

**WILD LIFE IN WOODS
AND FIELDS**

“EYES AND NO EYES” SERIES

by ARABELLA B. BUCKLEY

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and Fields
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“EYES AND NO EYES” SERIES Book I

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AND FIELDS**

BY

ARABELLA B. BUCKLEY



**YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA**

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
I. SPIDERS ON THE COMMON	2
II. THE WOODPECKER'S NEST	6
III. SPRING FLOWERS	10
IV. A FAMILY OF SQUIRRELS	13
V. THE SKYLARK AND HER ENEMY	17
VI. NUTS AND NUT-EATERS	21
VII. THE MOUSE AND THE SHREW	25
VIII. THE ANT-HILL	29
IX. THE HUMBLE BEE'S NEST	33
X. PETER'S CAT	37
XI. THE GREEDY STRANGER	42
XII. THE MOLE AND HIS HOME	46

INTRODUCTION

WE three friends, Peter, Peggy and Paul, walk to school together every day. We all love flowers and animals, and each day we try to find something new.

Peter is a little boy. He can only just read. But he has sharp eyes. He sees most things in the hedges. Peggy's father is a gamekeeper. She knows the birds and where to find their nests. Paul comes from the farm. He is a big boy and will soon be a teacher.

We meet at the big pond under the elm trees. Then we walk along a narrow lane, across the common, through the wood, and over three fields to the village school.

In the pond we find all kinds of creatures. In the lane are beetles and mice, flowers and berries, birds' nests and wasps' nests. On the common the spiders spin their webs on the yellow gorse. In the ploughed field the lark hides her nest. In the grass field there are buttercups and daisies. In the cornfield there are poppies and cornflowers.

Paul is going to write down for us all we see and put it in a book.

CHAPTER I

SPIDERS ON THE COMMON

WHEN we cross the common on a fine summer morning we see many spiders' webs sparkling in the sun. The webs on the gorse bushes are round. They are fastened to the gorse prickles by long silk threads, and each web has spokes like a wheel. These spokes are joined together with rings of silk. There are drops of gum all over the rings. It is these drops which sparkle like diamonds, and make the web so pretty.

The spider spins a little tent in the centre of the web. In this tent she hides, till some insect flies against the gummy threads. Then she feels the web shake, and darts out to catch the fly before it breaks the threads.

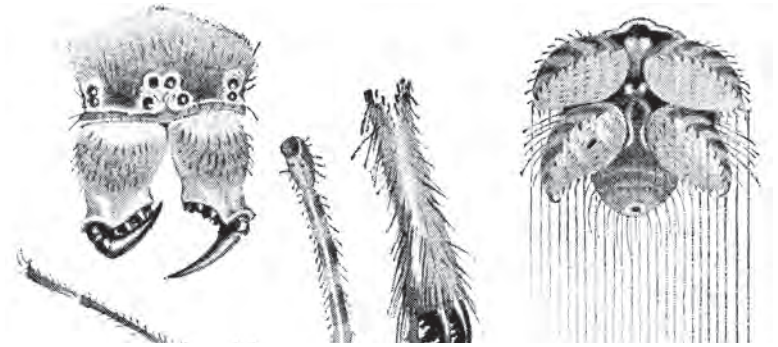
We saw a little bee to-day fly right against the web on the gorse bush. Out came the spider from her tent. She bit the bee with her sharp fangs, tore off its wings, and then sat and sucked the juice out of its body.

Paul caught her, while she was busy, and showed us the two fangs with sharp points, which hang down in front of her head. Above them are her eight eyes, four large ones and four small ones. She has eight legs with

SPIDERS ON THE COMMON

such strange claws! Each one is like a comb. What do you think they are for? She uses them to guide the silk threads as she makes her web.

We turned her on her back and saw, under her body, six little pockets, out of which she pulls the silk. It comes out through tiny holes. She draws it through the combs on her legs, and so makes her web as she runs along.



HEAD, LEG, CLAW AND SPINNERETS OF A SPIDER,
MUCH MAGNIFIED

Besides the webs on the gorse, there are webs all over the common close to the ground. These are not made with spokes like the round webs. The threads are mixed up like wool. For a long time we could not find the spider. At last one day Paul said, "Here is a hole right in the middle of the web. It goes down into the ground."



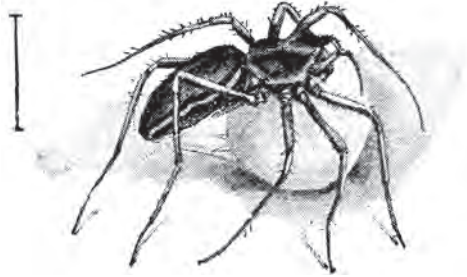
A GARDEN SPIDER AND BLACKBERRY BRANCH

SPIDERS ON THE COMMON

This hole was lined with silk threads. Just then a beetle crawled on the web, and shook it. At once the spider darted out from the tunnel in the ground and seized the beetle. She was so quick that she had carried him down into her hole before we could catch her.

There are many spiders on the common which do not spin webs, though they hang from a thread. They spring on the flies and beetles on the ground and are called "hunting-spiders."

The mother hunting-spiders carry their eggs about with them in a round bag. Peter caught one of these as she was running along with this white ball under her body. He took the ball away and put it on the ground. When he let her go, she ran up and seized it. He took



HUNTING SPIDER WITH
HER EGG-BAG

it away three times. Each time she caught it up again, and at last ran away before we could catch her.