


Ireland's most venomous spider

- 1 In what is sure to be good news for absolutely no-one, the Noble False Widow spider, already considered the most venomous in Ireland, may be even more toxic than previously believed, according to new research.
- 2 Scientists investigating the venom of the Noble False Widow found that it can potentially deliver an even more toxic bite than was previously believed. They found that of 140 toxins found in its venom, 111 of those were also present in their more famous cousin, the true Black Widow. 
- 3 Originating from the Canary Islands and Madeira, the Noble False Widow spider has since spread throughout Europe, North Africa, West Asia and parts of North and South America. It has become one of the most common species of spiders in parts of Ireland and the UK, favouring urban areas.
- 4 Venomous bites from them are also on the rise, victims of which can expect intense pain and swelling for a few days. In some cases, victims have developed small wounds at the bite site, malaise and persistent stiffness in limbs.
- 5 John Dunbar, doctoral student and lead author of this new study, said that though their work shows the venom of the False Widow spider may be more potent than previously thought, that doesn't mean 6. "In many parts of the world even 'true' black widow bites rarely require medical attention. However, this new discovery will ultimately help medical professionals to diagnose and treat severe False Widow bites."

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