

# PHILIP TAAFFE

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I was much interested one day by watching a deadly contest between a Pepsis wasp and a large spider of the genus *Lycosa* [the wolf spiders]. The wasp made a sudden dash at its prey, and then flew away: the spider was evidently wounded, for, trying to escape, it rolled down a little slope, but had still strength sufficient to crawl into a thick tuft of grass. The wasp soon returned, and seemed surprised at not immediately finding its victim. It then commenced as regular a hunt as ever hound did after fox; making short semicircular casts, and all the time, rapidly vibrating its wings and antennae. The spider, though well concealed, was soon discovered; and the wasp, evidently still afraid of its adversary's jaws, after much maneuvering, inflicted two stings on the under side of its thorax. At last, carefully examining with its antennae the now motionless spider, it proceeded to drag away the body.

- Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle*, 1831 – 1836

