

Garden Talk

Cicadas

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What's That Noise?

Cicadas

These 1-2 inch long aphid relatives have a black or mottled body, prominent reddish eyes, short antennae and transparent wings. Periodical cicadas appear in late spring to early summer. In Arizona the less harmful dog day cicadas show up in mid to late summer. Male insects attract females by producing a loud, buzzing "song" by vibrating membranes on the underside of the abdomen.

Life Cycle

These pest spend most their lives below ground as nymphs, feeding on tree and lawn roots. Each brood of dog day cicadas spends 2 to 4 years developing underground. Periodical cicadas spend 13 years below ground in the South and 17 years in the North. Once the nymphs



dig their way out they climb into surrounding trees and molt for the last time. The adults live for several weeks during which time they mate and lay eggs inside twig branches. These newly laid eggs hatch in 2 months and a new brood of nymphs drop to the soil and tunnel down.



Target

Many trees and shrubs, especially apple, peach, popular, oak, sycamore and dogwood.

Damage

Eating by this insect usually doesn't do much harm, but slits made for egg-laying can cause twig die back.

Controls

Tanglefoot or Stickyband around the base of trees, netting, pruning and parasitic nematodes have all proven effective against cicadas. Garden sprays like fertilome "**Carbaryl**" and "**38 Plus Permethrin**" are highly effective at killing the adult stage.

Notes

Since broods overlap, periodical cicadas may emerge more often than once every 13 to 17 years. and a brood of dog day cicadas can be expected to emerge each year.

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