



Dolomedes fimbriatus Raft Spider



Nationally Scarce

Scarce, local



♂ 9–16 mm ♀ 13–22 mm

Observation tips/habitat: Found on acid mires, usually in association with *Sphagnum* mosses. Occurs on wet, lowland heaths and in upland mires, often constructing its nurseries in Bog Myrtle or heather. Rather less closely associated with open water than *D. plantarius*, with juveniles often found in drier habitats, including in tree branches.

Description: **CARAPACE** Dark brown to black, with two yellow or white broad longitudinal stripes close to the margins.

ABDOMEN Dark brown to black (slightly more so than carapace) with two lateral, longitudinal yellow or white stripes appearing as continuations of the carapace stripes. The stripes are often slightly broader than in *D. plantarius*; occasionally the stripes are absent. A faint, lighter, cardiac mark is usually present. **LEGS** Uniform brown.

Similar species: *Dolomedes plantarius* (p. 240). Can be confused with some *Pirata* species, *Pisaura mirabilis* (see p. 240).

Distribution/Status: Widespread on wet heaths in southern England. Very scattered throughout the rest of Britain.



♂ *Dolomedes fimbriatus* × 2



OXYOPIDAE Lynx spiders

1 British genus

The Oxyopidae are eight-eyed hunting spiders which run around rapidly on low vegetation, such as heather, chasing and occasionally jumping on their prey. In common with the Salticidae and the Lycosidae, oxyopids have very well-developed eyesight and they are able to recognise prey from some centimetres away. They have long, slender legs enabling them to negotiate the undergrowth with ease. ♀s can sometimes be seen guarding their flattish, disc-like egg-sac in the upper levels of low vegetation. Both sexes have a similar appearance.

Oxyopes Lynx spiders

1 British species (illustrated)

Readily identifiable in the field by its **abdominal shape and general appearance**. However, some care is needed to avoid confusion with the running crab spider *Philodromus histrio*.

VU *Oxyopes heterophthalmus* Lynx Spider



♂ 5.5–6.5 mm ♂ 5–8 mm ♀

Observation tips/habitat: On established, dry heathland where it is usually found on south-facing slopes amongst heather.

Description: **CARAPACE** Dark brown ground colour with two white bands flanking a dark median band, tapering towards the posterior. Thinner, white bands extend round the front of the head area which also has a thin median line. ♂ palps each have a conspicuous, thin, chitinous protuberance which is directed inwards. **ABDOMEN** Distinctive cardiac mark (black in ♂, brown in ♀), edged in white. This edging continues through to the spinnerets as a thin line, all contained within a brown median band. Sides are darker and interspersed with white streaks. Tapering abdominal shape is noticeable in the field and differs from *P. histrio*. **LEGS** Pale brown with numerous long dark spines, which are conspicuous in the field (absent in *P. histrio*).

Similar species: *Philodromus histrio* (page 351).

Distribution/Status: Rare. Recorded only from a few heathland sites in Surrey in the last 100 years.

Nationally Rare

Rare, local



♀ *Oxyopes heterophthalmus* × 4



♀ *Oxyopes heterophthalmus*
showing conspicuous leg spines



3 British genera

All agelenids have eight eyes and conspicuously long posterior spinnerets, which provide a key pointer for field identification. In all genera the cephalothorax is rather long and narrowing at the front, and the abdomen has chevron-like markings. Their funnel webs are typically large, horizontal sheets of silk with a tubular retreat at one edge.

Agelena

 **1 British species (illustrated)**

The distinctive sheet web is a significant clue to the presence of the single species in this genus.

LC

Agelena labyrinthica Labyrinth Spider



♂ 8–9 mm ♀ 8–12 mm

Observation tips/habitat: Spins a large funnel web low down in vegetation – often brambles, heather and gorse. In late summer the female constructs a chamber, within the web, made up of a complex maze of dense silken tubes (hence the specific name *labyrinthica*). Within this structure she constructs her egg-sac and can often be found on guard at the entrance.

Description: **CARAPACE** Distinct banding, laterally pale, then dark brown on either side of a pale central section. This pattern runs the whole length of the carapace. **ABDOMEN** Dark grey with a paler longitudinal median band bisecting white chevron-like markings. **LEGS** Covered in long hairs. Pale brown with some darker markings.

Similar species: None.

Distribution/Status: Widespread in southern England and Wales with scattered records from farther north. Not recorded in Scotland.

Common, regional



♀ *Agelena labyrinthica* × 4

