

# black-legged meadow katydid

## *Orchelimum nigripes*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Arthropoda  
Class: Insecta  
Order: Orthoptera  
Family: Tettigoniidae

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### FEATURES

Katydids have feet with four segments. The body generally resembles that of grasshoppers, but katydids have long, threadlike antennae instead of the grasshoppers' short antennae. The black-legged meadow katydid is about one inch long. Its body is green with a blue tinge. There is yellow on the femur of the first two pairs of legs, and the tibiae are black. The head is white-brown and has red eyes. The female's ovipositor is curved.

### BEHAVIORS

The lifespan of a katydid is about a year. Females usually lay their eggs at the end of summer in plant stems. The eggs are typically oval and laid in rows on the plant. Most katydids overwinter in the egg form. The males have sound-producing organs on their front wings. They use this sound for courtship. During courtship there often is antennal contact between male and female. Katydids are eaten by birds and mammals and may be the target of insect predators and parasites including horsehair worms, wasps and flies. The black-legged meadow katydid sings from July through November. It is generally a species that lives near water, but it may move into dry meadows and thickets. It sometimes sings from trees.

### ILLINOIS RANGE



© Mary Kay Rubey



female



male

### **Aquatic Habitats**

marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; wet prairies and fens; lakes, ponds and reservoirs; Lake Michigan

### **Woodland Habitats**

none

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

black soil prairie; edge; gravel prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie