



The Cicadas Are Coming!!!

Yes, THIS is the year! From the middle of May until late June, we will once again be visited by billions of these *very* noisy insects. Brood X, after 17 years of rest underground, will emerge in vast numbers this summer in states from New York south to Georgia, and as far west as Missouri. In Ohio, the counties that will be heaviest hit will be Defiance, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Logan and Montgomery. Brood X 17-Year Cicada. Photo Credit: Brian Jorg www.brianjorg.com

What should you do? There's really not much you can do...

PLEASE don't try to spray them with pesticides! There will be far too many and spraying won't slow them down. And remember, by the end of July they will all be gone.

Cicadas fly to find mates and lay eggs in tree branches, so wrapping your tree trunks with foil won't help much either... it just wastes foil.

If you planted trees in 2020 or 2021, and they are not too big, you could cover them completely in fine netting (1cm openings or less). Cicadas are particularly fond of fruit trees, but all soft, tender twigs are potential targets. They don't eat the twigs, but split the branches open to lay their eggs. Other than protecting smaller trees, there is nothing you can do.

Cicadas are protein-rich little morsels that feed a lot of our wildlife. Birds, spiders, fish, reptiles, wasps, and other wildlife love these seasonal snacks. Oh, and expect a lot of mole activity this year. **Cicadas are not poisonous**, so if your dog or cat eat a few it won't hurt them (thought eating too many could cause a choking hazard).

Though they look a bit frightening, you can handle cicadas. They **do not bite** because they do not have chewing mouthparts. Instead, they have a long beak-like structure called a rostrum that works a bit like a straw and allows them to drink plant fluids.

Celebrate Cicadas!

Did you know that in some parts of the world, the seasonal arrival of cicadas is celebrated?

In southern France along the French Riviera, Cicadas are believed to bring good luck and the communities anxiously await their arrival since they announce the arrival of summer. Fabrics contain images of cicadas, and shops are filled with brightly-colored ceramic cicadas of various sizes. The one pictured is over a foot long and hangs in my kitchen (yes, my cooking needs a lot of luck!).



-- *By Nancy Linz, Co-Founder, Ohio Native Plant Month*