slender meadow katydid

Conocephalus fasciatus

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 slender meadow katydid is about three-fourths to one inch in length. It has long wings. The tip of the abdomen is green. The femur (large segment of the leg; third leg segment from the body) is green with some black spots.

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. Katydids are eaten by birds and mammals and may be the target of insect predators and parasites including horsehair worms, wasps and flies. The slender meadow katydid can be found in tall grasses and forbs, especially in wet spots, prairies, meadows and wetland edges. Singing occurs from July through October.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE

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Aquatic Habitats
marshes; peatlands; wet prairies and fens; lakes, ponds and reservoirs

Woodland Habitats
none

Prairie and Edge Habitats
black soils prairie; edge

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