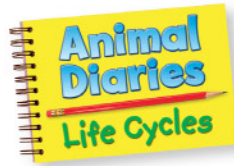


A Periodical Cicada's Life



by Ellen Lawrence

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A Periodical Cicada's Life

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Name: Sophia

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A Big Night in a Forest

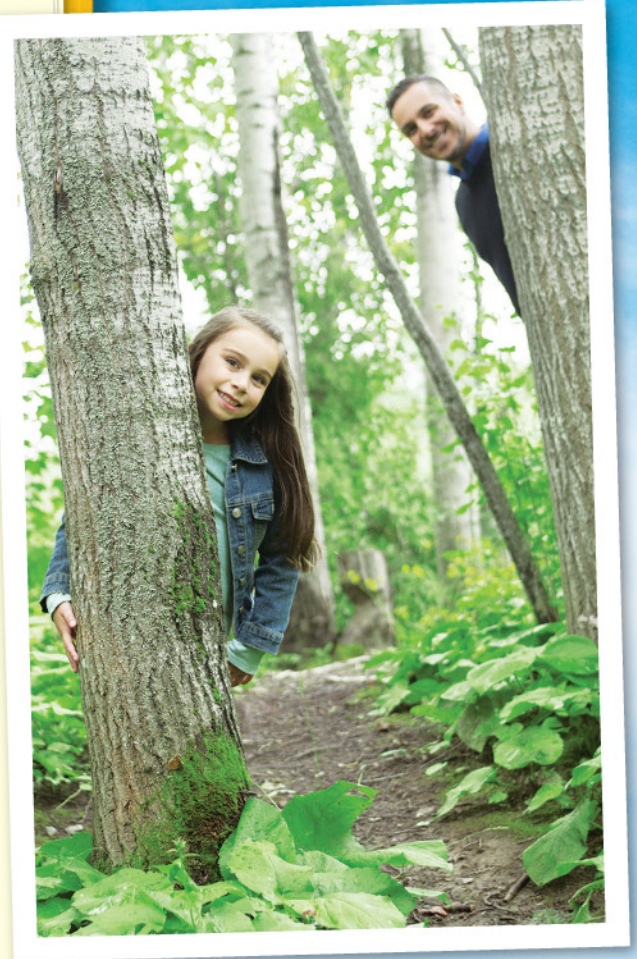
Just before dark, I visited a forest near my house to see something amazing.


Thousands of wingless brown **insects** were crawling out of the ground.

Dad told me the insects are periodical cicadas (si-KAY-duhs).

At this stage in their life, they are called **nymphs**.

Can you believe the cicada nymphs have been living underground for 17 years?





Millions of nymphs **emerge** from the ground at the same time. How do they know when to do this? It's a mystery that scientists are still trying to solve!

periodical
cicada nymph

What do you think the cicada nymphs do after emerging from the ground?

Date: **May 16** _____

Growing Up

During the night, the nymphs climbed up trees in the forest.

As each one held tightly onto a tree, its brown skin began to crack.

After about one hour, the insect wriggled out of its skin.

It now has a new yellowish-white body and wings!

Dad says this is the adult stage of the periodical cicada's life.



yellowish-white
adult cicada

old, brown
nymph skin

After a cicada nymph sheds its skin, the skin eventually falls to the ground. Sometimes the ground is covered with thousands of empty skins!

old nymph skin

adult periodical cicada

Imagine you are describing an adult cicada to a friend who's never seen one. How would you describe it?