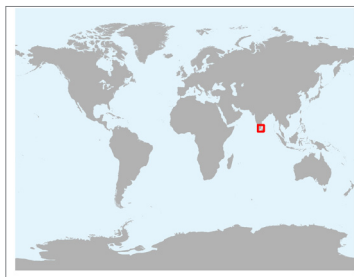




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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Rameshwaram Ornamental Spider

The **Rameshwaram Ornamental Spider**, *Poecilotheria hanumavilasumica*, is listed at 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This tree-dwelling tarantula is named after the Indian island where it was discovered in 2004, just off the coast of Tamil Nadu, India, and has also been reported from an adjacent area of the mainland.

The Rameshwaram Ornamental Spider is found in tamarind, palm and casuarina plantations. The major threat to this species is the destruction of its natural habitat for developments such as housing, recreational areas and tourism. In a single year (2006) two plantations were razed of which one was observed to have at least 70 individuals; all the spiders were killed by the loggers while razing the plantation.

The Rameshwaram Ornamental Spider occurs in private plantations and it currently has no protection laws in place. Controlled tourism activities, regulated development and protection of the spider's existing habitats are needed to secure the future survival of this highly threatened species.

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