

CHILEAN ROSE-HAIRED TARANTULA

updated March 2017



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| Range | Chile, Argentina |
| Habitat | Semi-tropical forests |
| Diet (wild) | Insects and other arthropods |
| Diet (captivity) | Crickets |
| Description | Leg span: 3–4 inches. A large, hairy, reddish-brown spider with highlights of pink and some metallic purple/rose hues on the cephalothorax. It has two body parts (cephalothorax and abdomen), eight legs, two pedipalps, and two chelicerae (fangs). There are eight closely grouped eyes—two large round eyes in the middle surrounded by three eyes on each side—located on the cephalothorax between the chelicerae. |
| Lifespan | 15 years for females; 3–4 years for males |
| Reproduction | The female cares for her egg sac, which contains 500–1,000 eggs and is made from her silk. From egg laying to emergence takes 45–65 days. She rolls it out of the entrance of the burrow to warm in the sun, and either sits over it like a hen on her eggs or keeps one or two feet on the cocoon so she can pull it back inside when something comes near. The maternal protective behavior is not absolute; if she's disturbed or the sac is not viable, the mother spider may extract the young and eat them. Safely hatched young stay in the birth burrow for several weeks. Baby tarantula mortality is high because the young may eat each other at that point, and their mother will eat them if they stay with her too long. Tarantulas do not grow quickly but grow steadily; females reach sexual maturity at 3–4 years; males are at least two-years-old before reaching sexual maturity. These tarantulas mate readily in captivity. |
| Behavior | Rose-haired tarantulas live in shallow burrows in the wild and are often found under discarded lumber and old signs as well as in more “natural” places. They kill their prey by biting and injecting it with venom. The venom contains strong enzymes that break down the prey's insides. The spider's mouth is a short straw-shaped opening that can only suck, meaning that anything taken into it must be in liquid form. As a means of defense, rose-haired tarantulas will use their hind legs to kick off guard hairs from their abdomens. These hairs cause an uncomfortable rash to those who are sensitive to them. The bite of a tarantula is no more harmful than a bee sting and feels like a pinprick with mild pain. |
| Our animals | 1 female. Born: 08/01/2004 |
| Cool stuff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rose-haired tarantulas are probably the most common species of tarantula available in American and European pet stores today. • Though all spiders are venomous and some bites cause serious discomfort that might persist for several days, there is no record of a tarantula bite causing a human fatality. • The spider originally bearing the name “tarantula” was a species of wolf spider native to Mediterranean Europe. The name derived from the southern Italian town of Taranto. The term “tarantula” was subsequently applied to almost any large, unfamiliar species of ground-dwelling spider. Compared to tarantulas, wolf spiders are not particularly large or hairy, so among English speakers the usage eventually shifted to describe members of the family Theraphosidae, even though they are barely related to the wolf spiders (family Lycosidae). |

Phylum
Arthropoda

Class
Arachnida

Order
Araneae

Family
Theraphosidae

Genus
Grammostola

species
G. rosea