

HOUSE CRICKET

The Latin name for the House cricket is *Acheta domesticus*.

Cricket is a common name for many species of insect characterised by the chirping call of the male. This is produced by rubbing a grooved ridge on the underside of one of the front wings against the sharp edge of the other.

Crickets have long antennae and hind legs adapted for jumping. Their hearing organs are located on the front legs. During the day, the solitary animals remain in crevices or shallow burrows dug in the soil. They emerge at night to feed on vegetation, aphids and other insects.

During the breeding season the male attracts a female with its call, sometimes driving off other males that intrude on its territory. The female uses her long, spear-like ovipositor to insert eggs into the soil or plant stems. The young, called nymphs, resemble the adults and reach full size after 6 to 12 months.

The House cricket is small with a body length of 1.5 to 2cm. It is brown with well-developed wings and antennae that are rather longer than the body. The call is a bird-like chirp that can often be mistaken for a bird. The call is mainly heard in the evening or through the night.

This species can be found in gardens, houses and rubbish-tips throughout much of Europe.