

Too Many Jennifers

Episode 04: “Tree Shrimp”

Episode description:

Jennifer Culture™ is BUZZING with updates + our first Jennifer guest, entomologist Dr. Jen White. Will we survive the current cicada invasion? Will we learn both upsetting and fascinating facts? And ARE cicadas better at counting than the Jennifers?

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(Upbeat music)
Too Many Jennifers,
So little time.
Too Many Jennifers,
All on the line

(music fades out)

JENNY C. 00:44

Hi and welcome to Too Many Jennifers, a podcast made by Jennifers, for everyone. I'm Jenny Cavallero.

JENN T. 00:52

And I'm Jenn Tisdale. Hi, Jenny!

JENNY C. 00:55

Hi Jenn, what a soothing tone. We both just had it, it really went naturally.

JENN T. 01:00

I'm just really obsessed with how deep my voice sounds and I can't stop accusing people of keeping this secret from me for my entire life.

JENNY C. 01:09

I assume that you knew. You've been in a mic, on microphone before.

JENN T. 01:13

I have been in one. And I have spoken into one.

JENNY C. 01:17

Yeah you were bo-, actually born inside of a microphone. We didn't get into that in episode one. But boy is it a story.

JENN T. 01:25

Yeah and so I, I don't know what it is. Maybe it's because, I've definitely been a guest on podcasts. I've definitely transcribed interviews that I've conducted. And for whatever reason, maybe it's because I finally have some good equipment, and it's just like when, like when you go, when you have HD now. And you can see every single pore, and every single like, it's like "Oh oh, I didn't know that was happening." That's what I, you can see every pore of my voice now. What a bummer.

JENNY C. 01:52

I think you have a great voice by the way...

JENN T. 01:54

Thank you

JENNY C. 01:55

...just gonna go on record. And we recorded our first three episodes ahead of time before we released them. So this is kind of our first episode recording close to in real time. Um so you've known about your deep voice for a few weeks now but this is our first chance to talk...

JENN T. 02:16

...into this microphone. I've clearly been talking about it to anyone who will listen just anyone who walks by "Is my voice, sir...does my voice," I'm in Target "Does my voice sound deep to you sir?" It's great. But really quick before we get into it, I want to take a minute to thank a couple of wonderful honorary Jennifers who contributed important pieces of art to the podcast. Corinne Dodenhoff did our amazing artwork. She's an artist in Philadelphia. She's so amazing. And I haven't told you this, Jenny but I already hired her to do some, like personal Jennifer merch. That's obviously unhinged and I, but it's not anything, it's not like it'll be for sale because it's too soon for that journey. But it's just something that I will wear, you know, around the house or to Target when I scream at men about my voice.

JENNY C. 03:05

Personal Jennifer merch that also, you know, if you are interested in it as our audience grows, maybe our personal merch will become political merch. The personal is political is what we're saying.

JENN T. 03:21

The personal to political merch pipeline will be very long.

JENNY C. 03:24

Yeah that's so exciting. We love the artwork, we kind of gave out the vibe we wanted and she sent us some sketches. And they were all incredible. And our little Too Many Jennifers keychain is I mean, should I tattoo it on my body? I don't know. It's too soon, but I love it.

JENN T. 03:42

I've thought of that, obviously. And then of course we want to thank Margot MacDonald for the song of the summer, our incredible theme music. I mean, it's really like, I-, to knock it out of the park right away for both people was thrilling.

JENNY C. 03:58

Yeah, she sent us I think it was like the draft version or the unmixed version. And we were like, this is perfect.

JENN T. 04:06

Yeah, she was like we still have to do things to it because I'm a musician and you two aren't so you don't understand that. Yeah. And I was like okay this feels finished but it's not.

JENNY C. 04:14

Total pro, I have not gotten it out of my head since we heard it the first time. And I hope it never leaves me.

JENN T. 04:23

No it's not going to. Um, so yeah, so before we jump into today's thrilling episode, I have some JenNews.

JENNY C. 04:33

Yes, we have some updates to Jennifer Culture.

JENN T. 04:36

The internet is on fire with the Ben Affleck, Jennifer Lopez reunion tour.

JENNY C. 04:44

The Internet and also my heart.

JENN T. 04:46

I mean as you know, I exclusively live in the past. There's rarely a time when I'm in the now. I do spend a lot of time in the future just sort of panicking, but I mostly just enjoy the past: music, TV, possibly, I guess my center part. Um, and that's where I live. So when Bennifer returned triumphantly, I was very excited. So I want to just talk a little bit about that really quick. I have the Bennifer timeline via Zoe Haylock for Vulture, which actually came out today.

JENNY C. 05:22

Timely

JENN T. 05:22

I, very timely, and I just picked out a few of my favorite dates. These are a few of my favorite dates. The timeline on Vulture spans 19 years from when they first met on the set of "Gigli," a film that you have not seen...

JENNY C. 05:37

Never seen it

JENN T. 05:38

...until they broke off their engagement. But they were officially, and that happened 17 years ago. So in April of 2002, after working with JLo on Gigli, Ben Affleck, this is so crazy, took out a full page ad in various trade magazines, which said and I quote "It has been nothing but an honor and a pleasure to work with you. I only wish I were lucky enough to be in all your movies, signed with love respect and gratitude. Ben Affleck" and then he probably murdered her I assume.

JENNY C. 06:09

Did he not have a cell phone at the time?

JENN T. 06:12

Yeah, 2002...

JENNY C. 06:14

That could have been an email to her. That's very thirsty, very thirsty.

JENN T. 06:20

Several trades, not just like Variety and then we moved along. We're just like, okay, Variety, probably the Hollywood Reporter and maybe Craigslist.

JENNY C. 06:29

All the-, all the hot trades, Craigslist. A

JENN T. 06:33

And then on November 5 2002, Guy Fawkes Day for our British listeners.

JENNY C. 06:39

There are a few of them by the way.

JENN T. 06:40

Are there? Guys, listen big day for you guys. The music video for "Jenny from the Block" appeared on TRL, RIP TRL as we know it, which featured Affleck and JLo galavanting around on a yacht. And the infamous like scene, we'll call it a scene in a music video, when he kissed her butt, which I believe was allegedly or actually insured for something ridiculous like \$27

million. Right? And that's truly some from the block behavior. The boat block, you know the block. You're like, yeah, that's a great block.

JENNY C. 07:17

Yeah, some call it a shipyard. Some call it a dock. We call it a block.

JENN T. 07:22

I'm, guys I'm still the same. This is a yacht. And then later that same month, he he proposed to her at his mother's house in Boston. I assume with just a lot of accents, which feels very weird to me, while her song "Glad," played which feels even weirder. And that would be like if someone proposed to me while an episode of this podcast was playing softly in the background.

JENNY C. 07:50

Honestly ideal, right?

JENN T. 07:52

Yes like isn't it so crazy? She's like, "Is this my song? Are you on your knees right now? Is your mother here with Boston baked beans?" I guess? I don't know. Sorry, Boston.

JENNY C. 08:03

Can we go to Dunkin' after?

JENN T. 08:06

Yeah, why didn't he propose to her there? Um, and then so jumping ahead like 11 years. They released a statement on September 13 2013 saying that they were postponing the wedding. I'm just now clocking that that was an 11 year engagement. Did I write this wrong?

JENNY C. 08:24

Wait that can't be right.

JENN T. 08:26

I think it must have been 2003 and I accidentally okay, okay. Good God. I was like oh, what is happening?

JENNY C. 08:31

What a ride.

JENN T. 08:33

September 13th 2003, they released a statement saying they are postponing the wedding that was supposed to happen literally the next day, like September 4.

JENNY C. 08:44

Okay that's a lot of um down payment for the caterers that is not getting refunded.

JENN T. 08:50

Literally everyone had bought a very expensive outfit um and I'm assuming this wedding was also happening at his mother's house.

JENNY C. 08:57

Yep

JENN T. 08:58

January 23, 2004 JLo dumped him and then somehow "Jersey Girls," still happens after this, which is another terrible film. And so 12 years later, I'm calling this the PS the Post Split, on March 1, 2016 Refinery29 runs a piece simply titled "Jennifer Lopez Thinks Ben Affleck's New Tattoo is Awful," where JLo says to Andy Cohen on an episode of "Watch What Happens Live" and I quote "It's awful. And I would tell him that What are you doing? It has too many colors. His tattoos always have too many colors..."

JENNY C. 09:35

Is that?

JENN T. 09:37

Listen this is not, no one has ever thought this.

JENNY C. 09:40

I'm sorry I'm interrupting JLo as quoted by you.

JENN T. 09:43

She needs to be interrupted right now because this is not like-, like you know how, you know that old saying this tattoo is too many colors. That's not a thing. There's no one has ever said that and I have a lot of bad tattoos that are too many colors.

JENNY C. 09:53

Was that his alcoholic back tattoo?

JENN T. 09:55

It's like the Phoenix right.

JENNY C. 09:57

Yeah, it's enormous, right?

JENN T. 09:59

Yeah, yeah.

JENNY C. 10:00

It's bad. I mean, she's right.

JENN T. 10:02

I just find it interesting that her problem with that garish monstrosity is the color choices versus just everything else about it. Its size, its content, its location, its existence, but she's like, everything else checks out really just less colors.

JENNY C. 10:17

She's a woman of taste. So...

JENN T. 10:20

Yeah, she says "They shouldn't be so colorful. You know what I mean? They should be like, cooler. I don't know."

JENNY C. 10:28

She's right.

JENN T. 10:29

A scathing review, one star. So now 17 years later, they have emerged from the ground. Ben and JLo have shed their exes so they can get to boning which brings me to our topic today. Another group of wacky kids who are returning to fuck after a 17 year hiatus. Jenny, would you like to...

JENNY C. 10:52

That's right, America's Sweethearts: the Brood X Cicadas.

JENN T. 10:58

Oh God, they're everywhere. One flew by my face today as a bird was shitting on my head right after I saved a mouse from my cats playing with it. I was like...

JENNY C. 11:08

That can't be real. That's too many things. Okay, I want to be clear. I have not seen a single Cicada and I'm starting to take it personally.

JENN T. 11:20

[LAUGHS] CicaDon't

JENNY C. 11:22

It's like I'm here, guys. There's trees, there's earth. And I don't know, maybe they got priced out of my neighborhood. It's very unclear. But I have not seen a single one. I thought I saw one but it was a cockroach, which is very DC. Um, but you know what? We're gonna learn about cCicadas today. And we're gonna learn a lot of it from our very first guest. [MUSIC BUMP]

JENNY C. 12:05

So our first guest today, which we are thrilled to have a follow Jennifer with us. We have with us today Dr. Jennifer White, who is an associate professor of insect ecology at the University of

Kentucky. Dr. White's laboratory research focuses on investigating the ecological, evolutionary and behavioral effects of bacterial endosymbionts and insects, which Jenn and I know a lot about, actually.

JENN T. 12:34

Right, right.

JENNY C. 12:35

Yeah, um in particular, and exploring the consequences of endosymbiont infection within the context of introduced species and biological control. I understood all of that. It sounds amazing, please. Did I do good?

Dr. Jen 12:50

You did amazing. That was so much jargon that came out of your mouth. That was fabulous.

JENNY C. 12:54

Oh, thank you. Welcome.

JENN T. 12:57

That's what it feels like to be an actor on like some sort of like "Star Trek" where you're just like "These are just words, they're not bah, bah, bah, bah, bah," you just kind of get into a cadence. You're like, I think I know what I'm saying. Right?

Dr. Jen 13:09

Well, the entire trick with scientific names and stuff is to just say them with confidence, because nobody knows. It's just all you know, you just, it's magicicada. And that's the genus of cicadas. And if somebody else says "Well, it's different," you say "Okay, well, that's how you say it. I say it my way, whatever. We're good."

JENN T. 13:24

You said that-, you said that almost like musically for such horrific beasts. Just...

Dr. Jen 13:30

Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

JENN T. 13:32

...I'm kidding. I told myself I wasn't gonna do that thing where I pretend that I don't understand the function of insects in this world. As gross as they can feel to me I know that almost every single one of them has a place in nature.

Dr. Jen 13:46

Yeah. And you know, I mean, it is fair that this is gonna be kind of overwhelming for y'all. So it's, you know, it's fair to be like, this is more than I really want to hear but you at least only have to do it like every 17 years, so.

JENN T. 13:58

I'll probably be dead before the next one. Okay.

JENNY C. 14:02

Here's hoping not.

Dr. Jen 14:05

Here's here's hoping not.

JENN T. 14:06

Before we get into nature's curse, we're gonna, we're gonna start with our first Jennionaire. That's another scientific term that also rolls right off the tongue. So and I probably going to refer to you as Dr. White because I worry that if there's too many Jenn, Jennys and Jennifers floating around that the listener will be like, I do not know who this is.

Dr. Jen 14:28

Uh could you do Dr. Jen?

JENN T. 14:30

Dr. Jen!

JENNY C. 14:31

Dr. Jen, perfect.

Dr. Jen 14:32

Then we got the Gen. X i don't-, i don't really, I don't like my last name.

JENN T. 14:40

You can be Jennifer if you want because she's Jenny and I'm Jenn. Do we feel great about that?

Dr. Jen 14:43

I am Jen. I am, I am horrified by Jennifer.

JENN T. 14:47

As am I. As am I, we're gonna get into it.

JENNY C. 14:49

And to be, to be clear this is a Jen, this is Dr. Jen with one n.

Dr. Jen 14:54

I am one n, definitely a one n Jen.

JENN T. 14:57

Well, you know how I feel about that. Where's that other n going? Excuse me.

Dr. Jen 15:02

I mean, you know when you hyphenate... I don't know anyway. [LAUGHS]

JENN T. 15:08

Dr. Jenn, which is so fun. I feel like we're starting like a science show somewhere and yes, Dr. Jenn and something bright flashes across the screen, right? Why did your parents name you, Jennifer?

Dr. Jen 15:20

I don't really even know. They just wanted something, they wanted something unusual.

JENNY C. 15:29

What???

