



# Peacock Spider

*Maratus volans* is a species in the jumping spider family (*Salticidae*) belonging to the genus *Maratus*, also known as '**peacock spiders**' on account of their bright colors and mating displays. Both sexes are tiny, as they reach about **5 mm in body length**. Females and immature males are brown but have color patterns by which they can be easily told apart from related species. Mature males, by contrast, are red-, blue- and black colored and have **flap-like extensions** of the abdomen with white hairs that can be folded down. They are used, precisely, for **display** during the **mating season**: the male raises his abdomen, then expands and raises the flaps so that the abdomen forms a white-fringed, circular field of color. The third pair of legs is also raised for display, showing a brush of black hairs and white tips while clapping to further attract a female's attention. While approaching a female, the male vibrates his abdomen while waving raised legs and tail, and **dances** from side to side. If the male continues his dance when the female is not interested, she attempts to attack, kill, and feed on him; she may also do this after mating – a behavioral pattern she shares with the **black widow** (among other arachnids and insects) and which is known as **sexual cannibalism**. The male may try to escape by jumping or will fall prey to her deadly embrace...



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