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American Arachnological Society

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NEW SPECIES OF EYELESS SPIDERS DISCOVERED IN HISPANIOLA CAVE

DENVER—August 6, 2014— The American Arachnological Society, the premier society in North America for the study of spiders and their relatives, announces the discovery of two new species of eyeless spiders in caves on the Dominican Republic. This is the first documented instance of two different species of blind cave spiders found in a single cave and the first such species ever found in Hispaniola.

The new species are in the spider families Ctenidae and Barychelidae. The spiders feed on other cave adapted organisms and rely on vibrations and chemical cues to locate their prey. The barychelid spider (a relative of tarantulas) is over 15 cm (over six inches) in length. The first author of the paper describing these species, Trevor Bloom, was an undergraduate student at the time of the discovery working in the lab of arachnologist Dr. Greta Binford from Lewis & Clark College in Oregon. The spiders were discovered during an expedition to document spider diversity throughout the Caribbean led by Binford and arachnologist Dr. Ingi Agnarsson from the University of Vermont.

Fewer than 30 species of blind cave spiders have been discovered in the tropics. Finding two such species in one cave is very unusual.

The species, *Ciba siebo* (Ctenidae) and *Trichopelma maddenii* (Barychelidae) are described in an article just published in the [Journal of Arachnology](#).

About the American Arachnological Society

The American Arachnological Society was founded in 1975 to further the study of arachnids (spiders and their relatives), foster closer cooperation and understanding between amateur and professional arachnologists, and to publish the [Journal of Arachnology](#), one of the premier scientific journals presenting current research about arachnids. Connect with the AAS on its [website](#) or [Facebook](#).

NOTE: Photos available

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