

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick

Q. Dear Twig: Are electric cars really real?

A. Yes, indeed, they really are. They don't use any **gasoline**. They run on **electricity** from **batteries** — big, strong, rechargeable batteries.

They hardly make a peep of sound. And **they don't toot greenhouse gases from their tailpipe**. If that were only true of my brother. (Ha hee!) (Hi, Log!)

All of which sounds pretty cool. But electric cars also have drawbacks. Some cost more than a typical gas car, sometimes even a way lot more. Some are only fast enough to drive in non-big, non-fast places — on a college campus, for instance.

Some can only store enough power to go, say, 30 or 40 miles and then you need to charge them again. The high-tech tech that makes them tick is getting better and better. But even more

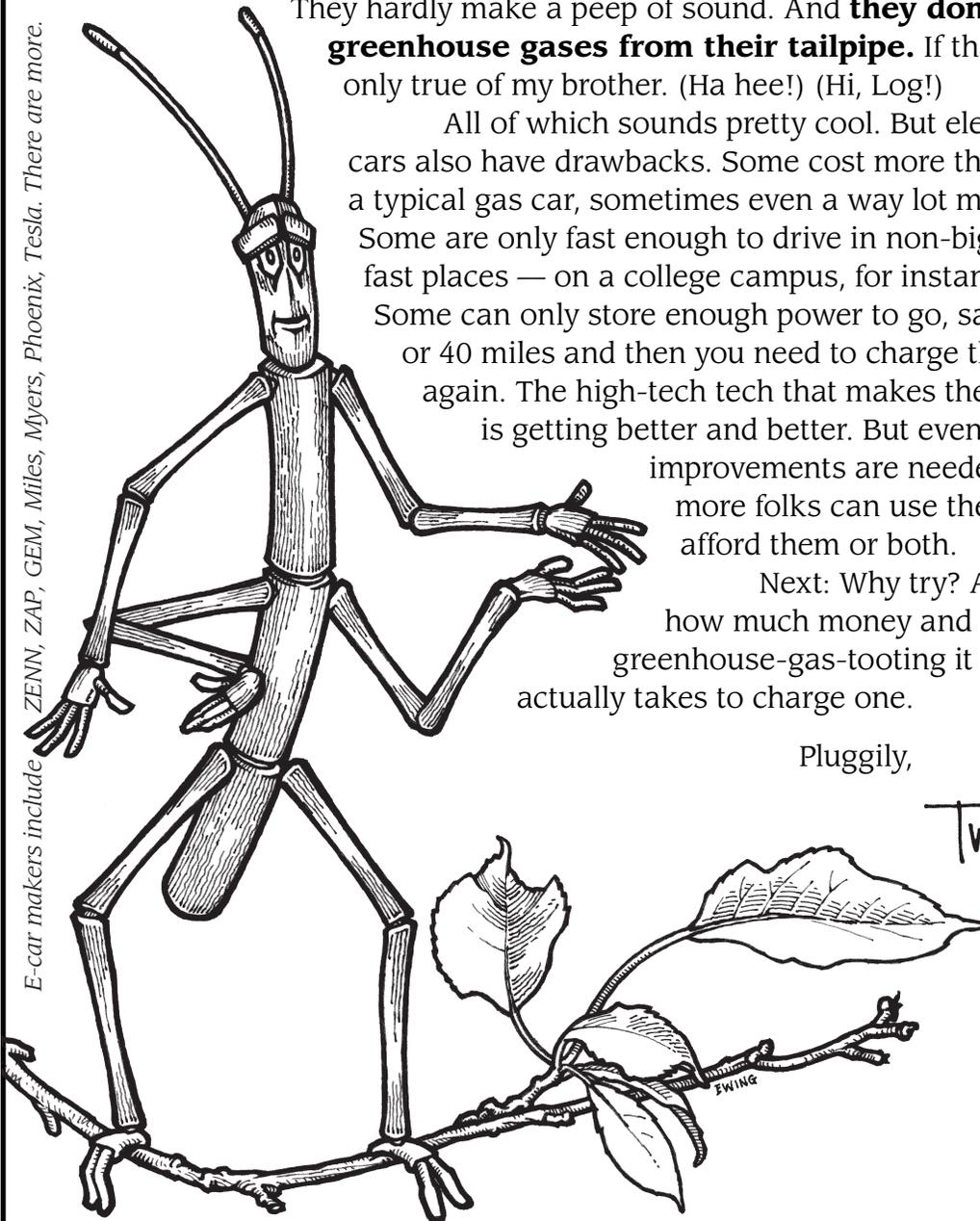
improvements are needed so more folks can use them, afford them or both.

Next: Why try? And how much money and greenhouse-gas-tooting it actually takes to charge one.

Pluggily,

Twig

E-car makers include ZENN, ZAP, GEM, Miles, Myers, Phoenix, Tesla. There are more.



From your scientific friends at The Ohio State University — specifically, the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (www.oardc.ohio-state.edu) and OSU Extension (extension.osu.edu).



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For the week of
Feb. 17, 2008

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Notes: Learn more from such sources as EV World, <http://www.evworld.com/>; TreeHugger, [http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/08/green-basics-electric-cars/](http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/08/green-basics-electric-cars;); and AutoblogGreen, <http://www.autobloggreen.com/2007/02/07/the-top-ten-electric-vehicles-you-can-buy-today-for-the-most-pa/>. Also, check out the various car makers' Web sites. One such maker is based in Ohio. Myers Motors, maker of the one-person, three-wheel, highway-speed NmG ("no more gas"), is located just up the highway from the tree that I call home.

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