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# THE MONROE NEWS

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## Arachnids abound

### Hordes of tarantulas across U.S. emerging for mating season

Elizabeth Weise USA TODAY

If you're hiking or camping in the arid Southwest and West in the next couple of months, get ready for what could be the experience – or fright – of a lifetime.

Across the United States, in California, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and Texas, tens of thousands of tarantulas will be crawling out of their burrows in search of females – making for a fascinating, if a little creepy, display of the wonders of nature.

It's tarantula mating season.

"If you're lucky enough, you can sometimes see them in hordes crossing the roads at certain times of the year," said Dan McCamish, a senior environmental scientist with California State Parks.

While the idea of thousands of hairy, baseball-sized spiders picking their way through parks and campgrounds might give people the heebie-jeebies, in general these misunderstood, wandering arachnids are simply young males in search of love. And if they wander into your tent, they didn't mean to.

"In truth they're gentle, ecologically valuable animals," McCamish said. "Mostly they're interested in escaping from confrontations – especially with something they know could squish them."

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Contrary to common fears, tarantulas don't want to interact with humans any more than most humans want to interact with them. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

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## EGLE grant helps Port of Monroe move toward international goal

Connor Veenstra  
The Monroe News  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy recently awarded a \$1 million Brownfield Redevelopment Grant to the Port of Monroe.

The grant will help the port redevelop its infrastructure with a second wharf and improvements to the turning basin, a large area where freighters can turn around and where the port receives liquid asphalt.

This is only one part of a \$16 million improvement plan that will rehabilitate the port's infrastructure. In the next 24 months, the port will utilize more grant funds from the federal, state, and local level to create Michigan's Maritime Gateway, the first cargo inspection facility in Michigan capable of screening international 40-foot ISO containers.

"Ultimately, we are starting the next chapter in the port's history with a great opportunity to develop regional cargo, but most importantly to fortify infrastructure that will stand the test

of time that will serve as a front door for freight in and out of our community," said Paul LaMarre, director of the Port of Monroe.

Even though maritime shipping is a big part of the Michigan economy, international containers haven't been moved in and out of the state of Michigan by water. Instead, they've been moved by land from major ports on the East and West coasts.

"The Port of Monroe is going to change that and will be the first

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## Man sentenced for firearm and drug charges

Connor Veenstra  
The Monroe News  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A man arrested in a drug investigation in February was sentenced in Monroe County District Court on Thursday, Aug. 21.

Earnest Deangelo Hunter pled guilty to one count of delivery/manufacture of controlled substances, and six counts of illegally possessing a firearm. Charges of maintaining a drug house and delivery/manufacture of methamphetamine were dropped. He was sentenced to 57-480 months in prison on drug charges, plus a consecutive 24 months on the firearm charges.

In early February 2025, multiple search warrants were executed simultaneously throughout Monroe County. The warrants were the culmination of a nearly year-long investigation conducted by the Monroe Area Narcotics Team and Investigative Services.

With the assistance of over 120 law enforcement partners, search warrants were executed simultaneously at six separate residences in Monroe County.

Close to a kilogram of cocaine was seized along with heroin, ecstasy, and analogues. Handguns and an AR-style pistol without serial numbers were also seized, along with body armor.

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