



The Brood X Cicadas Are Emerging Now

<https://earthsky.org/earth/17-year-cicadas-broodx-2021/>

Citizen scientists are reporting the emergence of the Brood X cicadas happening in Tennessee; and Cincinnati, Ohio. Even places as far north and west as Detroit, Chicago and St. Louis have had sightings. If you live within these areas and haven't seen or heard them yet, just wait.

Twitter is also buzzing with cicada sightings, with posts ranging from people announcing their cicada encounters to odder posts urging

those with shellfish allergies not to eat them. If you want to help track the emergence of the Brood X cicadas, download the free Cicada Safari app for iOS or Android, and then, when you see a cicada, snap a photo and submit it to have your cicada added to a live map.

Over the next month or so, billions of cicadas will emerge in a dozen U.S. states, from New York west to Illinois and south into northern Georgia, including hot spots in Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This group of cicadas, known as Brood X (as in the Roman numeral 10) is among the geographically largest of all 17-year periodical cicadas.

Periodical cicadas usually start to emerge in early- to mid-May when the soil temperature reaches 64 degrees Fahrenheit (18 degrees Celsius). In 2017, a few cicadas emerged as early as April 26, but large appearances began on May 16. The timing of their appearance varies by location, said West Virginia University biologist Matt Kasson. He told the New York Times earlier this month: Mid-Atlantic region, that usually comes by about the third week of May, but it could be sooner. Usually, you have stragglers on either side.

Often, the cicadas will emerge after a soaking rain. If you want to monitor soil temperatures where you live to determine when the cicada emergence will begin, here's a step-by-step guide on just how to do it. For about four to six weeks after the cicadas emerge, woods and neighborhoods will ring with their buzzing mating calls. After the cicadas mate, each female will lay hundreds of eggs in thin tree branches. Then the adult cicadas will die. When the eggs hatch, new cicada nymphs (cicadas before they're fully grown) will fall from the trees and burrow back underground, starting the 17-year cycle again.

The cicadas won't hurt you. They don't sting and they're not venomous. Cicadas get a bad rap because they remind people of

the biblical plagues of locusts (a different insect) that would eat entire crop fields. But the cicadas set to emerge this spring in the United States are harmless to humans and won't wipe out fields or gardens.

There are perhaps 3,000 to 4,000 species of cicadas around the world, but the 13- and 17-year periodical cicadas are unique to eastern North America.

After 17 years underground, sucking sap from tree roots, the cicadas will surface en masse. Dime-sized holes (about 2 cm) will litter the ground where the emerging nymphs crawl up toward daylight. The cicadas' only defense against predators is to arise together in an enormous swarm, overwhelming the predators' ability to eat them all. This technique is called predator satiation. As many as 1.5 million cicadas per acre (4,000 square meters) can cover some areas of the eastern United States.

Once above ground, the cicadas announce their arrival. The main aggravation cicadas inflict on the rest of us is their loud, buzzing mating call. The males head toward the tops of trees and let out a loud whirring noise that can fill the air at up to 80 to 100 decibels, equal to the intensity of a lawn mower or motorcycle. During the last emergence of the Brood X cicadas in 2004, the PGA's Memorial Tournament in Dublin, Ohio, was awash in the nonstop buzz of cicadas, providing a noisy backdrop to television coverage as the golfers played 72 holes over the course of four days.

The main damage that cicadas inflict on the landscape comes when female cicadas drill holes into slender tree branches, where they then lay their eggs. To protect younger or vulnerable trees, cover them with netting to keep the cicadas away.