JENN T. 15:30

Okay, wait, okay. May I ask? Are you comfortable sharing the year that you were born with us?

Dr. Jen 15:35

I was born in 1971. I'm at the very front end of the Jennifers

JENNY C. 15:41

You were a tastemaker is what you were.

Dr. Jen 15:43

[LAUGHS] My parents, you know, so-, so-, so the myth is that like a lot of people went with the name Jennifer because of the movie "Love Story."

JENNY C. 15:51

Yes, which we hate!

Dr. Jen 15:52

Hey, yeah well, I've never seen it because the same thing. Like it's like, I don't need to see this crappy movie. But it was, it was just after I was born. So they were ahead of this but then they got caught. And here's the thing. I was like, this has been the curse of my life, right? I don't like this, I you know, just all the other Jennifers all the time. And so when I had kids, I have two daughters and when I had kids, I was like, okay, we are not taking any baby names that are anywhere on the top 100 of the baby names...

Dr. Jen 16:25

...for the last whatever, whatever, whatever. And it was great with my first daughter....

JENN T. 16:26

Yes!

JENN T. 16:27

Moredecai

Dr. Jen 16:32

...to my second daughter, baby Charlotte was born to the royal family and now poor Charlotte is up there in the top 10 again,

JENN T. 16:41

This is not the first time the royal family has screwed somebody over. Unacceptable.

JENNY C. 16:49

That happened, that happened to my cousin. His name is Cullen, which is an Irish name. And then the movie "Twilight" came out when he was in middle school and they were like are you named after Twilight? He's like, yes 12 years ago before Twilight came out my parents, you know.

Dr. Jen 17:09

it does work in my favor in the sense that people will then assume I am younger than I actually am. So.

JENNY C. 17:16

We're all exactly the age we're supposed to be I say and we all fit in that Jennifer, that beautiful reign of terror of time in America. So do you know what other names your parents were considering for you?

Dr. Jen 17:30

Guinevere

JENN T. 17:32

WHAT???

JENNY C. 17:34

This is my story, this is my story is what it is.

JENN T. 17:38

I cannot handle this, this clear anti-Guinevere propaganda that has been just ugh.

JENNY C. 17:46

Yeah, do you know why they, what they, was it too unusual?

Dr. Jen 17:50

I don't actually, don't remember why they ended up going for Jennifer rather than Guinevere. I think they didn't like Gwen and that as a nickname which is actually, I love Gwen. It's like I wouldn't mind being a Gwen. I'd be quite happy as a Gwen but they didn't like it, and it, there's another side story was that my um my gran one of my grandmothers was like "Well, okay, that's an okay name but don't ever go by Jenny," because I had an Aunt Jenny that I didn't like at all. And I was Jenny like from my entire growing up and I still my friends and family my like old friends like high school and earlier still call me Jenny. And it's like a nice warm fuzzy for me to be called Jenny because that's like the people I've known the longest. But yeah, my whatever past and deceased relation didn't like the name Jenny just I guess that's just too bad.

JENN T. 18:40

Same, present company excluded.

JENNY C. 18:43

I'm just gonna keep flying the Jenny flag. And that's fine.

Dr. Jen 18:47

I love Jenny, just not Jennifer.

JENN T. 18:49

So I think, I think I know the answer to this question, but I'm still gonna ask "How has being named Jennifer affected your life?"

Dr. Jen 18:57

Well, I mean, you know, I'm kind of you both have more interesting last names. I have. I mean, I'm Jennifer White. I'm Jennifer Anne White.

JENN T. 19:11

Oh God

Dr. Jen 19:13

My middle name has an E on it. That is the one and only claim to any level of interesting. It's Anne with an E.

JENN T. 19:20

Your your initials are almost JAWS

Dr. Jen 19:22

My name are, my initials are almost JAWS.

JENN T. 19:26

And basically that shark could do no wrong as far as I'm concerned. Hot take, JAWS was the good guy. Just saying, just saying. Well, I'm always gonna err on the side of of animals and instincts. Like I can't we, can't be mad at them for that. I'm sure we'll get into that in a second.

JENNY C. 19:40

It's true.

Dr. Jen 19:41

It's true enough. But so anyway, having a very common common name means that I've lived on the same street as another Jennifer White. I have, there is another Jennifer Anne White with an E who works at the University of Kentucky. We get each other's emails.

JENNY C. 19:58

Whoa. On the other hand, it would be easier to do crimes as a Jennifer Anne White.

Dr. Jen 20:05

When people, when people Google me, you know, I'm a little more anonymous because there's just, it gets to a lot of different people, though the only thing that's my worst is my my best friend in sixth grade was Jennifer Johnson.

JENN T. 20:05

[LAUGHS]

JENN T. 20:17

Well, Jennifer Smith is is not far behind. It goes to her.

Dr. Jen 20:21

Those two are much, much higher than mine, but it's still not easy.

JENNY C. 20:27

Now, you mentioned having other Jennifer Whites on your street? How many friends do you have named Jennifer, Jenn or Jenny?

Dr. Jen 20:35

Actually, not all that many I have, you know, some again, from sort of back in the day, and I have you know, some random Facebook friends that I'm still in touch with a little bit that are also Jenny, but actually if I think of like my current circle of friends, I don't particularly have any I just you know, exchange emails with the other Jennifer Anne White when we get each other's emails.

JENN T. 20:55

How often are you just like "Ugh another email for you other Jennifer Anne White" just constantly.

Dr. Jen 21:01

It's about, I would say once every week or two. It's not too often but it's often enough. But she's like human resources and I'm bugs. So she gets a bug email she knows it's really for me. If I get something about somebody getting fired. I know it's for her.

JENN T. 21:17

Or even worse, because we all know of all kinds of things end up in the human resources department and nobody wants that email. Boy oh boy. Okay, so what are you saved as in some friends' cell phones?

Dr. Jen 21:31

Probably mostly just Jen.

JENN T. 21:32

Oh really not like Bug Lady or something? Which is no offense, I think probably what I would be like Bug Jen.

Dr. Jen 21:38

Oh, yeah, that's fair. That's fair. I mean, I also birdwatch, so I'm pretty sure some of the some of the people I've just recently met met, birdwatching might be having me in there is like a birder.

JENN T. 21:48

Okay I find that interesting and maybe we'll get into that, because it feels like the two things you like, it's like, our polar opposites like birds. I think a lot of them probably eat insects...

Dr. Jen 21:57

Oh they do.

JENN T. 21:58

Your two interests are just like prey, and the other word...

Dr. Jen 22:02

Predator

JENN T. 22:03

Thank you very much.

Dr. Jen 22:04

A lot of insects are predators, too, right? So they eat other insects, so...

JENN T. 22:08

Don't I know it.

JENNY C. 22:12

Now, if you were to change your name as an adult, what name would you choose?

Dr. Jen 22:19

You know I thought about that and the truth is, I'm pretty reconciled with Jen, I don't know that I would change it. I might change my last name if it came down to it but if I didn't change my name when I got married, because I'd already published and it's weird, and it always just seemed weird to me to change your name. So I kept it even though I don't love it and then now it's like, you know, might have been, I would have preferred my married name just as a generally better last name. But for the first name I like Jen. I just don't like Jennifer.

