

If you thought that scorpions were only found in Arizona, think again!

There are over 2,000 species of scorpions of which 3 (shown below) can be found in SW Florida. Interestingly, the Guiana Striped Scorpion is found only in Collier, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, including the Keys. Despite its name, the Florida Bark scorpion, is the only invasive scorpion in Florida. The Hentz is the most commonly found. These crab-like arachnids are brown, have a broad flattened body, and ten legs. The front pair of legs are claw-like pincers which are used to hold their prey. A scorpion's most noticeable feature is their curled fleshy tail. It is usually held over their body. The scorpion tail ends in an enlarged upturned tip that ends in a stinger. The sting is used for defense as well as for capturing prey.

Florida Bark Scorpion

Centruroides Gracilis



Hentz Striped Scorpion

Centruroides Hentzi



Guiana Striped Scorpion

Centruroides Guanensis



Fascinatingly, scorpions glow a bright blue-green when exposed to a black light, due to the presence of fluorescent chemicals in their outer shell, called the cuticle. They have a long-life cycle, lasting three to five years. Males and females go through a fascinating courtship ritual prior to mating. [Watch this video on Youtube.](#)

Scorpions do not lay eggs and the young are born alive. After birth, the young scorpions climb on the back of the mother and remain there until after their first molt, about 8 days. Scorpions will readily eat their own species and females will often eat their own young. Scorpions can be found living under rocks, leaf litter, loose bark of trees, dirt paths or in places where insects can be found to eat. Despite seeming so scary, they are quite beneficial. They feed on nuisance bugs like roaches, termites, and crickets and offer some apparent health benefits when ingested.

SW Florida scorpions are non-deadly but if you get stung, clean the site with soap and water and hold an ice pack against it to reduce swelling. Others say run as hot water as you can stand over it for 10 minutes. You could be allergic to the sting (like a bee sting only more intense). If you are allergic to insect stings, you might experience a wide variety of symptoms, including: an accelerated or irregular heartbeat, blurred vision, difficulty swallowing, drooling, increased blood pressure, muscle spasms or twitches, nausea and vomiting, numbness, seizures, strange movements of the head, neck and eye, sweating or trouble breathing. Don't take any chances when it comes to your health. If you notice any of these signs of an allergic

reaction, seek medical help at once. An antivenin is available for severe reactions to scorpion stings.

The oldest known fossil record of scorpions indicates that they evolved around 430 million years ago and may have had gills as they evolved out of the water and onto land. Scorpions have been used for over 2,000 years in China as a surprisingly effective treatment for tremors and seizure type symptoms. These include nervous system disorders, cerebrovascular disorders, malignant tumors, stubborn viruses, tetanus, strokes and more. If you happen to come across a scorpion or a few, you can try the following recipe found on the web, just don't invite me for dinner!

Scorpion Scallopini

8 scorpions, or similar species, thawed
1-pint low fat milk
1 cup white cornmeal
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

Using a sharp knife, remove and discard the stingers and venom glands from the tips of the scorpions' tails. Pour milk into a medium-sized bowl; add scorpions and set aside. In a 12-inch skillet, melt butter. Remove scorpions from the milk mixture, allowing the excess to drain off. Dredge scorpions in cornmeal, one at a time. Shake off excess. Place scorpions in hot butter and cook until golden brown (approximately two minutes), turn and cook a minute more, until done. Drain on paper towels. Once plated, sprinkle with lemon juice and salt.