

Insect Amplifier

Some insects are very hard to hear. An *amplifier* is something that makes a sound louder. Use this simple amplifier to help you hear the sound an insect makes.

Materials

Sound-producing insect
1 paper cup
Piece of waxed paper large enough to cover top of cup
Rubber band
Timer

Catch an insect that makes an audible sound. (Don't select a stinging insect for this experiment.) Carefully transfer the insect to a paper cup. Place the waxed paper over the mouth of

the cup, then use the rubber band to keep it in place. Put the cup up to your ear and listen. To slow down an insect and change its sound, put the cup, with the insect in it, into a refrigerator for up to 10 minutes. But don't forget to take it out! Set the timer for 10 minutes to help you remember. After you're finished listening, be sure to set your singer free.

Sometimes, it is better not to be heard. When male crickets are chirping trying to attract a mate, their calls can also attract tachinid flies. These flies are parasites. They lay their eggs inside the cricket. When the larvae hatch out of the eggs inside of the cricket, the cricket dies.



You might be surprised by how loud an insect can sound.