JENN T. 22:49

It's also really, and we've talked about this in previous episodes, what you have to do to change your name is just incredibly annoying. And yeah, and I just think nobody, I talked about how I'm pretty sure you still have to do that thing where you put an ad in like the paper somewhere in case you're trying to evade the law in some way. That was something they used to make you do. Who knows if that's still the case. But you just had to announce to the world that you were changing your name, which feels wild, like, I'll just Tweet it, don't worry about it. You'll hear about it.

Dr. Jen 23:16

Yeah, I have one friend who's had, who's changed her name several times legally. And yeah, it's a major pain in the butt. Because you know, then it's all these other names that are tracking, you know, she's gotten remarried or different things have happened. And so it's just not. Yeah, it's not worth it.

JENNY C. 23:33

Yeah this is an anti-paperwork podcast. We're not, we don't support it.

JENN T. 23:40

And the last question we already answered, your middle name is Anne, which is also my mother's middle name. No, E so...

Dr. Jen 23:48

well, I got that one.

JENN T. 23:49

Yep. So now ooh, boy, let's get into this absolute biblical nightmare that we haven't even really gotten to the bad part yet. They actually just started singing today. I heard is today and I was like "What's that horrendous ear shattering?" I was like "Oh oh, somebody's trying to get laid."

JENNY C. 24:09

Yeah so I mentioned to Jenn, before you came on that I have not seen a single cicada. And I think they're avoiding me and I don't know if I should be happy about that or offended.

Dr. Jen 24:23

I mean, I guess I guess it depends on exactly how irritating it gets for me. I could see it's hard to imagine that you're not going to hear them.

JENNY C. 24:31

Yeah, I do live right by our big park in DC. So I imagine once they really start going at it.

Dr. Jen 24:36

Yeah you'll hear it.

JENNY C. 24:37

But we have um we have some great questions and we actually um have some questions at the end from our Instagram followers. They had some.

Dr. Jen 24:44

Oh fabulous.

JENNY C. 24:45

But um, can you tell us what role do cicadas play in nature, good or bad. And by this, we do mean, you know, flies, feed spiders and spiders keep the insect population down those sorts of things. So what are cicadas doing for the world?

Dr. Jen 25:00

Alright well, first, it's being a little judgy that they gotta do something for the world, right? They're just living. They're just doing their thing. But but from a human perspective of like, what do they do that we think is a good thing. They certainly feed a lot of birds and a lot of other critters. So there's like this bonanza of food going on right now that the squirrels and the birds and various other critters are going to be like, really, really set for a while so.

JENN T. 25:27

So when they come back, it's kind of like when McDonald's brings the McRib back. And everybody's like, "You guys uh the McRib is back."

Dr. Jen 25:34

Right

JENN T. 25:35

Then they go crazy.

Dr. Jen 25:36

Yes. And then, but then the deal is like, the McRib comes back and everybody's like, okay, I had one and I'm kind of bored with them now. So I'm not going to have anymore. And that's exactly what the cicadas are doing. There's like, there's bazillions of them. And everybody goes, Oh, my God, this is great, and start shoving them in their mouth. And then after a while, they're like, ooh, but I'm done with that. And then the rest of the cicadas get to go on and do their business

and lay eggs and repeat the lifecycle. They also aerate the soil, right, all those little tunnels that come out that gives them good places for the rain to get in. They cycle some nutrients right when they all die in another month or so all that nutrients goes back into the soil and gets-, gets-, gets moved back in. And whether this is sort of a plus or minus, they do end up pruning the trees a little bit because they lay their eggs in the twigs and then the twig, some of them break and fall...

JENN T. 26:23

This is a minus, this is a minus, this is a minus.

Dr. Jen 26:25

This is a minus in the short term, but the next year those trees will do a lot more um pluses like they'll have better fruits, better flowers and things like that.

JENNY C. 26:34

There we go. Now Jenn has your dog Lorraine, who keeps popping into the frame, has she been eating them?

JENN T. 26:40

No, she's super picky. This is the one time where I will use that pickiness to my advantage because she refuses to eat dog food and I guess also cicadas, but something that you may or may not know. Dr. Jenn in DC at least which is where Jenny is and I'm in Maryland, a lot of DC restaurants are, have special Cicada dishes that they're serving. which is such a DC thing to do. Like just like just let them come out and have sex and do their thing. Like what now people are eating them. It's horrendous.

JENNY C. 27:14

But we are, we have tater tots. Let's stick to that. You know?

Dr. Jen 27:18

Well, if you think about it, they're not that different than like shrimp. Like tree shrimp.

JENN T. 27:24

Oh, boy tree shrimp!

JENNY C. 27:25

Tree shrimp!

Dr. Jen 27:26

Yeah, I wish I could take credit for that but that's actually Martha Weiss at Georgetown University was the one who I first heard use that.

JENN T. 27:33

Right up the street, Martha!

JENNY C. 27:35

Coming up the street. And actually, oh, go ahead.

Dr. Jen 27:37

I was just gonna say I believe she is doing a lot of culinary fun with the uh, with the cicadas herself.

JENNY C. 27:45

Good for Dr. Martha. Actually, one of our Instagram followers @champagneofgirls did ask "Have you ever tasted a cicada?"

Dr. Jen 27:54

I have not. I mean, this is the first time I've seen the you know, abundant periodical cicadas at all ever was today. So it's like you caught me on the day where I first saw this and I was trying to explain to one of my colleagues, he's kind of like, Oh, that's, uh, you know, wasn't really like getting how excited I was like "You, you don't understand. I have never seen this before." This is not like, oh, I'm remembering back to my ancient childhood days and like we've capturing those. This is my first first ever encounter with them. So for me, this is like, the most exciting thing ever.

JENN T. 28:30

This is my third. And I blocked it out. I just I truly blocked it out. So

JENNY C. 28:37

Well we're happy for you Dr. Jen.

JENN T. 28:39

I am excited. Yeah. Okay, so what are they doing for the 17 years that they aren't here? And is this some sort of witch's curse and do other nature or excuse me do other insects in nature acts similarly. I mean, 17 years, feels aggressive. That's a long time.

Dr. Jen 28:57

It's a really long time. I mean, that's as long as my teenage daughter has been alive, right? She this is I look at these things coming out of the ground. And it's like, I think about how much my kid has changed in that time. And it's like, and they're as old as my kid. And it's just, it's nuts. And really, they're, they're not sleeping, they're just eating the world's worst diet. I mean, it's like the, you know, like Slimfast you know, those liquid meal replacement type diets. It's like they're on that and it takes them 17 years to get to where they need to be and that's why they're so long.

JENN T. 29:31

Okay, wait so are how far away from my dainty feet walking along? Are they like are they are they right there? I mean, how far away are they how many feet?

Dr. Jen 29:42

I think they're pretty deep in but I don't actually know exactly how deep they'll go at the at the tip of it but then they'll come back up you know, get get closer to the top as as they're getting closer to emerging and they're super super tiny when they start right so like when they, the eggs hatch it you know, 10 weeks from now, it'll be these little teeny teeny little things that start out going down there because the eggs are, you know, a few millimeters at best.

