

These male spiders catapult away to prevent being cannibalized after sex

An act of balancing keeps males of one orb-weaving spider types from ending up being their mates' post-sex treat.

After breeding, *Philoponella prominens* males catapult away from women at speeds up to almost 90 centimeters per second, scientists report April 25 in *Current Biology*. Other spiders dive to capture victim or prevent predators (*SN*: 3/16/19). But *P. prominens* is special amongst spiders in that males skyrocket through the air to prevent sexual cannibalism, the scientists state.

P. prominens is a social types that's native to nations such as Japan and Korea. Up to 300 private spiders can come together to weave an whole area of webs. While studying *P. prominens*' sexual habits, arachnologist Shichang Zhang and coworkers seen that sex appeared to constantly end with a catapulting male. But the motion was "so quick that typical videocameras might not record the information," states Zhang, of Hubei University in Wuhan, China.

High-resolution video of breeding partners clocked the male arachnids' speed from around 32 cm/s to 88 cm/s, the scientists report. That's equivalent to simply under 1 mile per hour to almost 2 miles per hour.

A male *Philoponella prominens* spider prevents being consumed by a woman after sex by leveraging hydraulic pressure to extend leg joints and fling himself away, seen here initially at about one-fiftieth real speed and then at typical speed.

The dive looks a little like the start of a backstroke swimming race, Zhang states. Males hold the ideas of their front legs versus a female's body. The spiders then usage hydraulic pressure to extend a joint in those legs, rapidly introducing a male off a woman prior to she can capture and consume him.

Of 155 effective breeding routines that the scientists observed, 152 males catapulted to survival. The staying 3 that didn't fell victim to their partner. Female spiders likewise consumed all 30 males that the group stopped from leaping to flexibility with a paintbrush.

The researchers state, "This behavior is a unique adaptation to prevent women's cannibalistic tendency."

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