

Opiliones (Harvestmen)

Opiliones are long-legged spiders. They differ from the arachnida order of spiders in several ways, but the most obvious is their bodies. Opiliones appear to be one unit whereas arachnids have 2 body sections. Opiliones also have 1 obvious pair of eyes, whereas arachnids have up to 8 eyes.

Contrary to the myth opiliones have no venom and are not poisonous. They do not have fangs or venom. They can emit a pungent fluid from their glands that would not taste good to predators. These spiders are sometimes confused with cellar spiders, but harvestmen also do not use silk.

According to entomologists at the University of California, Riverside, the term “daddy longlegs” is commonly used to distinguish these from cellar spiders. Cellar spiders have long legs but are in the *Pholcidae* family of the arachnida order.

Phalangidae

There are around 380 species in this family.

Leiobunum sp – Eastern Daddy long legs

Phalangium opilio – Brown Daddy long legs

These are non-native, widespread Harvestmen. Their native habitats are in Europe and Asia. Although non-native, these arachnids are beneficial as they prey on many soft-bodied insects and are commonly found in meadows, prairies, and ag fields. This species overwinters as eggs placed in the soil or in cracks of rocks.