



Fort Leaton State Historic Site

# TEXAS BROWN TARANTULA

*Aphonopelma hentzi*



TEXAS  
PARKS &  
WILDLIFE

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## TEXAS BROWN TARANTULA

*Aphonopelma hentzi*

Tarantulas have fangs on the end of their chelicerae, or mouthparts, which inject poison when they bite their prey. This helps liquefy their food for eating. They mostly feed on other insects, such as crickets, beetles and grasshoppers.

When disturbed or alarmed, tarantulas face the threat, raise up on their hind legs and stretch out their front legs, hoping to look "scary." This might be the case for those afraid of spiders, but in general a tarantula bite is not harmful to humans. Another defense that Texas brown tarantulas have is to rapidly brush the tops of their abdomen with their hind legs in turn rubbing off hairs, which can get into and irritate the eyes or skin of a predator, such as a coyote.

Females lay from 100 to 1,000 eggs in a hammock-shaped nest. Baby tarantulas are called spiderlings.

Tarantulas use old rodent burrows, and natural cavities, and can even dig their own burrows.