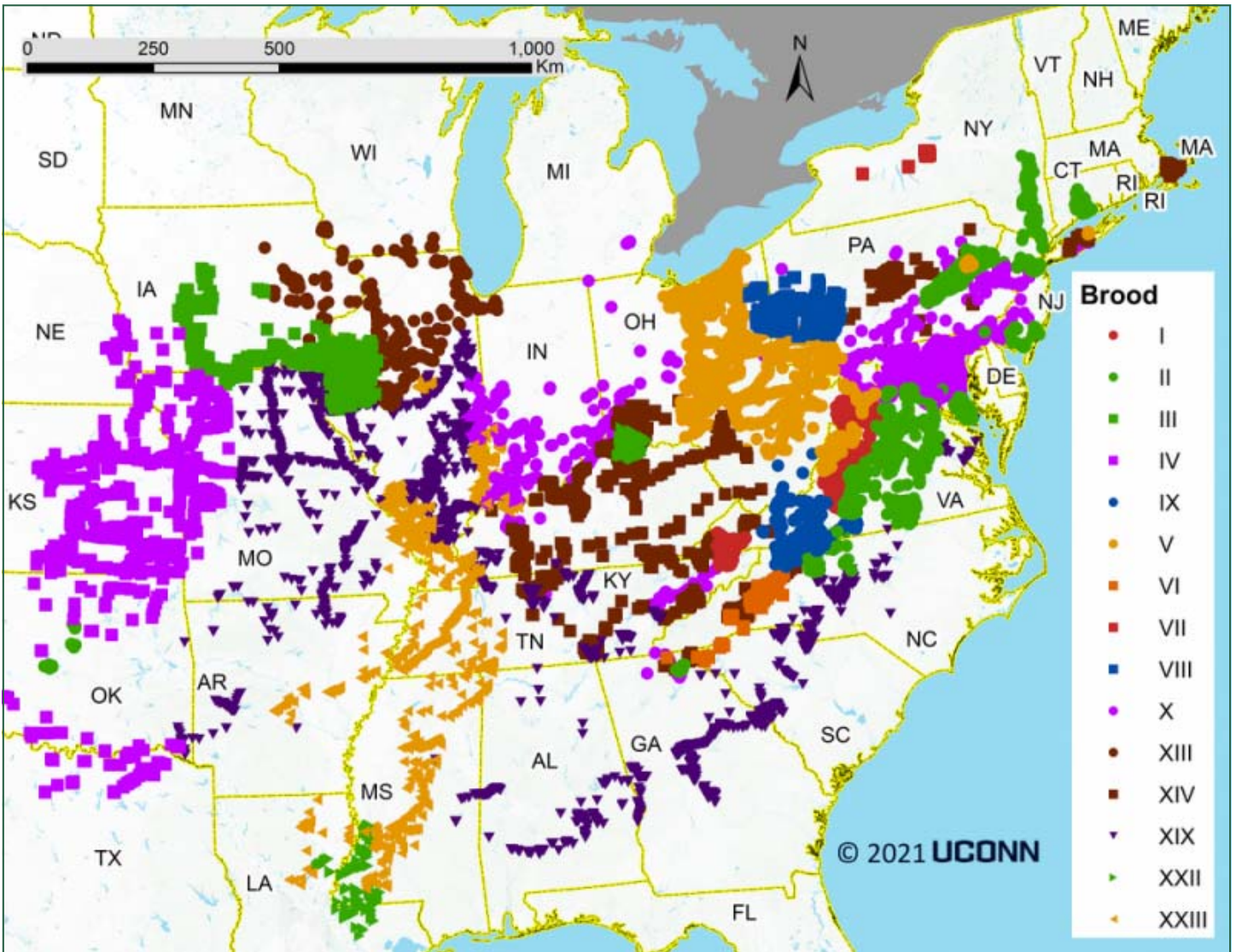
The eggs deposited by the females will eventually hatch, producing nymphs the size of a grain of rice. Those nymphs fall off the trees and burrow underground, beginning their 17 years



of subterranean life, while above ground, their parents end their life stage, the carcasses piling up under trees and on the grass, returning nutrients to the soil that will feed the trees and eventually their children, who dine off the sap of the tree roots.

The whole cycle of emergence, predation, mating, birth and death will take place over the course of about six weeks before the landscape again returns to its former state to await the next emergence in 2038.

Bottom line: Reports are beginning to come in from D.C., Tennessee, Ohio and more as the 17-year periodical Brood X cicadas emerge from their subterranean dwellings.



Broods of periodical cicadas, identified by Roman numerals, emerge on 13- or 17-year cycles across the eastern and midwestern U.S.

