

## The Cicada Invasion: Nature's Noisiest Spectacle!

After 17 years underground, Brood XIV is set to emerge in 2025, bringing a once-in-a-generation phenomenon to the state, including Cape Cod. Here's what you need to know!



### An Uncommon Event

- Brood XIV is emerging in 2025 across southeastern Massachusetts, including parts of Cape Cod.
- This 17-year brood last emerged in 2008 and will be most noticeable in the upper and mid-Cape.
- Cicadas will start appearing in late May to early June, with adults active for about 4-6 weeks.

### Understanding Periodical Cicadas

- Periodical cicadas (*Magicicada* spp.) spend most of their lives underground, emerging only every 17 years.
- Unlike annual cicadas (*Neotibicen* spp.), periodical cicadas emerge in synchronized masses.
- They are black with red eyes and about 1.5 inches long.
- The loud buzzing (~100 decibels) is males calling for mates.

### Life Cycle

- Cicadas have three life stages: egg, nymph, and adult.
- Nymphs feed on tree roots underground for 17 years.
- When they emerge, they molt, become adults, and move to trees to feed and mate.
- Females lay up to 600 eggs in tree twigs.
- 6-10 weeks later, eggs hatch, and nymphs burrow underground, restarting the cycle.
- Adults live only 3-4 weeks.

### Living with Periodical Cicadas

- Cicadas do not bite or sting and are a food source for birds and wildlife.
- Their numbers can be staggering, reaching hundreds of thousands per acre.
- Egg-laying in young twigs may cause flagging (twig dieback).
- Mature trees recover well, but young trees (planted in the last 5 years) should be protected with netting ( $\leq 1$  cm mesh).
- Pesticides are ineffective and harm beneficial insects and birds.

### MythBusters

- "Cicadas will destroy my trees!" **False!** Most trees recover quickly.
- "They are dangerous!" **False!** They don't bite, sting, or spread disease.
- "This is the biggest emergence ever!" **False!** It's large, but not record-breaking.
- "Cicadas are locusts." **False!** Locusts are grasshoppers, cicadas are not.



### Be a Citizen Scientist!

Help track Brood XIV by submitting photos to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' iNaturalist project. Scan the QR participate!

