

# Smart Stuff

## with Twig Walkingstick



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
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EXTENSION  
OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

For the week of  
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**Notes:** Ba ha ha ha ha ha heeeee! Get it? Raise their fin? That's so finny I forgot to laugh. Thanks to Elise of Lakeville Elementary School, Lakeville, Ohio, for this week's question. "Seahorses have an extremely reduced stomach, a characteristic found in many fishes that, like them, feed continuously on small prey." So says the "Seahorse Anatomy" Web page of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, Calif., [http://aquarium.ucsd.edu/Education/Learning\\_Resources/Secrets\\_of\\_the\\_Seahorse/swf/body.swf](http://aquarium.ucsd.edu/Education/Learning_Resources/Secrets_of_the_Seahorse/swf/body.swf). Check it out: It lets you roll your cursor over a seahorse to see the parts inside. Project Seahorse: <http://seahorse.fisheries.ubc.ca/>.

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### Q. Dear Twig: How do seahorses go to the bathroom?

A. Seahorses are **fish**. You probably know that. So they go to the bathroom like other fish do. Food goes into the mouth, to and through the **intestine**, then the food that isn't digested and absorbed there goes out the **anus** ("AY-nuss") as **feces** ("FEE-seez") — usually, in this case, small pellets.

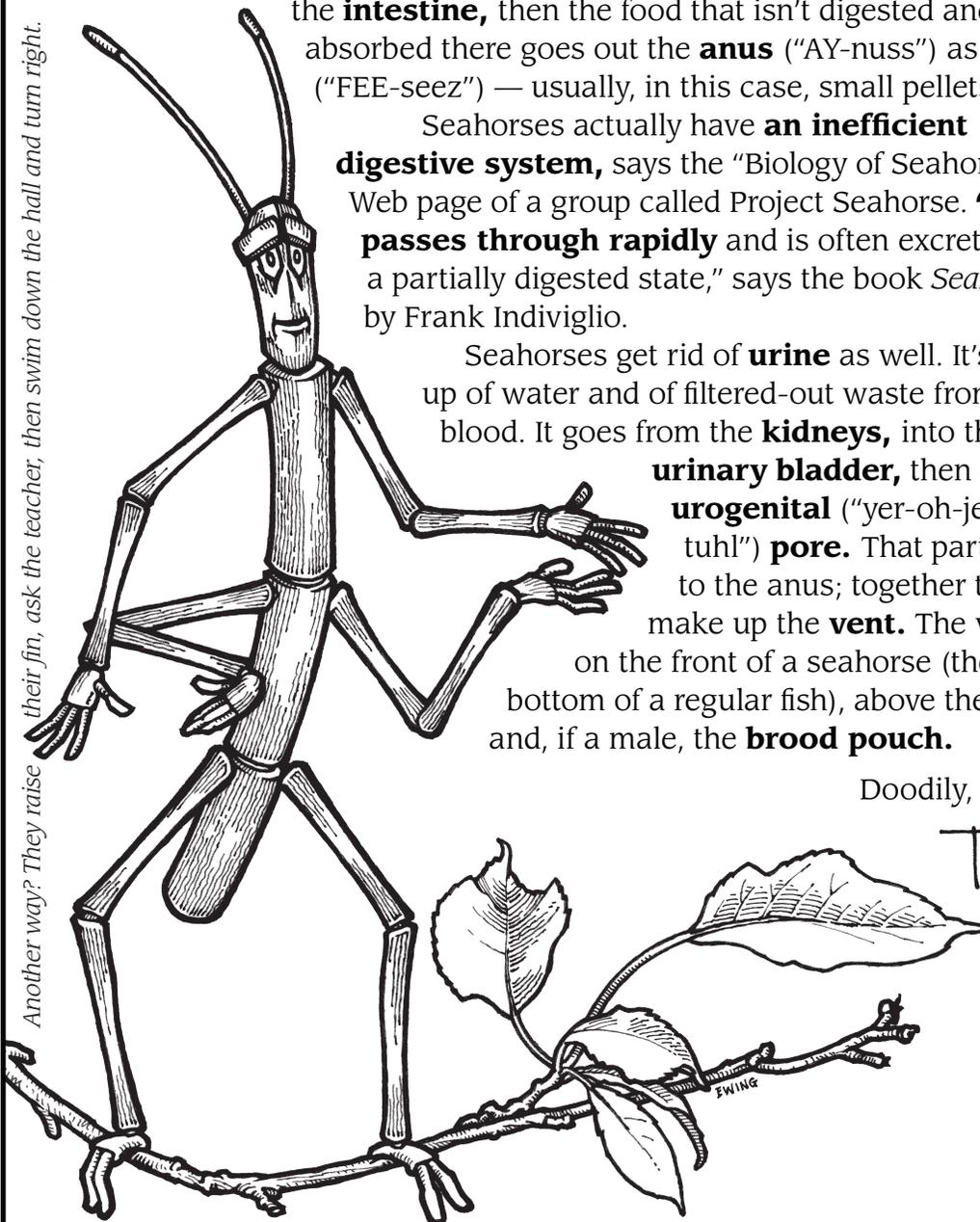
Seahorses actually have an **inefficient digestive system**, says the "Biology of Seahorses" Web page of a group called Project Seahorse. "**Food passes through rapidly** and is often excreted in a partially digested state," says the book *Seahorses* by Frank Indiviglio.

Seahorses get rid of **urine** as well. It's made up of water and of filtered-out waste from the blood. It goes from the **kidneys**, into the **urinary bladder**, then out the **urogenital** ("yer-oh-jen-ih-tuhl") **pore**. That part's next to the anus; together they make up the **vent**. The vent is on the front of a seahorse (the bottom of a regular fish), above the tail and, if a male, the **brood pouch**.

Doodily,

Twig

Another way? They raise their fin, ask the teacher, then swim down the hall and turn right.



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