

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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EXTENSION
OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Notes: Learn more about making maple syrup in OSU Extension's new *North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual* (details: <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~news/story.php?id=3925>). Sources also included Kahiltna Birchworks, <http://www.alaskabirchsyrop.com/abbisy.html>; Hickoryworks Inc., <http://www.hickoryworks.com/>; and "We Make Sweet Syrup from Pacific Northwest Trees," *Mother Earth News*, January 1979. A tip o' the antenna for this week's sweet question to non-sap reader D. Weezerbird!

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Q. Dear Twig: I know maple syrup comes from maple tree sap. What other trees can you use to make syrup?

A. In cold northern places like Alaska and Scandinavia, people make syrup from **birch** tree sap.

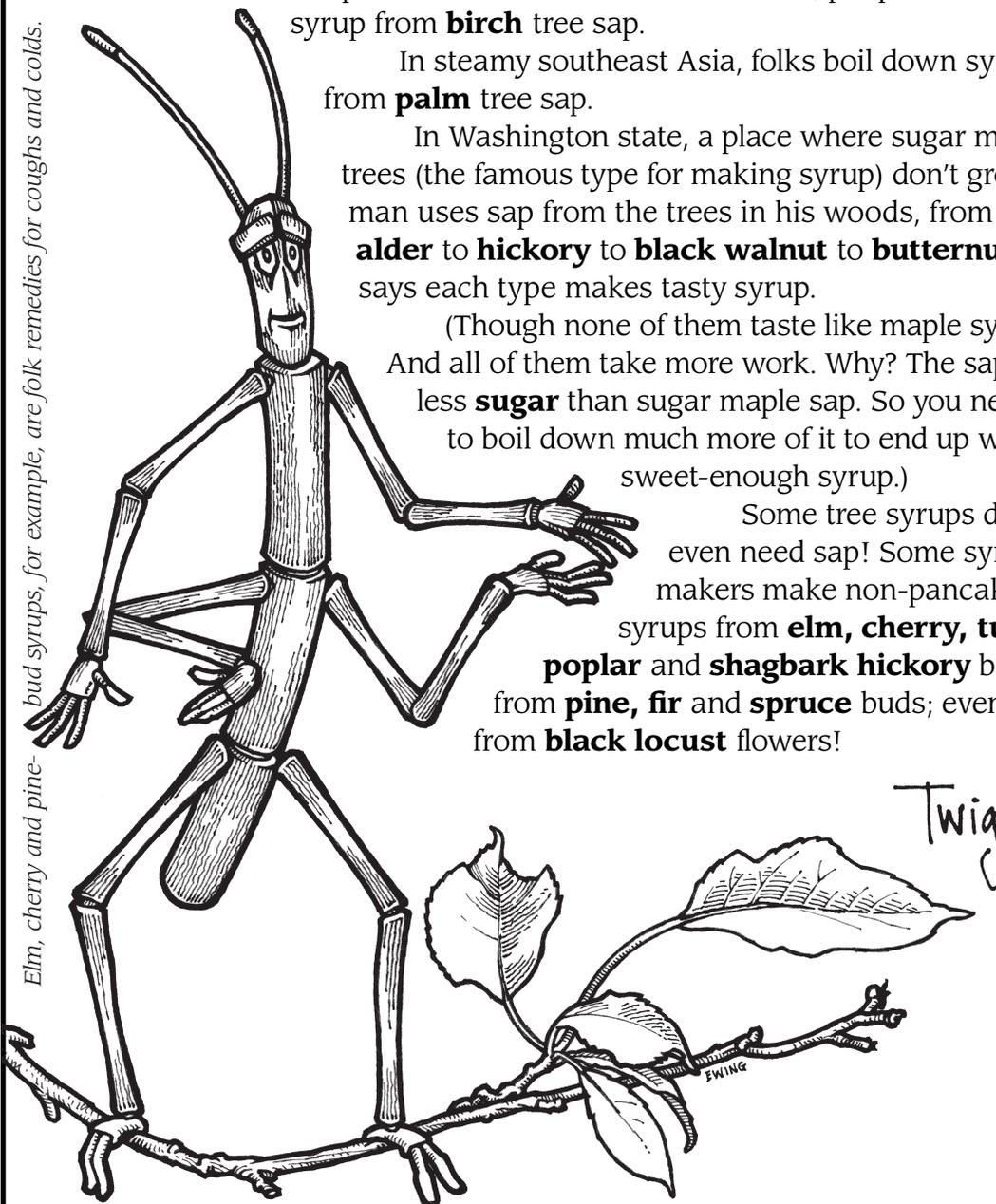
In steamy southeast Asia, folks boil down syrup from **palm** tree sap.

In Washington state, a place where sugar maple trees (the famous type for making syrup) don't grow, a man uses sap from the trees in his woods, from **alder** to **hickory** to **black walnut** to **butternut**. He says each type makes tasty syrup.

(Though none of them taste like maple syrup. And all of them take more work. Why? The sap has less **sugar** than sugar maple sap. So you need to boil down much more of it to end up with sweet-enough syrup.)

Some tree syrups don't even need sap! Some syrup-makers make non-pancake syrups from **elm**, **cherry**, **tulip-poplar** and **shagbark hickory** bark; from **pine**, **fir** and **spruce** buds; even from **black locust** flowers!

Elm, cherry and pine-bud syrups, for example, are folk remedies for coughs and colds.



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