JENN T. 30:08

Are they gonna drop onto my head when I'm walking?

Dr. Jen 30:10

Probably, probably not particularly.

JENN T. 30:12

Okay

JENNY C. 30:13

Jenn is really upset with all of this information. All of it. She's very upset by it, Jenn, just get a nice straw hat. It'll be okay.

Dr. Jen 30:23

I mean, the truth is, there's a little insects probably falling on you all the time. It's not gonna be any worse.

JENNY C. 30:30

Don't tell her that. Don't tell her that.

JENN T. 30:31

No, I gotta, I gotta finish this podcast from the shower.

Dr. Jen 30:36

So sorry. I'll try to be more sensitive. We should you're going to put a content warning on the beginning. Like as this times like, okay, we're going to talk about trigger warning. I'm going to type trigger warning.

JENNY C. 30:45

Yeah this is way worse than that. The episode where we talked about a murder in gruesome detail.

Dr. Jen 30:52

You're painin' me. This hurts so much.

JENNY C. 30:55

I'm so sorry. We totally, we respect you. We respect the cicadas from a distance. We're very glad that this is happening and also ending at some point.

JENN T. 31:06

Yay!

JENNY C. 31:08

And so I love this question, because Jenn worded it. It's not quite a question. I'm going to read it as is because I love it. Um "I feel like they have wings. But don't fly question mark. I mostly see either their exoskeletons hanging on to some surface, and I truly don't understand why they're here." Period.

Dr. Jen 31:32

Oh, they fly. They do fly. They fly a lot. If you haven't seen any flying around yet?

JENN T. 31:37

Actually. And I wrote these questions before before today. But today was the first day that I saw like they they and they my mother said to me, she goes they're blind. And I was like, or are they they have these giant eyes. That feels really silly. And so she doesn't know she's not a doctor. But I'm one like they just keep flying past me reckless abandonment. It's just no respect for my space.

Dr. Jen 32:06

Well, I think again, the volume, the pure volume of them that you're going to be dealing with. It's just, you know, they'll set each other off.

JENN T. 32:12

They don't fly very high. I mean, here's the thing. Here's what here's what's been happening. Here's where we are in our cycle. And I'm if you're going on in the same way, I guess you're a little behind us. So one or two start to show up. And then suddenly, when you look at almost every tree, at least where I am, I'm in the suburbs, so there's more trees, and less diversity. So when you look at every every tree, they're just there all of a sudden, and they're quite still. And I don't just mean they're exoskeletons, because I know what that is. And I know what's happening there. But I rarely do you see them moving. So what is happening in this stillness after they have shed their exoskeletons? They're just what are they waiting for? What's happening?

Dr. Jen 32:55

So they're, they're trying to avoid attracting attention, right? They're gonna get they're gonna..

JENN T. 33:00

It's too late. It's too fucking late.

Dr. Jen 33:01

Yeah, they're trying really hard. But for like birds and things, they're going to catch them a lot easier when they're moving. Like, if you move, that's what draws your attention. So if you move the predator sees you and goes after you so if you hold still, even if you're this, you know, monstrous looking black and orange bug, it's harder to see you than if you're moving around. So they will try to stay still, quite a lot of the time. They're also still eating so they have their mouthparts. So this is a little you know, proboscis that they put into the tree and then tap into the xylem the water system of the tree, and then there'll be feeding so that's also partly why they're still because they have to be still to do that. So

JENN T. 33:43

Well, and I also sent you a photo and I have not seen I don't know if you remember getting this email and it was a it was clear was actually quite beautiful. It was this the Cicada was almost clear, or white. And I thought if they all look like this like Mothman, I'd be totally in business like I and then I've never seen one that looks like that since maybe he was a weird little albino.

Dr. Jen 34:06

It was brand new. He had just come out so so they're really fresh when that's the one. So this is the whole story this morning. My husband comes downstairs and he says, I think there's one of those cicadas on the wheel of our car. And it's really blonde. And I looked at it...

JENN T. 34:25

And it's having more fun.

Dr. Jen 34:28

So much fun. And so yeah, I ran upstairs and went looked and sure enough so they're there. You know, they first pop out of those exoskeletons, they have to inflate their wings, which is really pretty if you can actually see that part of it. And then they stay white for maybe an hour or two and they gradually start darkening and they can't fly at all until they darken up some because they're just too soft. So they can walk a little bit but they try not to do very much. They're just hanging out and trying to harden up and then they can start flying once they get darker and can fly but they're still not 100% there. So like things like that they need about a week before they'll start, have it be mature enough to like mate and do their singing and things like that.

JENN T. 35:11

Same

JENNY C. 35:14

So they start out kind of like dinner rolls. They're like, soft and they're really...

Dr. Jen 35:18

Well, that's most most of the culinary aspect is if you can catch them right at that stage, like that's when they're they're really soft. They're not all the crunchy bits.

JENNY C. 35:28

That's the veal of the bug.

Dr. Jen 35:30

Yes it is, yup.

JENN T. 35:33

Oh, God. Well, speaking of the singing, this is just a goofy question. So what artists do you think they most resemble? And do they deserve a residency in Las Vegas? Like, should they be replacing Britney Spears?

Dr. Jen 35:46

Well, I mean, all clearly it's going to be some sort of electronica. Right? Because I mean, just sort of the like droning house like just goes on and on and on, and that sort of thing. But you know, I don't that's not really my style of music. So I don't have like, it's clearly this person. But I did look in there is an electronica band called Cicada. And I thought, oh, that'd be it. And then I listened to it. And it really doesn't sound like Cicadas at all. I was very disappointed.

JENNY C. 36:11

Off brand, off brand. Yeah, maybe some sort of electronic DJ who wears a Cicada mask. And gets laid a lot, I guess.

JENN T. 36:24

Yeah. And then years later, we find out hideous sexual harassment charge, and then we don't get to listen to the music anymore. Guys, stop it.

JENN T. 36:32

Stop it.

JENNY C. 36:34

Stop it.

Dr. Jen 36:34

I would guess that we're going to see a plethora of TikTok videos that have people overlaying other other beats on top of the Cicadas? I mean, who wouldn't do that?

JENN T. 36:46

Yeah. And I think it's going to it was not quite so loud. So it's speaking of the singing, does it happen primarily do you know, during the day or at night, because I am a very light sleeper, and I will not be able to handle this madness during the night.

Dr. Jen 37:00

That is an excellent question and I don't know the answer, because I haven't experienced it yet. And I forgot to look that one up. The Dog Day Cicadas, the annual cicadas are there in the day.

So you hear those primarily during the heat of the day. I don't know whether these ones will be day or night. It will probably be one or the other.

JENNY C. 37:19

More to be revealed.

Dr. Jen 37:20

More to be revealed. You'll have to wait and see. I'm sorry, I can't answer that one.

JENNY C. 37:24

Now, you talked a bit about kind of what the Cicadas are doing down there for 17 years. But how is their internal clock so accurate, that they all come out at the same time? And can we use it to learn how to make people on time for social events?

