



CARE GUIDE



HOODED KATYDID

Phyllophorella queenslandica



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PROFILE

Hooded Katydids are common inhabitants of the tropical rainforests of eastern Australia, however due to their remarkable camouflage are not often found in the wild. They are known as Hooded Katydids due to the large box-like hood on their thorax behind their head. This is obvious even before adulthood. Their wings are highly veined to mimic leaves, and will even have irregular spots or patches on their wings to match the rainforest plants they live on. They grow to around 60mm in body length with females being larger than males.

During the day these katydids sit motionless upon green leaves. They have very long antennae that when at rest, will be folded back along either side of their body. They will also fold their hind legs up under the body to aid their leaf-like façade.

This species is capable of producing a defensive sound, which resembles a series of rapid hisses. Even relatively young nymphs can produce it, as it is created by rubbing the bases of the hind legs against the body.

In order to reproduce, male Hooded Katydids will transfer a spermatophore to the females. A spermatophore is a white-coloured mass that can sometimes be seen at the tip of the female's abdomen after mating has occurred. It contains sperm to fertilise the eggs. Females lay elongated rice-like eggs in the substrate using their ovipositor, which is a long sabre-like extension protruding from the end of the abdomen. The young will hatch out looking like miniature versions of their parents, and will shed their exoskeletons to grow.

FOOD

Minibeast Wildlife's Katydid Food or Orthopteran Food mix. Foliage of a variety of plants including gum trees (*Eucalyptus* spp), Brush Cherry (*Syzygium australe*), bottle brush (*Callistemon*) and apple (*Malus domestica*) and some palm species. The branches should be put into a jar of water to keep them fresh for as long as possible. Make sure the jar has a lid or covering with holes in it to stop the young insects from falling in and drowning.

WATER

Mist spray the enclosure once a day. This will keep the enclosure damp and the humidity high. The katydids will drink from the moisture on the foliage and branches.

ENCLOSURE

A suitable enclosure needs to be approximately 30 cm H x 30cm W x 30 cm D to adequately house 1 or 2 adults. A larger enclosure will be required for more specimens. (Minibeast Wildlife's mesh enclosures are ideal.) An egg laying tub can be placed at base of the enclosure (a tub with 4cm depth of moist of coco-peat). While this is not essential it will accommodate breeding. Sticks and branches should be placed within the enclosure as they are required for the insects to hang from whilst moulting.

COMMON ISSUES

If keeping these katydids in groups of high numbers, you may find that some individuals will be injured or disrupted during the delicate moulting process. If this happens, your katydids need more space.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Remove frass (poo) and fallen leaf material from the bottom of the enclosure once a week. This can be done when the food plant is changed over.

HANDLING

These katydids are quite timid but usually settle down relatively quickly and can be safely handled. They can be a little unpredictable and may leap away without warning. Adults can fly, so handle indoors to prevent escape.

TEMPERATURE

This species will do best at 22° – 26°C, but will tolerate 16 – 24°C and have a slower growth rate.

SUBSTRATE

Not required, but it can help with clean up to put some paper down on the bottom of the enclosure to catch the frass (poo) and leaf material that falls to the ground.



About one year life span



These animals are captive bred, and should not be released into the wild



50-60%



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