

Antilles Pink-toe Tree Spider (*Avicularia versicolor*)

Habitat and Distribution: Found in the forests of the Guadeloupe and Martinique Islands in the Caribbean Sea.

Size: Up to 6 inches

Wild Diet: Insects and small lizards

Predators: Unknown

Life Span: Unknown

Reproduction: This spider lays eggs that hatch into spiderlings that are ½ to 1 inch in length.

Behavior: Arboreal (tree-dwelling) tarantulas. Build thick web tubes in the trees and bushes. When threatened, they will jump or run away as quickly as possible. If cornered, they can shoot excrement at their attacker. Adults can fire with good accuracy up to 3 feet. They also have barbed hairs on their body for protection. These hairs can embed themselves into a predator's skin, causing irritation. This tarantula cannot kick its hairs at an attacker the way some other terrestrial species can.

Conservation Connection: Status Unknown

Interesting Facts: The spiderlings are bright blue, but change color with each molt as they grow. The abdomen turns from blue to light pink and then to bright red. The carapace turns from blue to metallic green and lavender. Adults also have red hairs on their legs. The males are thinner, and have longer legs. The females are bulkier and less spindly.

