

Common Froghopper

Philaenus spumarius

Insects · Active Jun–Sep · cuckoo spit May–Jun



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A small, squat, extremely variable bug, ranging from pale straw through mottled brown to almost black, with a broad frog-like head. Common froghoppers are abundant on rough vegetation, verges, meadows and gardens across the Dumfries area, though far more people have seen the nymph's froth than the adult insect itself.

BEHAVIOUR

The nymph feeds on plant sap and blows the excess into a mass of bubbles — cuckoo spit — which hides it, keeps it damp and deters predators. The adult is one of the great jumpers of the animal world, accelerating at over 400 g and launching itself more than seventy times its own body length, out-performing a flea. It is also the main vector of the plant disease Xylella in Europe.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Froghoppers (Aphrophoridae)
SIZE	5–7 mm
STATUS	Native; abundant

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