



# Spider Boy

*By Ralph Fletcher*

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Humorous story about a boy's adjustment to new surroundings and kids in a new school. Packed with fascinating facts about spiders, the story is told through journal entries and scenes of events. Contains a spider bibliography.

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## Spider Boy By Ralph Fletcher Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-7. Bobby loves spiders and keeps a journal in which he records interesting facts about them, as well as some personal reflections. He is worried about his pet tarantula because she hasn't eaten since the family moved from Illinois to New Paltz, NY. The boy doesn't have much of an appetite himself. He doesn't fit in with the rest of the seventh graders at his new school. A group of his classmates call him "Spider Boy" and make his life difficult. The use of spiders in Bobby's journal and in the plot is a unique unifying theme of this novel. However, the character development is less successful. It takes awhile for readers to care about Bobby. The supporting characters are stereotypes (bully, understanding teacher, confident older sister). The story moves slowly and is limited in intensity until a final crisis. The resolution is predictable but upbeat. Bobby finds a niche for his unique interests, new friends with whom to play football, and even a little romance. Adele Greenlee, Bethel College, St. Paul, MN  
Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-8. Bobby Ballenger, a walking encyclopedia on spider lore, is quickly dubbed the "Spider Boy from Illinois" by his new seventh-grade classmates. With his watch and his heart still set on Midwest time, Bobby struggles with homesickness and finding his place in New Paltz, New York. Fletcher portrays the new-kid-on-the-block syndrome honestly by making Bobby a sympathetic but not perfect character who starts out spinning spider tales and ends up accepting his new life. Along the way, Bobby believably faces down the taunts, cheating, and cruelty of the class bully and finds his own sense of worth. Packed with juicy tidbits guaranteed to make arachnophobics squirm, this appealing story will be an easy sell to middle-school readers. *Candace Smith*

From Kirkus Reviews

In a story every bit as engaging as Fletcher's *Fig Pudding* (1995), and less of an emotional rollercoaster to boot, a seventh-grade arachnophile and his beloved tarantula take some time adjusting to a family move. Between missing his old home and worrying about Thelma (the spider), who has stopped eating, Bobby feels suspended, unable to accept the change in his life long enough to unpack. His parents give him plenty of room and support, plus a huge, ferocious king baboon spider he dubs "Monk" as an early birthday present. Not until two new friends take him firmly in hand, and a bully's harassment escalates into spidercide, does Bobby snap out of it. So does Thelma, who molts and once again takes to pouncing on hapless crickets. Capable of telling wild but utterly convincing tall tales about his family at school, courageous enough to make handsome apologies later (and to face his nemesis without fear), Bobby is a beguiling character who fills his notebook with fascinating spider facts (a bibliography is appended) and trenchant observations: "The female [black widow] allows the male to mate with her. And to show her appreciation she kills him. Eats him. . . . It's lucky human girls aren't this dangerous. Or who knows--maybe they are." Creating and guiding a winning cast with a light, sure hand, Fletcher puts a fine, fresh spin on a familiar premise. (Fiction. 10-13) -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

### Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Cindy Gross:**

The book Spider Boy make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can utilize to make your capable much more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem using your subject. If you can make reading through a book Spider Boy for being your habit, you can get much more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about several or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like start and read a guide Spider Boy. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this publication?

**Julia Gilmore:**

People live in this new morning of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the time or they will get wide range of stress from both lifestyle and work. So , if we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not only a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer can unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading books. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, often the book you have read is actually Spider Boy.

**James Jernigan:**

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**Francis King:**

In this era globalization it is important to someone to obtain information. The information will make anyone to understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You will observe that now, a lot of publisher which print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended to your account is Spider Boy this book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The vocabulary styles that writer value to explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some research when he makes this book. This is why this book acceptable all of you.

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