

## Toolbox Talk - Environment

### Ecology – Noble False Widow Spider



Adults are 7 – 14mm in size and have shiny dark brown bodies with a distinctive creamy white half-moon at the front edge of the abdomen.



#### What?

- Noble False Widow *Steatoda nobilis*, one of three *Steatoda* species, found in southern England but recently started to spread northwards;
- Males live for one year, females for up to three years and numbers generally peak between July and November;
- Usually found in dark corners around buildings and in gardens or open spaces, they are shy and rather sluggish;
- Builds a messy, often large, tangled web of non-sticky (but very strong) silk, usually built in a corner or partly hidden in a deep crack or hole.

#### Why?

- The Noble False Widow Spider bite has been compared to a wasp sting but it poses a limited threat to humans or domestic animals;
- Though bite is more toxic than any native British species, there are few confirmed cases of human injury and no records of a serious wound;
- The only risk of being bitten comes from putting your hand into a web, handling a spider roughly or sitting or lying on one by mistake.

#### DO

- ✓ In the unlikely event of being bitten by this spider, call NHS111 or seek medical advice if you have a serious allergic reaction, swelling or ulceration of the bite
- ✓ Monitor for infection or ulceration

#### DON'T

- ✗ Be overly concerned – the chances of being bitten are extremely small
- ✗ Don't handle these spiders or put your hand into their webs
- ✗ Don't scratch any wound