JENN T. 37:41

[LAUGHING]

Dr. Jen 37:41

Well, I'm the excellent questions. And they in the personal they're not perfect. Some of them do come out the wrong year. So there are you know, the early birds that show up way before you ready for him at the party. And then the late late late ones that you're like, what are you doing the party's over stop go away. So they're not perfect. But and we don't entirely know how they do it. So we know, what they're probably doing is sensing the difference in the tree. So like the tree, the changes in like the nutrient content and the water pressure and things like that, and then the temperature too. So there's a lot of cues that okay, the season has changed. So they'll know and but somehow they're counting, somehow they're counting and getting to the right number and then getting to know like, okay, it's go time,

JENN T. 38:28

Like a little Count of Monte Cristo has done. They're just like, ticking those years off until they can escape.

Dr. Jen 38:34

Until they can get get to the right one. And if they're going to be wrong, it's either usually about one year or four years. And so...

JENN T. 38:44

That's a big difference.

Dr. Jen 38:45

It's a big difference. But so so at some point, they're like, okay, it's go time, and if they if they decide that they might decide it, like four years early, and then there's this whole, like, I mean, again, this is, you know, science nerds, how we get into this sort of stuff, and it's like, okay, so here's a whole bunch of them that came out four years early. Are they gonna keep going on this

four years early and just be every 13 years from that point on? Or are they gonna just try and be in 17 years again, you know, and just to have started up a new new set of them, because if you look around the country, you've got the big Brood X group here, right? You know, that's what you guys...

JENN T. 39:19

Oh!

Dr. Jen 39:19

...with right now.

JENN T. 39:20

It's 10. Not x. I've been saying x.

Dr. Jen 39:22

It's Brood 10, it's Brood 10.

JENN T. 39:23

Okay, this is just like Jason X versus Jason 10. The Friday the 13th films. Now I know.

Dr. Jen 39:29

Yeah, it is-, it is a Roman numeral and that's by year. So every seventh age of the 17 years, there is a Brood 1, Brood 2, Brood 3 for the entire 17 year cycle.

JENNY C. 39:40

We're not as good at counting as the Cicadas.

Dr. Jen 39:45

Well, and then there's 13 year Cicadas and they get higher brood numbers after that. And then there's some years that there are no broods, because they've gone extinct, and so there's no Brood 11 there's no Brood 12, so.

JENN T. 39:58

There's no-, there's not going to be a Brood 13 because we don't allow 13 floors in this country and we're certainly not going to allow...

JENNY C. 40:04

It's bad luck.

Dr. Jen 40:06

Brood 13's gonna hang on there, but that's in like Wisconsin and Iowa and Northern Illinois. So you won't be dealing with that when they're here.

JENN T. 40:12

The flyover states. Forget it.

JENNY C. 40:14

Hey, that's where I'm from.

JENN T. 40:21

Okay, so roughly how many cicadas are we talking about hanging underground and emerging like zombies to ruin patios.

Dr. Jen 40:30

Billions and billions?

JENNY C. 40:32

Billions?

Dr. Jen 40:33

Billions

JENNY C. 40:33

Whoa

JENN T. 40:34

No. No, no, no, no. Dr. Jen. No, no.

Dr. Jen 40:38

Not all in one spot. It's just really the area.

JENNY C. 40:41

Yeah, Jen, not at your house. [LAUGHS]

JENN T. 40:48

Don't turn around. Oh God. [LAUGHS]

Dr. Jen 40:53

Oh, when I was out taking pictures this morning, though, I did actually at one point look, and I hadn't had one land on my shoulder.

JENN T. 41:00

Like a little Jiminy Cricket.

Dr. Jen 41:02

I know. I tried so hard to get a selfie but by the time I've got the camera up, it was just it was gone. I couldn't do it.

JENNY C. 41:08

I'm sure you'll have another chance.

Dr. Jen 41:10

I might although you know, again here we're not getting I have you know, several hundred here at my house but it doesn't seem to be widespread at this point. So I don't know we just going to have one of these little like satellite populations and it's going to get all eaten by birds and we're you suppose propagate this year?

JENN T. 41:27

Were you supposed to get them in Kentucky?

JENN T. 41:29

No well, parts of Kentucky get 'em. We weren't-, we weren't in Lexington, we get more Brood 14s. So that's four years from now um was when we get the big outbreak of them. And so that's when I was expecting so I didn't think I'd see any at all this year. So that's, you know, kind of why I'm over the top excited about this is like we were supposed to have them. And we do and they're at my house. But I don't know that we're going to have like lots and lots of them. Like you guys will. So that's for y'all.

JENNY C. 42:01

Related question. What is the longest nap you Dr. Jennifer White have ever taken above or below ground?

Dr. Jen 42:09

You know, I just I never get naps. It's just not a thing for me. I you know, I occasionally will not off trying to read something. But it does, it's not even a real nap because then I'm like, I can't do that. And then I keep kind of shaking it off. I mean, probably, you know, a couple hours somewhere along the line. But that's I'm not a big napper. It is easy, you know, they don't have a lot going on. So.

JENN T. 42:39

Naps are very disorienting. I don't understand why people like them. Like, I can't tell you how many times I've thought 7pm was 7am. Like it's very, I'm not. It's not great. It's not a great feeling.

JENNY C. 42:50

I'm, I'm Team Nap. I would rather be asleep most of the time. I mean, I like my life, but like, should I be awake for it? I don't know.

JENN T. 43:01

Well, you and a billion Cicadas have that in common. Okay, so now we're going to take a few questions from our Instagram followers.

Dr. Jen 43:12

Alrighty

JENN T. 43:12

This this first one is great. I don't even I don't even know if you've heard about what's been happening but it's from @carolinesucks_. And this is in reference to an article I sent Jenny about the Cicadas getting high on, there's some sort of fungus and they're turning into you should read this one, Jenny. They're turning into zombies whose butts fall off upon emergence, which "Who among us?" how and why is this happening? And can we the Jennifers be mad about it?

Dr. Jen 43:48

I mean, given that you don't really care much for the Cicadas you should probably be rooting for this fungus.

JENNY C. 43:55

It's very, it's very it's very upsetting the image of something being born mainly to have sex and then its butt falls off.

Dr. Jen 44:04

Yeah so it is, it is no no chances it has no genitalia anymore, but they tried to the-, the-, the mind-blowing fungus has, you know, it keeps them active. And then the weird part is it'll make the males act like females. So, you know, normal. Wait

JENN T. 44:23

Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. We need to get this to the human men of the world.

JENNY C. 44:31

They start cooperating better.

Dr. Jen 44:34

Well I mean, but then they pass on an STD so...

JENN T. 44:37

They're doing that anyway. This still feels like a W so.

Dr. Jen 44:44

You know, so so the males are the only ones that can sing right? Because they have all the special organs that can do the resonating and so they do the loud calls, and females don't have any of that so they can't call back. So they just like flick their wings and make a little clicking noise. That's how they talk back to the males and say, "Hey, baby, okay, maybe you know." So that's, that's that's sort of what's going on. And the males that you know, have the fungus in there, but falls off. They also can't really they can't do the deed the normal way. But they can try and trick other males into thinking that they're females. So they'll click their wings back at the

uninfected males, and try and convince these uninfected males that they're females, and then those uninfected males will come mate with them and pick up the fungus.

