

Green Bush Crickets & Locusts

Big World of Insects, Spiders & Bugs Series

Subject Areas: Science, Life Science, Biology

Synopsis: Green bush crickets, also known as katydids, are seen blending in with the undergrowth in their environment. Some of the differences between grasshoppers and crickets are covered. Students will clearly see how crickets and locusts make sounds to communicate with others. Green bush crickets are predatory insects that sometimes feed on their own kind, while locusts eat grass and are pursued by hungry mantises.

Learning Objectives:

- Objective 1)** Students will be able to identify the parts of an insect including the head, thorax, abdomen, six legs, wings and antenna.
- Objective 2)** Students will be able to compare and contrast crickets and locusts.
- Objective 3)** Students will be able to describe some of the ways that insects communicate.

Vocabulary: Define and discuss the following key terms:

Green bush cricket, meticulous, katydid, camouflage, imperceptibly, undergrowth, albino, forewing, locust, species, unique, quarters (living space), deceptive, prey, predator

Pre-Viewing Questions and Discussion:

- 1) Can you think of any ways that insects can communicate with each other? What might the insects be telling one another?
- 2) What is camouflage? Why is this characteristic important?

Post-Viewing Questions and Discussion:

- 1) Why does the green bush cricket spend time preening?
- 2) How does the green bush cricket differ from grasshoppers? How is it similar?
- 3) What is another name for the green bush cricket?
- 4) Describe what the green bush cricket looks like. Where does it live? What does it eat?
- 5) What does albino mean? Describe the albino bush cricket. Why do you think that the albino cricket will be safer in the fall?
- 6) How does the male cricket try to attract the attention of female crickets?
- 7) How does the green bush cricket produce its sound? How can it 'turn up the volume'?

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- 8) What does the female green bush cricket usually do to the male cricket after mating?
- 9) Describe the locust. How does it differ from the green bush cricket? How is it similar?
- 10) Where does the locust live?
- 11) How do the male locusts communicate? What are they telling other locusts?
- 12) How does the male locust attract a mate? Why is it difficult for the male locusts to find mates? What attracts the female locusts?
- 13) What do locusts eat?
- 14) What might happen to a locust rushing through the grass?
- 15) What animals are predators of locusts?

Additional Activities:

- 1) Draw a detailed picture of a green bush cricket and a locust. On each insect, label the head, thorax, abdomen, six legs, antenna, and wings.
- 2) Create a chart that lists the similarities and differences between the green bush cricket and the locust. Include information on what the insects look like, what they eat, what their predators are, where they live, how they communicate, etc.
- 3) Arthropods are animals that have jointed appendages. Find out more about arthropods. What other animals are arthropods? What characteristics do all arthropods share? How are arthropods classified into groups?
- 4) Pretend you are either a green bush cricket or a locust. Describe your typical day as you find food, and either hunt prey or avoid predators.
- 5) Research the life cycle of these two insects. Find pictures of the larva of each insect and learn about how they transform into adults. Present your findings in a report. Include a poster that has illustrations showing the larva and the adult of each insect.
- 6) How many different kinds of crickets, grasshoppers and locusts are there? Research one species of each insect and present your findings in a report to the class.
- 7) Create a food web that includes these insects, their food (prey) and animals (predators) that might eat them as well. Be sure to include plants and the sun in your food web.

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