

the centre of the umbel, it is quite invisible unless specially looked for. Thus concealed, it waits until some insect—frequently a small bee, or a butterfly of the genus *Pamphila*, settles on the flower—but no sooner is the insect intent upon the nectar of the blossom, than the cunning *Thomisid* has it in its grasp, and is sucking its life-juices away. On one occasion, also, I found a white *Thomisid* spider seated on a white umbel, and equally concealed here by its whiteness, it had secured and was feasting on a bee. So far good. It may be argued that spiders of this family have been accustomed to sit on flowers, and being variable in colour (as in fact they are) natural selection has so arranged matters that yellow spiders preside over yellow flowers, white over white, and so on. But perhaps, also, the spider has “an eye for colour,” since he (the yellow one) occasionally sits on a small species of sunflowers which has yellow rays and a dark brown disc—and here, although the spider always sits in the *middle* of a yellow umbel, he sits on the *rays* of this sunflower, knowing altogether better than to expose himself to observation on the brown disc. But, to come to the point to be discussed, there is a species of geranium found here (*Geranium fremontii* Torrey,) having *pink* flowers—yet the *yellow* spider sits on these, apparently unconcerned at the difference of colour. Now, it is a curious thing, that throughout living organisms, whether birds (*e. g.* *Fringillidæ*), mollusca (*e. g.* *Tellinidæ*, *Helicidæ*), insects (*e. g.* *Zygænidæ*, *Sesiidæ*, *Cheloniidæ*, *Ichneumonidæ*), or plants, that the red and yellow pigments seem to stand in this relation to one another, that the red is a more complex form of the yellow, and hence occasionally reverts to it, yellow being in all cases the primitive color. In *Geranium*, it is true, there are not (to my knowledge) yellow-flowered varieties, but then, there are both pink and yellow-flowered species of *Oxalis*, in the same natural order. Therefore, it is conceivable that the yellow *Thomisid* first came to sit on geranium flowers at the time when these were yellow, and has continued the habit—but still, since it appears to understand the difference between brown and yellow on the sunflower, why cannot it tell that pink and yellow are not the same? Does it not look as if, to this spider, these colours were indistinguishable?

Also, the geranium-frequenting spiders do not starve, although to human eye they are very easy to be seen—does not this, again, look as if the insects frequenting those flowers could not distinguish between pink and yellow, and so, not seeing the spider, fell unwittingly into its grasp?