JENNY C. 44:47

Oh, that's so manipulative. That is like a man.

Dr. Jen 45:08

They're very very manipulative.

JENN T. 45:33

Okay when you say, mate, I assume you don't mean like, nothing can come of this or can they?

Dr. Jen 45:39

No, yeah, they can't. They can't. I mean, it's it's the copulation without the reproduction.

JENNY C. 45:44

So they're like Incels who are mad that they can't reproduce, and so they punish other healthy men.

Dr. Jen 45:53

I guess. I mean, I guess I don't know, the metaphor for me, I'd maybe, probably to my own good, I have not delved deeply into what motivates and drives Incels, but

JENN T. 46:05

Rejection and entitlement and that's about it

Dr. Jen 46:07

Right, right.

JENN T. 46:09

So I guess, I guess, I'm trying to understand why the healthy males, they can be so easily fooled. Just a click of the wing, they have no other sense of the, I'm gonna say sex, gender is fluid, especially in this case. I'm just gonna say the sex of them. They just don't know. They're like, Oh, it's clicking. That's all I need.

Dr. Jen 46:30

Well I mean, so Okay. You get, I mean, this is sort of across all organisms, right? The males have the, the low input gametes, they have the sperm, they can fertilize lots and lots and lots of females. So their biology tends to be like, the more females I can get, the better off I do. So they're not actually really wired, generally speaking to be super picky. Want to mate. And females usually, don't you they might make a few times. But usually, they don't need to mate nearly as often as males do, because often one meeting with the male gives them because insects in any way. Let's not go outside of insects, but in insects, females can store the sperm. So basically, they often they can only meet once, and then they can just have the sperm

hanging out in their bodies and then just fertilize as they go as they lay their hundreds and hundreds of eggs.

JENNY C. 47:31

What???

JENN T. 47:33

Wait, because obviously I know that human sperm can live inside of your body for up to five days. I am aware of that. Yeah, so are we saying...

JENNY C. 47:41

They have like a travel mug full of the sperm.

Dr. Jen 47:44

Yeah, there's an entire organ that stores it. And they, I mean, you think about some of those like social insects where they I apologies to any social entomol-, entomologists in case I get this wrong. But some of these insects will have like a mating flight they mate once maybe with several different individuals, but that's it. And then they are in their like hive or their their colony and just keep pumping out babies for years based on that one meeting. So they get to store the sperm for a really long time.

JENNY C. 48:15

So it's like a self-sustaining sperm bank.

Dr. Jen 48:18

Kind of I mean, it's not it's not replenishing. So right once it's gone, it's gone. But yeah, they can keep it going for a really long time. So in any case, for insects in a right there's often no motivation to mate more than once or maybe a couple times because maybe your first mate wasn't as good as your second mate is then you can and then there's all kinds of funky insect things where little like dig the sperm out from a previous meeting so they can add their own they can put their own psychotropic drugs in the male's can so that the females less willing to mate again.

JENN T. 48:51

That you mean they're getting dosed. They're getting, they're getting slipped slipped a mickey.

Dr. Jen 48:57

Pretty much yeah.

JENNY C. 48:58

So that they won't want to mate with someone else, after.

Dr. Jen 49:01

They won't want to mate with another male Yeah, so that they are occupied by what they their first mating.

JENNY C. 49:07

You know what men are just terrible across the board.

Dr. Jen 49:12

At least in that case, that would be male Katydid, but sure.

JENN T. 49:17

Okay I want to ask a crazy question. That's probably gonna make me seem a little pervy, the trigger warning. So, okay, I'm just going to ask it, orgasms. Do we know if I'll just say insects because that's your area of expertise. Like I understand the purpose of sex and I always thought like orgasms were thrown in as like a temptation like, hey, in case you're getting tired of this thing, don't forget you can feel good while doing it. That's we need you to have these babies or whatever. Whoever designed our machine bodies. And sex, the grossest where as this like, are you going to edit this out? like well, Jenn asked a very weird question about insect orgasms. Want to know cuz I know that their driving force to mate is to reproduce it, it's obviously more, like, there's no like, we have to be in love and we have to feel things. None of that's there but like what about...

Dr. Jen 50:09

You know, it is really hard to know, because people argue about whether insects can feel pain or not. So, you know, you there has to be some level of instinct to do the deed, obviously, but whether it is motivated by any form of pleasure, I would not tend to think so. But I, you know, again, there's a lot of like, we don't really fully understand how insect brain works. You know, they have, they have a lot fewer neurons than we do, but they still have a pretty sophisticated nervous system. I mean, they're very fast in the reaction times and they can do amazing amazing things with a lot less than, you know, sort of what we have in our in our in terms of like neural neurons and things. But the, you know, there's, there's interesting things like, you know, praying mantises, the female will, like eat the head of the male and he can still keep copulating, right. So, you know, they're there, there's some disconnect in sec bodies between the brain and what the brain is doing and what the rest of their body is doing. So they can sort of just keep doing that. But there are also a lot of systems where, you know, the insemination is traumatic, and insects where you know, like, there's actually like spikes and things and...

JENN T. 51:25

Oh like who has like the is it ducks? Or somebody has like the corkscrew?

Dr. Jen 51:30

Yeah, those are ducks.

JENN T. 51:31

Yeah, there's, it's very painful, I believe.

JENNY C. 51:34

I don't want to be a duck.

JENN T. 51:37

[LAUGHS]

Dr. Jen 51:37

Yeah, most birds are very nice. But ducks man, they're, they're kind of messed up. And if you can tell your listeners if they want to see something that they just are not expecting at all, they should just google what duck genitalia looks like, because it is not expected.

JENNY C. 51:50

Nope, not doing it!

Dr. Jen 51:55

Edit it out, edit it out.

JENN T. 51:56

Oh, no, keep it in I can't wait to Google this.

Dr. Jen 52:00

I did this to my neighbor not that long ago. And she was like "Oh, no, oh, oh, I can't unsee. Oh."

JENN T. 52:06

She was like, I'm so sorry. I was just asking for some milk. But okay, duck genitalia. Okay.

Dr. Jen 52:13

So, so a lot of insects have very, very elaborate genitalia, as well, but some of them you know, they're like sort of locking heat in a way so that like they get into the in, copula and then they just, it's it's, it's elaborate, they have to, like fit in in just a particular way. And it's one of the other ways that they can deter females from wanting to mate again, is have it be kind of damaging.

JENN T. 52:36

Oh, my God, I can't believe that human men are so similar to all of these.

Dr. Jen 52:43

So are your listeners mostly men?

JENNY C. 52:47

Oddly, it's like almost even which, according to our, you know, analytics, it's like, it's like a 55% women, 45% men.

Dr. Jen 53:00

I guess the dude's must know what they're, what they're in for when listening?

JENNY C. 53:04

Oh yeah.

JENN T. 53:04

Oh yeah.

JENNY C. 53:05

They should. Um, so you answered one of our questions already, which was about what happens, like do they ever come out early? But @katshroe asks, "Why won't they leave my front door alone?" That's a great question.

