

Life Cycle of a Cicada



CICADAS

Stages of Growth



eggs are about the same size and shape as these grains of rice.



larvae stage begin as small as termites



larvae continue to grow, shedding skins periodically



adult emerges from exoskeleton.



The adult cicada scratches grooves in tree branches then lays eggs inside the grooves. After 6 to 8 weeks the eggs hatch and the tiny larvae begin feeding on the tree's sap.

The newly hatched nymphs drop to the ground and begin burying themselves into the soil. The grooves carved into branches can cause the branch to die off and fall to the ground. This makes it easier for the larvae to get to the soil.



The newly hatched larvae bury themselves into the soil and burrow down until they reach the roots of plants to feed on.

The cicada larvae will remain underground for a number of years. (Between 1 and 17 years depending on their species.)

When they are fully developed the larvae dig their way out of the soil at night and climb up into the open. They attach themselves to trees, walls, anywhere they can find a sheltered spot. Then they prepare to shed their skin.





The cicada pumps fluid underneath their exoskeleton (outer skin) to help it begin to separate from their body. A split in the exoskeleton begins to appear on their backs between the eyes. The cicada pushes its head out through the split and slowly wriggles its body free. This can take about one and a half hours. The new adult is soft shelled and light coloured. The true colour of the cicada develops as the new skin dries and begins to harden.



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