



Species profile

Bog-Bush Cricket

The Bog bush-cricket (*Metrioptera brachyptera*) is only found in one site in Scotland, which is threatened, so its future is very uncertain.

The Bog bush-cricket belongs to the group of insects known as Orthoptera (grasshoppers and crickets). In both crickets and grasshoppers, the hind legs are large in proportion to their bodies, and this enables them to jump really long distances. Bush-crickets can be distinguished from grasshoppers as they have very long antennae - much longer than the length of their body. Grasshoppers have fairly short antennae.



Bog bush-cricket (*Metrioptera brachyptera*) © Roger Key

The Bog bush-cricket is one of ten bush-cricket species currently found in the UK. It is a relatively large insect, being about 18mm in length but females are slightly larger than males. It is bright green underneath, brown along its sides and either brown or green along its back.

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Bog bush-crickets like to live in lowland peat bogs - they lay their eggs on purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and feed on heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*). Peat bogs are now scarce so they have few places in which to live. In Scotland the only place they are found is Aucheninnes Moss in Dumfries and Galloway but in 2003 the council had agreed that the area should become a landfill site, despite opposition.



Bog bush-cricket (*Metrioptera brachyptera*) © Roger Key

It looked like the future for the Bog bush-cricket in Scotland was bleak. However, in 2009 the council decided to close the landfill site for good and are now in talks to decide how the site should be managed.

In the past one hundred years a third of Scotland's grasshopper and cricket species have become extinct. Will the Bog-bush cricket be joining this number?