JENN T. 53:23

It is a great question.

Dr. Jen 53:25

So like, they're just all over the front door, as they're not now when they went out to emerge, but they're just hanging out all over the front door.

JENNY C. 53:32

They're just hanging out. They're knocking. They're chillin'.

Dr. Jen 53:36

I mean, it's just probably a really good spot, it'd be, there's they like, they'll thermo regulate. So sometimes, like my front door faces east, so it's really warm in the morning. So like insects if they want, you know, they're ectotherms. So they need to like have the air temperature higher to actually be actually be active. So there's, you know, they might be thermal regulating, or they might be, it might be nice and protected. So they feel safe. I'm not sure.

JENN T. 54:04

This begs the question, how is the near constant heating up of our planet affecting their cycle, if at all

Dr. Jen 54:13

That that is one of the things that people are really interested in looking at this time around, and so so especially Broods that are off cycle, so like the ones that are coming out earlier than they expected? This is like so here in Lexington, are these ones that were actually laid 17 years ago, off cycle and part of Brood 10? Or these four years early of our Brood 14's? I'm not sure. And so the the expectation is, you know, if you look at sort of where these are distributed, the more southerly Broods are the 13 year ones. And so there seems like there'd be a likelihood that having more warming periods more like early springs that then shut back down and then come back up. These things might trigger faster development for them, so we might have more shifts

towards that 13 year or early emergencies or just re-, re syncing and calibrating amongst the different groups. So

JENN T. 55:08

Yeah a couple came out early. And then there was sort of like a cold snap and by cold snap I mean, like 60 degrees. And then those poor guys are just like welp. Look at these nerds come into the party on time.

Dr. Jen 55:21

Yeah, yep, yep, yep. And they, you know, so that that's one thing that we know is, is that the temperature is the soil temperature that dictates when they come out. So they're, like, ready to go. They're waiting for their cue, and it's about 64 degrees at like, eight inches down. And so once that happens, that's when that's go time. But, you know, so that we have that too. We had a long, kind of cool, it was beautiful weather for like, a week or two. And then it just the heat turned on two days ago, and they all came out today.

JENNY C. 55:53

Ta-dah!

JENN T. 55:57

Can I ask, that was all for our Cicadas questions, and I was hoping to just really quick ask you what it is you normally study you very kindly. Again, cicadas are not your area of expertise, but certainly sound like you know everything about them. But I was just wondering if you could just share with us what you actually do.

Dr. Jen 56:17

Oh, well it does intersect with with Cicadas a little bit anyway, so I work on bugs that infect bugs. I work on microbes in bugs. And some of them are like things the insects absolutely 100% need to survive. And that's true for Cicadas. So like I said, they were you know on this like horrible, horrible diet, right? There's like, you know, you have essential amino acids and nutrients that you need, all animals need. Cicadas are eating a diet that has none of it has none of these things. And so they have microbes in their body that they've evolved with for hundreds of millions of years, that are able to synthesize those nutrients that are gone. And so they need their bacteria in order to do their thing. And there's a really pretty interesting article in The Atlantic from like a week or two ago, which was talking about how messed up the microbes and cicadas are. So they actually have a lot of problems. But now because I don't do the Cicada ones, I actually work on aphids, a lot, which are kind of related to cicadas, it's another true bug that feeds on SAP. But they're, they're really cool. They're clones, they're all girls. But they're born pregnant. And then they like their baby machines. And they, they have they have the same sort of like nutritional microbes like that are different ones, but the same sort of thing, where they have nutritional microbes, but they also have these other bacteria that kind of get passed along maternally. So you're born with these bacteria. And they can do all kinds of interesting things. So like they can protect the aphid from parasitoids. So parasitoids are little teeny wasps that lay their eggs inside aphids and other insects, and then they eat them out from the inside. So like

it's a total inspiration for Xenomorphs. In aliens, like this is where it's a toy. That's the whole idea. And so they The amazing thing is like if the avian has the right bacteria in it, it's like, got kryptonite that protects it against the wall. So the wasp can lay the egg and then the egg just dies and the ape, it just goes along. And it's business. And so I'm an ecologist, I'm interested in things like well, how aphids and parasitoids interact, and it just is so cool to me that like that might depend on a bacteria. That's something that you normally think of as like a bad thing, obviously, yeah, bacteria doesn't really have a good, good image. Yeah, well, I mean, you know, there, I don't do like human microbiomes or anything, because that's way too complicated for me, because there's all these different kinds of bacteria, and they're in there. They're all doing all kinds of different things. And it's all very fluid, it's hard to tell, but it has a huge impact on your health. Like, we just don't even know they can change them. Sure it affects our our behavior in various ways. I'm sure it affects a lot of aspects of our health. But that's too complicated for me. So that's why I work on bugs. They're inherited, and there's only usually like one or two that really matter. And so we can actually figure out what those things are. And right now I'm working on spiders, which I never planned. But here I am. And I like them.

JENNY C. 59:24

But I like them. I like them because they eat mosquitoes is that they will eat a lot of other insects, they

Dr. Jen 59:31

do a lot of biological control. So spiders take care of a lot of like insect pests and things by eating them up and keeping them from our crops and all that sort of stuff. So spiders are good.

JENN T. 59:31

Jenny do you have a bug that you like or don't like for any reason any sort of weird visceral, like Jeff Daniels in Arachnophobia level of responses to any insects?

JENNY C. 59:53

I mean, I don't want to be like interacting with most bugs on a daily basis. I'm gonna be honest but I have a certain respect for centipedes because they they also eat other household bugs. So if I see a centipede on my wall, I'm just like "Hey, what's up? I know you're not going to bother me, I'm not going to bother you." But generally, I'm, you know, I just let them do their thing. And I'm going to do my thing. And, you know, there's a nice, quiet respect between the two of us.

JENN T. 1:00:29

That sounds about right. Okay Jenny would you like to take us out? I think we're, I think that was very informative.

JENNY C. 1:00:37

So informative.

JENN T. 1:00:39

I cannot believe how much I learned. I'm now going to be obsessed with aphids. The second you said all girls, I was on board.

JENNY C. 1:00:45

Yeah. And then we screamed a little bit when you said born pregnant, but we're gonna move past that um because they sound really fascinating. And this was so great. You are our first guest. So thank you so much for being our first Jennifer. And being a part of Jennifer Culture. And yeah, to our listeners, thank you so much. Follow us on Instagram @TooManyJennifers. We put up little pictures with the episode each week we will not be posting a picture of duck genitalia this week. I promise. I promise. Follow us on Twitter @TooManyJsPod or send us an email if you have comments, suggestions for future episodes or themes at TooManyJenniferspod@gmail.com. Bye bye.

JENNY C. 1:01:36

Bye!

Dr. Jen 1:01:37

Bye!

JENNY C. 1:01:39

Dr. Jen spoke to us today in her personal capacity and not as a representative of the University of Kentucky. All views are strictly her own.

(Upbeat music)

Too Many Jennifers,

Jenns Galore.

There are:

One million, five hundred fifty-five thousand, three hundred and four

According to the latest Census.

Like, whoa.