

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
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For the week of
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Q. Dear Twig: So tomato juice doesn't get rid of skunk stink. What does? My dog really smells!

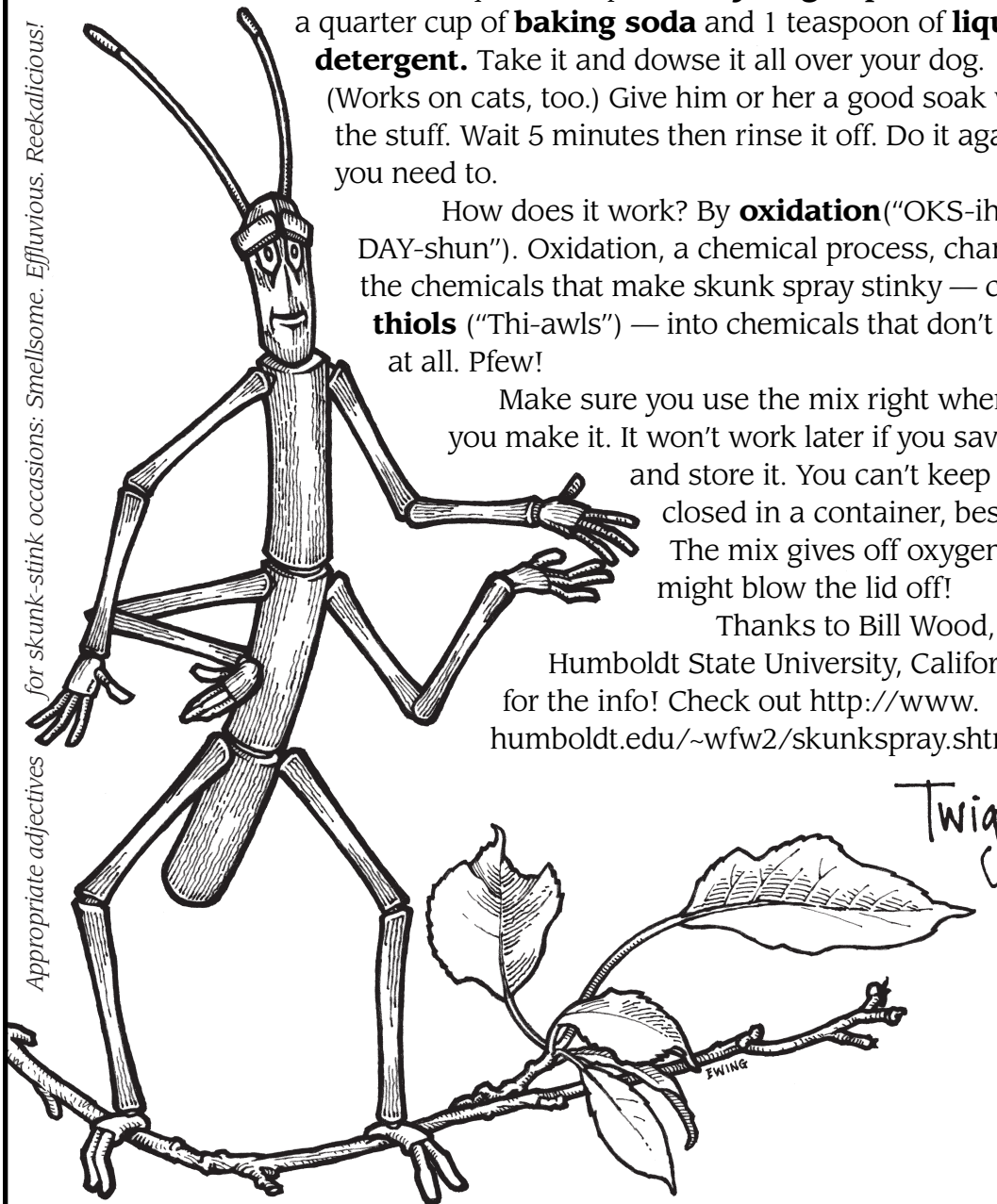
A. Here's what works: Mix 1 quart of 3-percent **hydrogen peroxide**, a quarter cup of **baking soda** and 1 teaspoon of **liquid detergent**. Take it and douse it all over your dog. (Works on cats, too.) Give him or her a good soak with the stuff. Wait 5 minutes then rinse it off. Do it again if you need to.

How does it work? By **oxidation** ("OKS-ih-DAY-shun"). Oxidation, a chemical process, changes the chemicals that make skunk spray stinky — called **thiols** ("Thi-awls") — into chemicals that don't stink at all. Pfew!

Make sure you use the mix right when you make it. It won't work later if you save it and store it. You can't keep it closed in a container, besides. The mix gives off oxygen and might blow the lid off!

Thanks to Bill Wood,
Humboldt State University, California,
for the info! Check out <http://www.humboldt.edu/~wfw2/skunkspray.shtml>.

Appropriate adjectives for skunk-stink occasions: Smellsome. Effluvious. Reekalicious!



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).

By Kurt Knebusch
(330) 263-3776
knebusch.1@osu.edu

Notes: Also check out scientist Wood's paper "The History of Skunk Defensive Secretion Research" in the journal *The Chemical Educator* (1999). In that paper he credits the mix to Paul Krebaum, Lisle, Ill. Also mentioned is a cheaper yet still effective mix to use on non-living skunk-sprayed objects (armor, drive-through window speakers, boomerangs): 1 cup of liquid laundry bleach in 1 gallon of water.

Section of Communications and Technology

2021 Coffey Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1044
(614) 292-2011

208 Research Services Bldg.
1680 Madison Ave.
Wooster, OH 44691-4096
(330) 263-3780

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