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## Checklist of the spiders (Araneae) of Canada and Alaska

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## Abstract

This checklist records the occurrence of 1413 species of spiders (Araneae) in 43 families in Canada and Alaska. Distributions of species are given by state, territory and province. Each species name is presented in its original combination, followed by primary synonyms, if any. The list is dominated by members of the family Linyphiidae (39.5% of total species). Highest numbers of species are recorded for Ontario (746), British Columbia (700) and Québec (677). We record 69 species that are thought to be introduced from elsewhere and 321 that are known in the Palaearctic.

**Key words:** Canada, Alaska, spiders, fauna, checklist

## Introduction

Canada and Alaska occupy more than half the land area of the North American continent (Fig. 1). Together they span vast regions of arctic tundra, boreal forest, prairie and deciduous forest. The Rocky Mountains and Appalachian Mountains form enormous heights and valleys in a north-south orientation (Danks 1979). Special habitats are found in areas thought to have remained ice-free during the Pleistocene, notably Beringia. Such landscape diversity has produced a comparable diversity of spider taxa.

Exploration of the Canadian and Alaskan spider fauna began with the collection and identification of specimens from a few scattered localities by European arachnologists such as Blackwall (1846a, 1871), Sutherland (1852), Thorell (1875d) and O. Pickard-Cambridge (1881b). New England workers followed with more systematic collecting: Marx (1892a, b), Emerton (1894, 1915b, 1917a, 1919a,b, 1920, 1923, 1925a, 1926); Banks (1906b), Chamberlin (1921c), Crosby & Zorsch (1935), Bishop (1949) and Levi & Levi (1955). A few Europeans continued the work: Jackson (1933), Holm (1960b), Koponen (1992a, 1994) and Saaristo and Koponen (1998). Canadians have contributed a few works: Kurata (1944) and Leech (1966). Since the year 2000, Québec workers have made remarkable progress in making known the spider fauna of that province: Paquin & LeSage (2001), Paquin & Dupérré (2003, 2006) and Paquin *et al.* (2001, 2008e, f). State, territorial or provincial lists are available for Alaska (Chamberlin & Ivie 1947b), Yukon Territory (Dondale *et al.* 1997), British Columbia (West *et al.* 1984, 1988; Bennett *et al.* 2006), Manitoba (Aitchison-Benell & Dondale 1992), Québec (Bélanger & Hutchinson 1992; Paquin & Dupérré 2003, 2006; Paquin *et al.* 2001, 2008c) and Newfoundland (Hackman 1954; Pickavance & Dondale 2005). The sole published list for Canada as a whole is the early one by Emerton (1920), who recorded 342 species. Sixty years later, Dondale (1979a) estimated a total of 1246 species. Bennett (1999) suggested a total of 1400 species. The present list contains 1413 species for Canada and Alaska (Table 1), a number that might represent 80% of the actual total.

## Organization of the list

The format used in this checklist follows that of Bousquet's (1991) *Checklist of Beetles of Canada and Alaska*.