Image via University of Connecticut. <https://cicadas.uconn.edu/broods/#>

13 Home Remedies for Mosquito Bites

<https://www.healthline.com/health/outdoor-health/home-remedies-for-mosquito-bites>

Mosquito bites are the hallmark of warmer weather. Most mosquito bites are harmless, but some can cause complications. Mosquitoes bite because they are attracted to human blood. The bite, which might not appear until hours later, creates a bump that is typically swollen, sore, or itchy.

Mosquitoes can carry diseases, although the likelihood of being infected by a mosquito depends largely on where you live. Another rare problem caused by a mosquito bite is a negative reaction to the bite itself.

If you have a mosquito bite and develop hives, difficulty breathing, or a swollen throat, contact a doctor immediately.

You may not notice when a mosquito bites you, but the bump the bite leaves behind comes with a persistent itch that can linger for days after the bite. Creams and ointments can help, but you can also beat the itch with things that are probably already lying around your house.

1.Oatmeal One remedy for an uncomfortable mosquito bite may also be one of your favorite breakfasts. Oatmeal can relieve itching and swelling because it contains special compounds that have anti-irritant qualities.

Make an oatmeal paste by mixing equal amounts of oatmeal and water in a bowl until you have a spackle-like substance. Spoon some paste onto a washcloth and hold it, paste-side down, on the irritated skin for about 10 minutes. Then wipe the area clean.

If you have many bites, try an oatmeal bath instead. Sprinkle 1 cup of oatmeal or ground oats into a bathtub full of warm water. Soak in the oatmeal bath for 20 minutes, occasionally rubbing some of the clumped oatmeal onto irritated areas of your skin.

2.Crushed Ice Cold temperatures and ice can reduce inflammation. The cold also numbs the skin, which can give you immediate but short-term relief.

Don't leave the ice directly on your bite for more than five minutes as it can damage the skin. You can also put a barrier, such as a washcloth, between your skin and the ice so you can leave the ice on the bite longer.

3.Honey This sugary sweet substance is a common pick among home-remedy enthusiasts because it has many antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. It has been used for hundreds of years as a treatment for ailments like sore throats to bumps and bruises.

A small drop on an itchy bite can reduce the inflammation. It should reduce your temptation to itch, as itching skin covered in honey can create a sticky mess.

4.Aloe Vera A common household plant, aloe vera has many uses beyond shelf decoration. The gel has been shown to have anti-inflammatory properties and can help to heal minor wounds or calm infections. That's why it may be a good bet for healing a bug bite, too.

To try this, cut open a small section of the plant. Apply the plant's gel to the area that's irritated. Let it dry, and apply again as needed.

5.Baking Soda Found in virtually every kitchen, baking soda has a multitude of uses — from baking bread to clearing drains. Otherwise known as sodium bicarbonate, baking soda may also provide relief from a mosquito bite.

It's easy to make a baking soda paste, and you can use it in a similar manner to oatmeal paste. Mix 1 tablespoon of baking soda with just enough water to create a paste. Apply it to the bug bite, and let it sit for 10 minutes before washing it away.

If skin irritation occurs, stop this treatment.

6.Basil The fragrant basil plant is a key ingredient of many of your favorite Italian recipes, but it does double duty as a mosquito-bite remedy. Studies suggest that a chemical compound called eugenol, which is found in basil, could relieve itchy skin.

To make a basil rub, boil 2 cups of water and add half an ounce of dried basil leaves. Leave the mixture to steep until it's cool. Then dip a washcloth into the liquid, and rub it gently on your mosquito bites.

Alternately, you can chop some fresh basil leaves up until very fine, and rub them on to your skin.

7.Vinegar For centuries, apple cider vinegar has been used as a natural remedy to treat many medical conditions, from infections to blood glucose problems.

If you have an itchy bite, dab a drop of vinegar on it. The vinegar can help reduce stinging and burning sensations. It can also act as a natural disinfectant if you've been scratching too much.

If you need more relief, try soaking a washcloth in cold water and vinegar, and then applying it to the bite. If you have many bites, dilute 2 cups of vinegar in a tepid bath and soak for 20 minutes. Beware, a hot bath may make itching worse.

If skin irritation occurs, stop this treatment.

8.Onion Not only can onions bring tears to your eyes, they can bring relief to your mosquito bites. The onion's juices, which leak out from the freshly cut bulb, can reduce the bite's sting and irritation. Onions also have a natural antifungal property that can reduce your risk for an infection.

