

Really? Next time a noisy cricket disturbs my beauty sleep I will definitely catch it and bring it for my humans to eat.

Activity suggestions:

- Why do crickets chirp?
- Are crickets useful in nature?
- What animals eat crickets?
- Do you eat crickets? Why not?



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THE CRICKET



BY STRIPES
THE ECO-CAT

I heard my humans talking about a cricket named Abie or Hash or something. I only know one cricket - the one who kept me awake last night with his loud chirping. I tried to find him to tell him to keep quiet, but every time I moved he stopped chirping, so I could never find him.

So I asked my humans if Abie and Hash also chirp loudly.

They laughed and said, "Only if they play Australia".

I must have looked a bit puzzled, because my Anina human stroked my head and started to tell me about the cricket that so annoyed me.

"Crickets are insects that come out mostly at night. During the day they hide in dark places, under logs and stones," she said.

"Well, it was certainly here last night" I replied.
"But what's with all the chirping"?

Anina settled down for a long chat. Oh dear, this could take a while. Perhaps I shouldn't have asked.

"It's only the boy crickets that chirp - they do it to attract girls," she explained.

Mmm ... I suppose that's because they don't have cell phones to call the girls.

"They chirp by rubbing their wings together, and the warmer it is the more they chirp."

I thought to myself that the cricket must have been very hot last night. I wondered if all that chirping at least impressed a mate. It certainly didn't impress me!

"What are these annoying crickets good for", I wanted to know.

"Ah, Stripes, they are scavengers that eat dying plants and things we throw away, so they are very important for returning nutrients to the soil. They are also food for many other animals like lizards, frogs and birds. Humans eat them too", Anina replied.