

Habitats

Katydids can be found in most habitats in Australia except the oceans and the tops of the highest peaks. Look for katydids on the ground, in shrubbery or high in trees. Many species are active during the day and many more are nocturnal. Most can be found during the day using specialised techniques which are discussed in relation to the tribes or subfamilies in this book.

With some arboreal species, you can find nymphs on annual or perennial vegetation for most of their nymphal lives. With a little special care, these nymphs can be collected and raised to maturity without much difficulty.

Choosing the time of year to collect is very important. If you look for Pollen Katydids, Pollen and Nectar-feeding Katydids or Stick Katydids in summer, you are not likely to find them. These insects are at their zenith in winter and spring and are largely gone by summer. Many Shield-backed Katydids are adult in mid to late summer but others are found early in the summer.

Travel to remote locales will always yield species of interest. But you do not have to travel far to find katydids. At least two species can be seen and heard in the vegetation at Darling Harbour, Sydney.

Even the most desolate of habitats harbour katydids. In the hot interior of the continent, the best time to look for katydids is after dark. However, it is not unusual to find katydids seeking shelter during the day on cliff faces or on large rocks. A locality near Bullfinch, Western Australia, yielded a number of katydids in the dead, dry leaf and twig litter under the eucalypts. Other species were found up in the trees in the foliage.

Mixed eucalypt forests, such as in the vicinity of Balladonia, Western Australia, are productive in the spring following good rains, yielding nymphs of a number of species that begin life among the spring herbs and annuals. In summer, katydids occur in the dry leaf and twig litter as well as on shrubbery and in the trees. Areas of mulga vegetation offer many species but most are nocturnal



Collecting at a remote locale.



Darling Harbour, Sydney.