Cut a slice from an onion — the type doesn't matter — and apply it directly to the bite for several minutes. Rinse and wash the area well after you remove the onion.

9.Thyme The petite leaves of the thyme plant are delicious on potatoes, fish, and more. They may also help ease the itching of a mosquito bite. Thyme has antibacterial and antifungal properties, so it can help reduce your risk of irritating and infecting the skin around a mosquito bite.

To get the most benefit from thyme, finely mince the leaves. You can apply the leaves directly to your bite, and let them sit for 10 minutes.

You can also make a concentrated liquid by bringing water to boil, and adding several sprigs of thyme. Let the sprigs steep until the water is cooled. Then dip a washcloth into the thyme-infused water, and apply to the bites. Leave the washcloth in place for a few minutes.

For extra relief, wrap a thyme-soaked washcloth around an ice cube for a natural cooling effect.

10.Lemon Balm is a leafy plant that's closely related to mint. The herb has been used for centuries as a soothing all-natural treatment for everything from anxiety to upset stomach.

For mosquito bites, you can apply finely chopped leaves directly to the bite, or you can buy a lemon balm essential oil.

Lemon balm contains tannin, a natural astringent. In addition, lemon balm contains polyphenols. Together, these natural compounds ease inflammation, speed up healing, and reduce the risk of an infection.

11.Witch Hazel is a natural astringent you can buy over the counter in pharmacies and grocery stores. Like lemon balm, witch hazel contains tannins, which act as astringents when applied to the skin.

Used alone, witch hazel is beneficial for any number of skin irritations, from minor cuts and scrapes to hemorrhoids. Applying witch hazel to the skin reduces inflammation, soothes the burning and irritation the bite causes, and can speed up healing.

Apply a small amount of witch hazel to a cotton ball. Gently dab or swipe it over the bite. Allow it to dry. Repeat this as needed.

12.Chamomile Tea Chamomile, which is a member of the daisy family, is a common natural remedy for many ailments. When applied to skin, the tea can reduce inflammation, ease skin irritation, and speed up healing.

Steep a tea bag filled with the dried, crushed flowers in water in a refrigerator for 30 minutes. Then squeeze any excess water from the tea bag, and apply it directly to your bite. Let it sit for 10 minutes. Wipe the area clean with a wet rag. You can chill the tea bag in the fridge for additional applications later.

13.Garlic is a well-known natural remedy for conditions from heart disease to high blood pressure. While more conventional treatments may be preferred for those serious conditions, a bit of garlic applied to an irritating bug bite is an easy home remedy for a mosquito bite.

But before you slice into a bulb and apply it to your bite, know that applying cut garlic straight to a skin wound or bite may cause burning and stinging.

Instead of that, finely mince up fresh garlic and stir it in with an unscented lotion or room temperature coconut oil. These ointments and creams will help reduce the garlic's potency but still allow you to get relief from the garlic's natural anti-inflammatory and antibacterial effects.

Let the mixture sit for 10 minutes, then wipe it off your skin. Wipe the area down with a cool washcloth. Apply more later if the itching persists.

Of course, the best way to get rid of mosquito bite irritation is to avoid a bite altogether. Keep in mind that these insects are more active in the evening and at night. If you want to enjoy a summer evening outdoors but fear the petite blood-sucking bugs, cover your skin and stay away from standing water to reduce your exposure. If you are bit, quickly stop the swelling and itching with a safe, cost-efficient homemade remedy.



THREE BEAN SALAD

PREP TIME 10 mins

TOTAL TIME 10 mins

SERVINGS 4 to 8 servings

Prep the onion first. Soak the chopped onion in a small bowl of water to take the edge off the onion while you prep the other ingredients.

Chill & Serve: Transfer the salad to the refrigerator for several hours, to allow the beans to soak up the flavor of the dressing.

For the salad:

- 1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 red onion, finely chopped (about 3/4 cup), soaked in water to take the edge off the onion
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 cup loosely packed, fresh, finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon fresh finely chopped rosemary

For the dressing:

- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar (more or less to taste)
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper