

short-winged meadow katydid *Conocephalus brevipennis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Orthoptera

Family: Tettigoniidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Katydid 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 short-winged meadow katydid is about one-half to slightly less than three-fourths inch long. It has a brown back and a green body. The back section of its abdomen is yellow-orange. The wings cover a little more than half of the abdomen. The femur (large section of the leg; third leg section from the body) has two brown stripes separated by a plain green area. The female's ovipositor is straight.

BEHAVIORS

The lifespan of a katydid is about a year. Females usually lay their eggs at the end of summer beneath the soil or 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. Katydid are eaten by birds and mammals and may be the target of insect predators and parasites including horsehair worms, wasps and flies. The short-winged meadow katydid lives in tall grasses and sedges, in woodland edges as well as in the open. Singing occurs from July through October.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

marshes; peatlands; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soils prairie; edge

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