

NO PESTICIDES NEEDED!

Periodical cicadas don't sting or bite, and are not poisonous. In fact, they are a great food source for birds and other wild animals. In addition, they're good for the soil, providing nutrients as the bodies decompose, and channels for air and water as the new adults tunnel to the surface to emerge from the soil.

This leads to two recommendations:

1. Leave the cicadas on the ground to feed the wildlife and enrich the soil. Don't sweep them up and throw them away.
2. Be sure the cicadas provide nourishment that is safe and healthy. Don't use any kind of pesticide, poison, or chemicals to try to control cicadas.

SHOULD I PROTECT MY PLANTS?

FYI: Cicadas don't have chewing mouth parts – only mouth parts for sucking. This means that, unlike locusts, they will NOT eat the leaves of your shrubs and trees.

But because the female cicada makes a small slit in a tree's twig to lay her eggs, there can be some damage to young trees and shrubs.



You can protect young specimen trees or shrubs by wrapping the plant with mesh netting (left). Gather it together at the trunk to reduce the risk of the insects getting inside; leave the netting on from mid-May until the end of June. You could see some mid- to late-summer twig dieback from plants where egg-laying has taken place; while this is visually unappealing, it does not normally affect a healthy plant.

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You can obtain mesh or netting with ¼-inch or smaller holes at garden centers or stores that sell garden supplies.