

Davis describes the note of this species as a "beat, beat, pulsating sound." Riley says the chirp "is intermittent, resembling a shrill 're-teat, re-teat, re-teat' with a slight



Fig. 41. Note of *Ecanthus niveus* by night.

pause between each." McNeill calls it "the well-known *trrrr ree, trrrr ree*, repeated without variation or pause sixty or seventy times a minute," or as he says in another place "*t-r-r-r-r-e-e-e, t-r-r-r-r-e-e-e*, repeated . . . about seventy times in a minute," and adds:

"In the vicinity of Davenport, Iowa, this song is heard as early as the twenty-third of July and it continues until the persistent little songsters are killed by the heavy frosts of the late fall. This song is heard only at night and occasionally on cloudy days, but in the latter case it is only an isolated song and never the full chorus of the night song produced by many wings whose vibration in exact unison produces that characteristic 'rhythmic beat'—as Burroughs has happily phrased it. It is this effect of many united songs that has lead the same author to speak of 'purring' crickets. Thoreau calls it the 'slumbrous breathing' and the 'intenser dream' of crickets, but Hawthorne has given it a more spiritual interpretation than either Burroughs or Thoreau. He describes it as an 'audible stillness,' and declares if 'moonlight could be heard, it would sound like that.'"

Fitch writes of this insect in New York as follows: "In the southern part of our State the song of the flower cricket begins to be heard as early as the first of August, but it is a week later before it commences in the vicinity of Albany, and later still in the more northern parts of the State. Perched among the thick foliage of a grape vine or other shrubbery, some feet up from the ground, and as already stated, remaining in the same spot day after day, its song begins soon after sunset and before the duskiness of twilight arrives. It is distinctly heard at a distance of several rods, and the songster is always farther off than is supposed. Though dozens of other crickets and katydids are shrilling on every side at the same time, the peculiar note of this cricket is at once distinguished from all the rest, consisting of repetitions of a single syllable, slowly uttered, in a monotonous, melancholy tone, with a slight pause between. The children regard the cricket as no votary of the temperance cause; they understand its song to consist of the words *treat—treat—treat—treat*, which words, slowly uttered, do so closely resemble its notes that they will at once recall them to the recollection of almost every reader. And the song is thus continued without the slightest variation and without any cessation, I think, the whole night through. I, however, have sometimes heard it at the first commencement of its evening serenade uttering three syllables resembling the words *treat, treat, two; treat, treat, two*—as though the songster was supplicating a libation for his voiceless mate as well as himself—a longer pause following each third note. This prelude is probably performed in limbering or otherwise adjusting his organs, preparatory to performing the regular carol, which is struck into in a few moments."

Ecanthus fasciatus Fitch. Of this species McNeill says: "The song is a high trill continuing usually for several minutes with the intervals between the trills of very irregular length. It sings all day as well as all night, apparently in the bright sunshine as well as on cloudy days and in the dusk of evening." Davis calls the song "a long and comparatively loud, continuous whirr often lasting several minutes." My notes, which probably refer to this species, make the chirp to be at a somewhat lower pitch than that given by me for the preceding species, namely, at the third B above middle C, and the song itself is described as more rapid and vigorous. See also the notes under *E. niveus*.

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