Araneus nox

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Why in news?

A recent survey at the Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary has reports the first record of the spider species Araneus nox in India.

- **Araneus nox –** Also known as the ***Leathery Garden Orb-weaver***, is a species of orb-weaving spider.
- **Family –** Araneidae.
- **First documented –** In 1877 by French arachnologist Eugène Simon from Basilan in the Philippines.

> ***Arachnology*** *is the scientific study of arachnids, which are a diverse group of invertebrates that includes spiders, scorpions, mites, ticks, and harvestmen.*

- **Distribution –** Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and other parts of Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **1st time in India –** It was recently recorded in India for the first time during a 2025 survey in the Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala (1st time that both male and female specimens have been identified from India).
- It typically builds its webs at heights ranging from waist-level to about 7 feet.
- **Habitat –** Commonly found in gardens, forests, and backyards around the world.
- **Appearance –** A small to medium-sized orb-weaver with a distinctively textured, leathery abdomen.
- Its coloration can vary from light brown to jet black, sometimes featuring clusters of light brown bristles (setae) on the abdomen's sides.
- **Web –** This spider is known for spinning near-perfect, vertically oriented

circular web on vegetation and tree branches.

- **Behavior –** Like other species in the genus Araneus, the Araneus nox constructs an orb-shaped web to catch flying insects.
- **Risks –** The venom of Araneus species varies in toxicity, but bites from these spiders are not considered dangerous to humans.



References

1. The Hindu | 1st record of the spider species Araneus nox in India
2. Spider net | Araneus nox

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