Reel History: My Green Earth and Spiders

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Al Asuncion/KMXT

Hello, I'm Al Asuncion, an intern here at KMXT are part of the station's summer archiving project. This week, I listened to "My Green Earth” hosted by Stacy Studebaker, also known as Leila Liverwort.

"Hi there, Nature fans! Welcome to My Green Earth, a weekly radio show about our environment for kids and their parents. I'm your host, Leila Liverwort; and today's creature feature is about a relative of the insect that can be found nearly everywhere from deserts to bathtubs. Instead of having six legs like insects, these creatures have eight legs. You've guessed it! Spiders!"

This episode titled "Spiders" aired on KMXT in December of 1994. Leila illustrates the body structure of a spider in this show.

"The body of a spider has two main parts, the cephalothorax and the abdomen. The cephalothorax is a combination of the head and midsection, and it is covered with a hardened shield called the carapace. At the front end is the mouth, which is flanked by a pair of fang. These are used in feeding, defense and sometimes for digging. A poison gland opens into the tips of each fang is used to immobilize the spider’s prey. This like many other behaviors of tiny animals like insects and spiders are things that the creatures are born knowing without having to go to school or watch their parents, it is called instinct.”

Leila also describes silk and how spiders produce them.

“Silk is very important in the lives of all spiders, even though species that don’t spin web. Silk is a kind of protein. Spiders make it in glands, near the tip of the abdomen. They use their legs to draw out the silk from the spinneret, with their hollow finger-like projections of the tip of the abdomen. The liquid silk hardens as it is drawn out. The threads are stronger than steel threads of the same diameter and can be stretched for up to one-third of their length without breaking."

To conclude, here’s a clip of the song that I found entertaining on this show titled, “Spunky Spider&rdquo by Jane Murphy.

Thank you for joining me this week as I recap some remarkable real-to-reel audio.