

Southeastern Field Cricket, *Gryllus rubens* Scudder (Insecta: Orthoptera: Gryllidae)¹

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Introduction

This cricket is the most commonly encountered field cricket in Florida. It is common in lawns, roadsides, and pastures. In most parts of the state, it is the only field cricket that trills rather than chirps.

For information on other Florida field and house crickets see: <http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/creatures>.

Distribution

The southeastern field cricket occurs throughout southeastern United States.

Identification

The southeastern field cricket and the sand field cricket often occur together and are sometimes difficult to distinguish except by song. The easiest morphological means of telling the two apart is the color pattern on the forewings. For males, the number and spacing of the teeth in the stridulatory file is definitive.

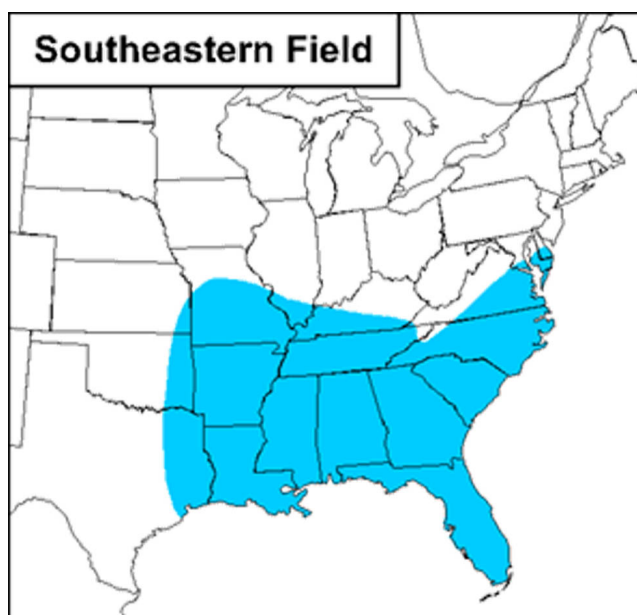


Figure 1. Distribution of southeastern field cricket in the United States.

In southern Florida, where southeastern and Jamaican field crickets co-occur, the color pattern of the head will separate the two.

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In western Florida, where both southeastern and southwestern field crickets occur, the only sure means of telling the two apart is by the pulse rate (=wingstroke rate) during the male's calling song. The southeastern field cricket has the slower song, with a pulse rate of less than 62 at 77 degrees F. If the two are singing at the same time and place, a trained ear can identify the males that are trilling at the slower pulse rate as southeastern field crickets



Figure 2. Southeastern field cricket, *Gryllus rubens* (Scudder), long-winged male. Credits: Paul M. Choate, University of Florida



Figure 3. Southeastern field cricket, *Gryllus rubens* (Scudder), short-winged female. Credits: Paul M. Choate, University of Florida

Life Cycle

Adults are most abundant in spring and fall, but adults and middle-sized to large juveniles can be found throughout the year. Small nymphs do not survive the winters in north Florida, and eggs laid in early December may remain dormant until the following spring. In states to the north of Florida, middle-sized to large juveniles are the overwintering

stages and there are two discrete generations with adults occurring in spring and again in late summer.

Habitat

This species occurs in lawns, pastures, and roadsides and is sometimes attracted to lights in numbers.

Song

The calling song (657Kb wav file) of the southeastern field cricket is a trill that is interrupted every second or so (graphs). Often the pulse sequence within the trill not quite uniform, because the wings occasionally pause momentarily during the silent opening stroke.

Selected References

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