

# Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick

**Q. Dear Twig: My friend went fishing and caught a chub. Chub? I don't even know what that is!**

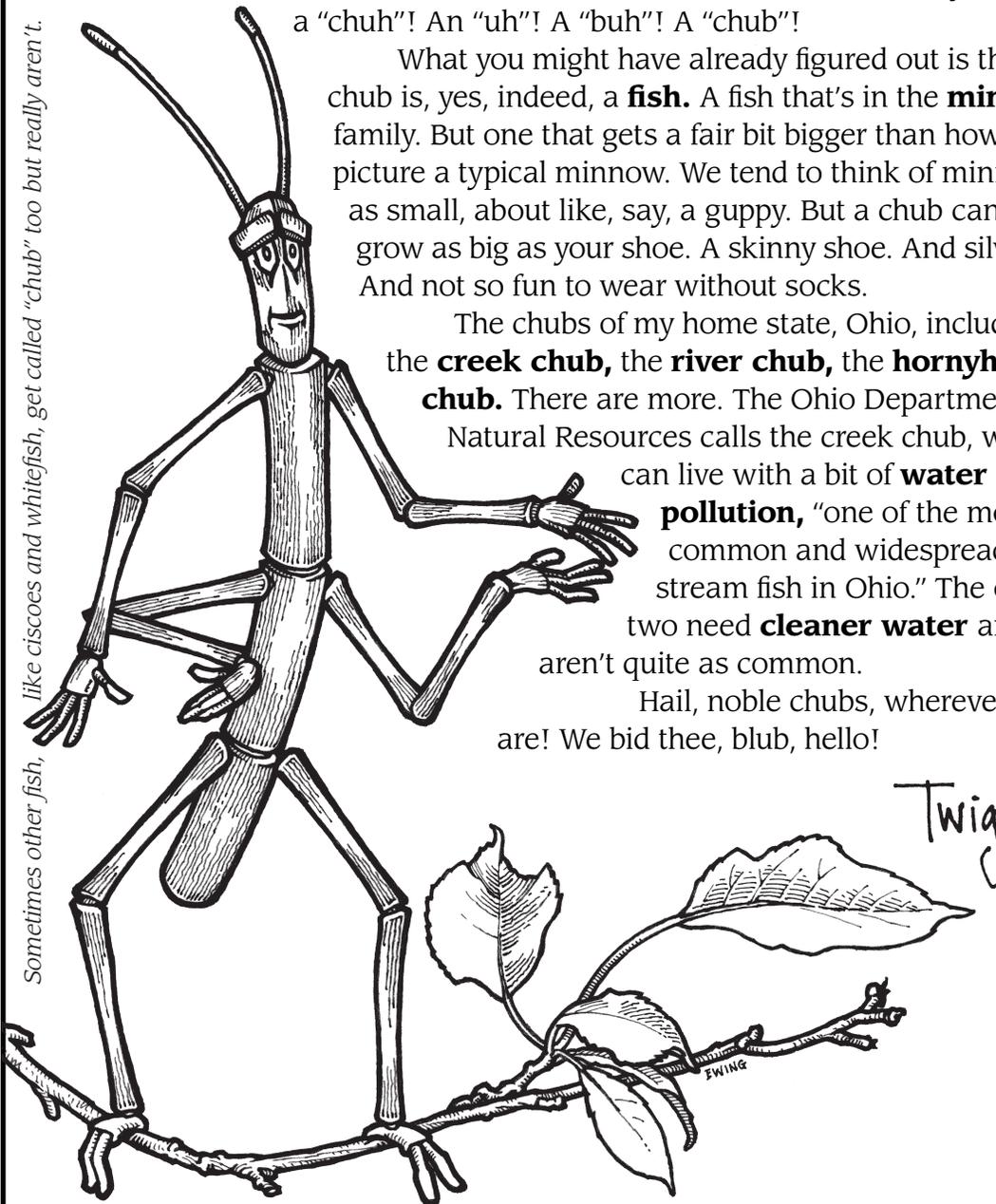
A. "Chub." "Chub." A wonderful word. Fun to write! And fun to say! With a "chuh"! An "uh"! A "buh"! A "chub"!

What you might have already figured out is that a chub is, yes, indeed, a **fish**. A fish that's in the **minnow** family. But one that gets a fair bit bigger than how we picture a typical minnow. We tend to think of minnows as small, about like, say, a guppy. But a chub can grow as big as your shoe. A skinny shoe. And silver. And not so fun to wear without socks.

The chubs of my home state, Ohio, include the **creek chub**, the **river chub**, the **hornyhead chub**. There are more. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources calls the creek chub, which can live with a bit of **water pollution**, "one of the most common and widespread stream fish in Ohio." The other two need **cleaner water** and so aren't quite as common.

Hail, noble chubs, wherever you are! We bid thee, blub, hello!

Sometimes other fish, like ciscoes and whitefish, get called "chub" too but really aren't.



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)).



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**Notes:** "Chub" comes from the Middle English word "chubbe." Creek chubs, ODNR also says, "may be taken on a small hook baited with worms or maggots. This species is popular with young stream anglers because they are easily caught." Sources included ODNR, <http://dnr.ohio.gov/wildlife/fishing/aquanotes-fishid/fishtips.htm>, <http://dnr.ohio.gov/dnap/rivfish/crchub.html>; Milton Trautman's classic *The Fishes of Ohio*; and "The Simpsons," episode 54. There's also a chub in Europe, the aptly named European chub, and it gets even bigger: more like the size of a bass or a trout. The European chub is easily caught, too, and anglers of all ages fish for it.

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