common name 'Badge Huntsman' comes from the distinctive, often brightly coloured badge or shield on the underside of the abdomen.

Identification

Badge huntsman spiders are large, long-legged spiders. They are usually fawn or grey on top, with distinctive colour combinations of black, white, orange or yellow under the abdomen (the 'badge') and colour bands on the underside of the front legs. Most huntsman spiders have flattened bodies adapted for living in narrow spaces under loose bark or rock crevices. This is aided by their legs which, instead of bending vertically in relation to the body, have the joints twisted so that they spread out forwards and laterally in crab-like fashion ('giant crab spiders'). Badge Huntsman spiders (*Neosparassus*) have less flattened bodies.



A female Badge Huntsman Spider, *Neosparassus* sp Image: Heather McLennan

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Habitat

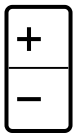
Badge Huntsman Spiders, like other huntsmans are found living under loose bark on trees, in crevices on rock walls and in logs, under rocks and slabs of bark on the ground, and on foliage. Some

Badge Huntsman Spiders in woodlands are burrow builders, with and without trapdoors.

Huntsman spiders of many species sometimes enter houses. They are also notorious for entering cars, and being found hiding behind sun visors or running across the dashboard.

Distribution

Badge Huntsman spiders in the genus *Neosparassus* are found all over Australia.



Feeding and diet

Food consists of insects and other invertebrates.

Breeding behaviours

Some species of *Neosparassus* build a silken retreat in foliage, often at ground level, by binding several leaves together with silk, while others construct shallow burrows or move into abandoned cicada burrows. The young of *Neosparassus* species are often green in colour changing to a brown colour after several moults.

Danger to humans

Badge Huntsman have been known to bite and general symptoms include local severe pain and swelling, sweating, nausea and vomiting. A cold pack may relieve local pain. Seek medical attention if symptoms persist.

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