

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Notes: The link is to the Web site of the Borror Laboratory of Bioacoustics, part of Ohio State's Department of Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology. If you click on "The Archive," then click on "Search the database by species," you can check out 1,500 animal species by their common name or scientific name, including the white-tailed deer (or *Odocoileus virginianus*), and hear the amazing sounds they make. The study mentioned and main source for this is "Vocalizations of White-tailed Deer" by Thomas D. Atkeson, R. Larry Marchinton and Karl V. Miller, *American Midland Naturalist*, 1988.

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Q. Dear Twig: Do deer make sounds?

A. They crunch leaves, snap twigs (not me) and whack their antlers on trees. They make sounds, too, with their **mouth, nose** and **throat**.

Q. Really?

A. Scientists call it **vocalizing**. One study found that the white-tailed deer, the kind of deer you probably know, makes at least 12 different sounds — **vocalizations**.

Q. Awesome.

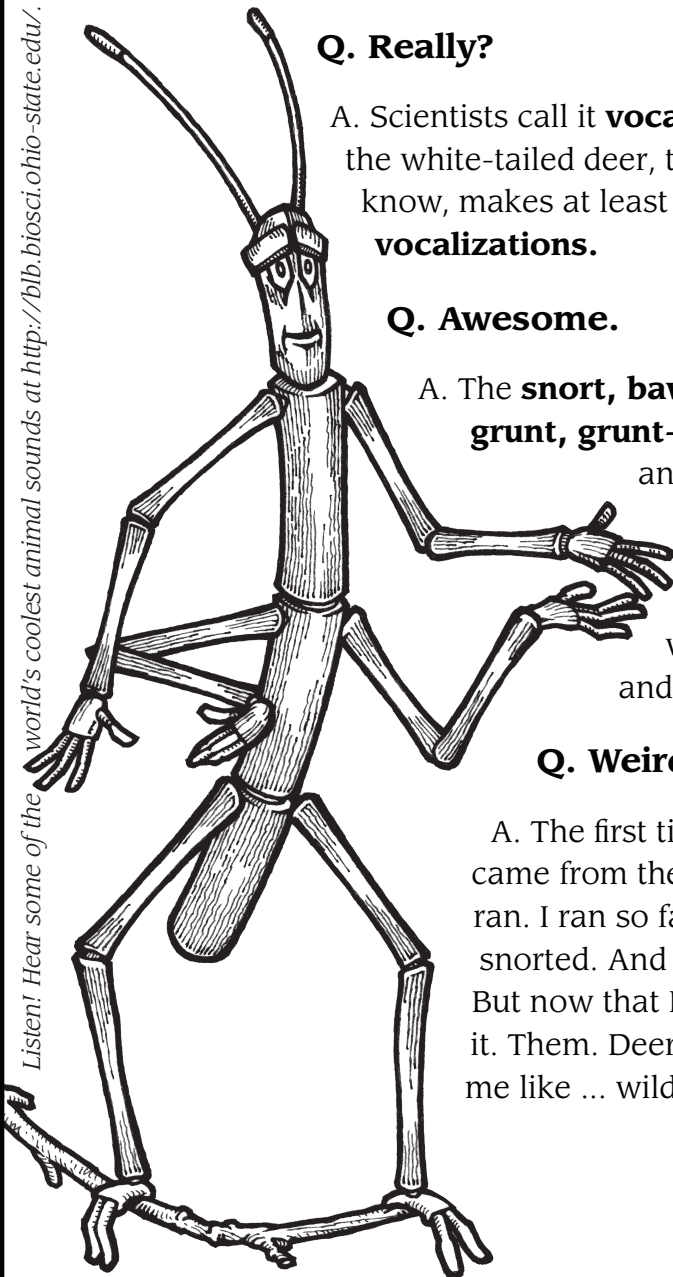
A. The **snort, bawl, mew, bleat, grunt, low grunt, grunt-snort, grunt-snort-wheeze** and **nursing whine** are some of them. Which one depends on the deer's situation: a snort when spooked, a bawl when hurt, a bleat when lost and so on.

Q. Weird.

A. The first time I heard it it scared me. It came from the woods in the dark. A snort. I ran. I ran so far away. (I guess I should have snorted. And then I should have bleated.) But now that I know what it is I like hearing it. Them. Deer sounds. That. It sounds to me like ... wild.

Twig

Listen! Hear some of the world's coolest animal sounds at <http://blb.biosci.ohio-state.edu/>.



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).