

Medically Important



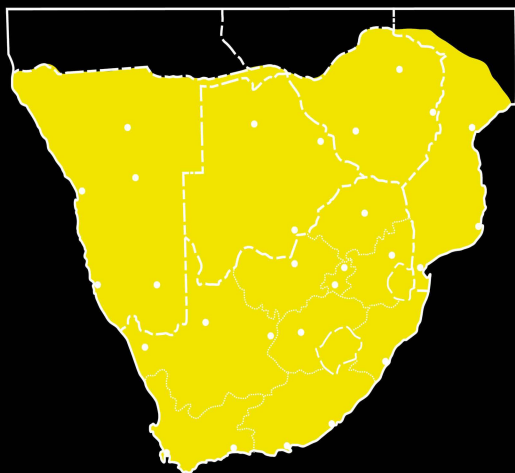
Sake Van Wyk

Brown Button Spider

(*Latrodectus sp.*)



Maximum size
30 - 40 mm



These common spiders are often found around human dwellings. They build a messy web and have large white, spiky egg sacs. They are usually a brown colour with darker bands on the joint of each leg. The abdomen is grey to white often with a series of dots. The characteristic hourglass shape under the abdomen is orange to red. They are inoffensive and when disturbed, drop to the floor in a tight ball. Bites are rare and usually occur when the spiders are squashed by accident. The venom is highly neurotoxic and causes pain, sweating, nausea and shortness of breath. A bite from a Brown Button Spider is unpleasant, but treatable and no deaths have been recorded.



Ashley Kemp