

BROOD X

THE CICADAS ARE COMING!

WHAT IS BROOD X?

Love them or hate them, Brood X, or the tenth designated group of 17-year cicadas found within the United States of America, will be emerging this spring. Some of you may remember the last time this specific cicada brood emerged, back in 2004, or have experienced other periodical cicada broods in other parts of the country. Well, all those eggs and nymphs that hatched 17 years ago are about to have the biggest coming-of-age event of the year and we all have a front seat to view this amazing natural phenomenon.

WATCH OUT!

You should know that cicadas are harmless to humans and animals. They do not possess the ability to bite or sting. However, they are considered poor flyers, especially compared with other insect families such as dragonflies and bees. This can be concerning for bystanders as cicadas will often bounce off an unsuspecting passerby or might even land on you briefly for a rest while they reorient themselves. When this happens, try to be kind to the cicada. Calmly unhinge their feet from any fabric and place them on a nearby tree or surface.



PERIODICAL -VS- ANNUAL CICADAS

It's important to note that not all cicadas take 13 or 17 years to become adults. Most people notice another type of cicada, the annual or dog-day cicadas, that can be seen every year. These cicadas typically appear later in the summer here in the northern hemisphere — usually in July or August. Due to overlapping generations we tend to see these cicadas in smaller populations.

CICADAS BY THE NUMBERS

17
YEARS

The Brood X cicadas emerge every 17 years.

4-6
WEEKS

The average cicada lifespan is 4-6 weeks.

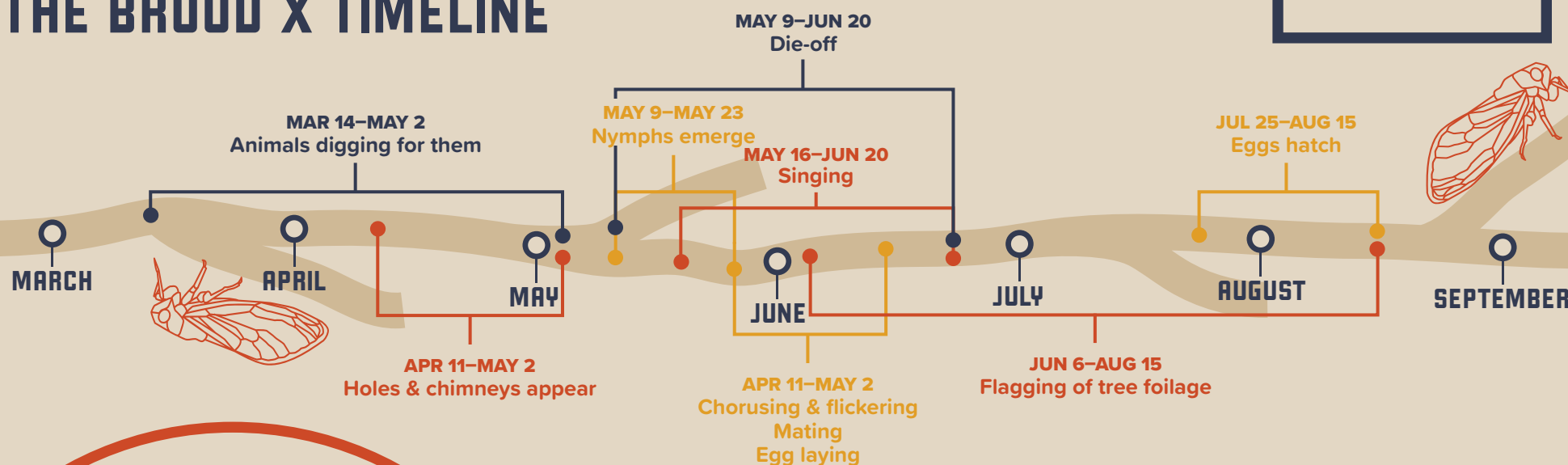
1,500,000
PER ACRE

In some areas we could see up to 1.5 million cicadas per acre.

80-100
DECIBELS

In high concentrations, cicadas can emit sounds as loud at 80-100 decibels.

THE BROOD X TIMELINE



WHY WE LOVE CICADAS!

There are many ways in which cicadas are great for the environment!

Cicadas aerate the soil around trees which is good for tree, plant, and soil health!

Once cicadas die their bodies act as fertilizer for the soil.

Cicadas provide small animals like birds, fish and squirrels an alternate food source.

CAUTION!

While cicadas are harmless to most plants and trees there are some concerns for young trees and woody vines. Damage can occur when female cicadas lay their eggs on branches that measure from ¼–½ inch in diameter. Don't use pesticides to protect your plants, instead place cages or netting around plants of concern.

WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THEM?

EDUCATE kids about lifecycles and nature.

EAT them!

LEARN to pin cicadas like a real entomologist.

CREATE art such as shadowboxes or dioramas.



Smithsonian Gardens