

Cicada Summer

In the year 2033, the [17 year Cicadas](#) will emerge from the soil. This cycle is a long and dangerous one for the cicada who lives above ground only a few short weeks.



Brood V cicada

I would be remiss not to mention that this year, 2016; Ohio is experiencing an emergence of these cyclic insects. Not everyone experiences them with the same intensity. Some yards are full to overflowing to the point where garden rakes and shovels are required to remove their dead bodies and discarded exoskeletons. Other yards only bare a few in the tops of the trees and have scattered remnants of outgrown shells.



Cicada ravaged tree

They don't appear to cause much damage to vegetation, other than the new growth on tree branches where the female has pierced the tender growth and laid her eggs with her sharp ovipositor. As you drive down the road, you can see the damage to the trees. Dead branches fringe the trees and there is a blanket of broken, leaf filled twigs haloing the tree trunks.

Cicadas make a peculiar sound. It is not an easy one to write in the English language; however, if I were to try to subscribe letters to this sound, it would be something like: Hee-Uoo t-t-t-t-t-t-t, Hee-Uoo t-t-t-t-t-t-t. Singularly, a lone cicada isn't too loud, but put hundreds and thousands of them together and the chorus sounds like the hum of a C-130 airplane three miles away, warming up for takeoff. Someone described it as White Noise. As you drive down the road, going past pockets of cicada swarms, the sound is loud enough to permeate your closed car windows. Cicadas bounce off the windshield as they clumsily fly in apparent confusion. Why and where are they going? They are following the laws of nature to find a mate and perpetuate this mysterious 17 year cycle, of course!

The birds and wildlife are eating well this summer. ©Karen Glenn Farr 2016



Cicada exoskeleton