



Crickets are a valuable part of the food chain.

The eggs are very small, banana shaped, and yellowish white. They usually hatch in two to three weeks. But the newly hatched babies (or nymphs) are so tiny that it is hard to see them without a hand lens. In four to eight weeks, after several molts, they are mature adults.

Crickets are food for such animals as birds, snakes, lizards, frogs, and toads. They are a valuable part of the food chain. But they also eat plants and can do a lot of damage to them. In some places, farmers consider them pests.

Just by observing your crickets, you can learn a lot. In fact, you can find out how the cricket moves, eats, explores, defends its territory, mates, lays eggs, and hides. But how does a cricket hear with its legs? How does it breathe through holes in its body? To find the answers, do some research in the library or contact an expert in insects, an **entomologist**.