

# Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
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EXTENSION  
OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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

**Notes:** The fact sheet mentioned, "Preventing and Managing Raccoon Problems," W-7-2001, was written by Professor Rodewald and published by OSU Extension. If you don't have access to a computer and/or the Internet, try your county Extension office if you live in Ohio or, if you don't, call (614) 292-1607. Thanks to Mike K. for this week's question!

#### 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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**Q. Dear Twig:** Every spring we plant sweet corn in our garden. And every summer, right before we pick it, it gets eaten up by raccoons. What can we do?

A. Two things: One, try an **electric fence**. Get a solar or plug-in **fence charger**. Set up one or two "**hot**" wires — the ones that give a zap — all around the garden, or at least around the corn patch. Turn the charger on at dusk and off at dawn.

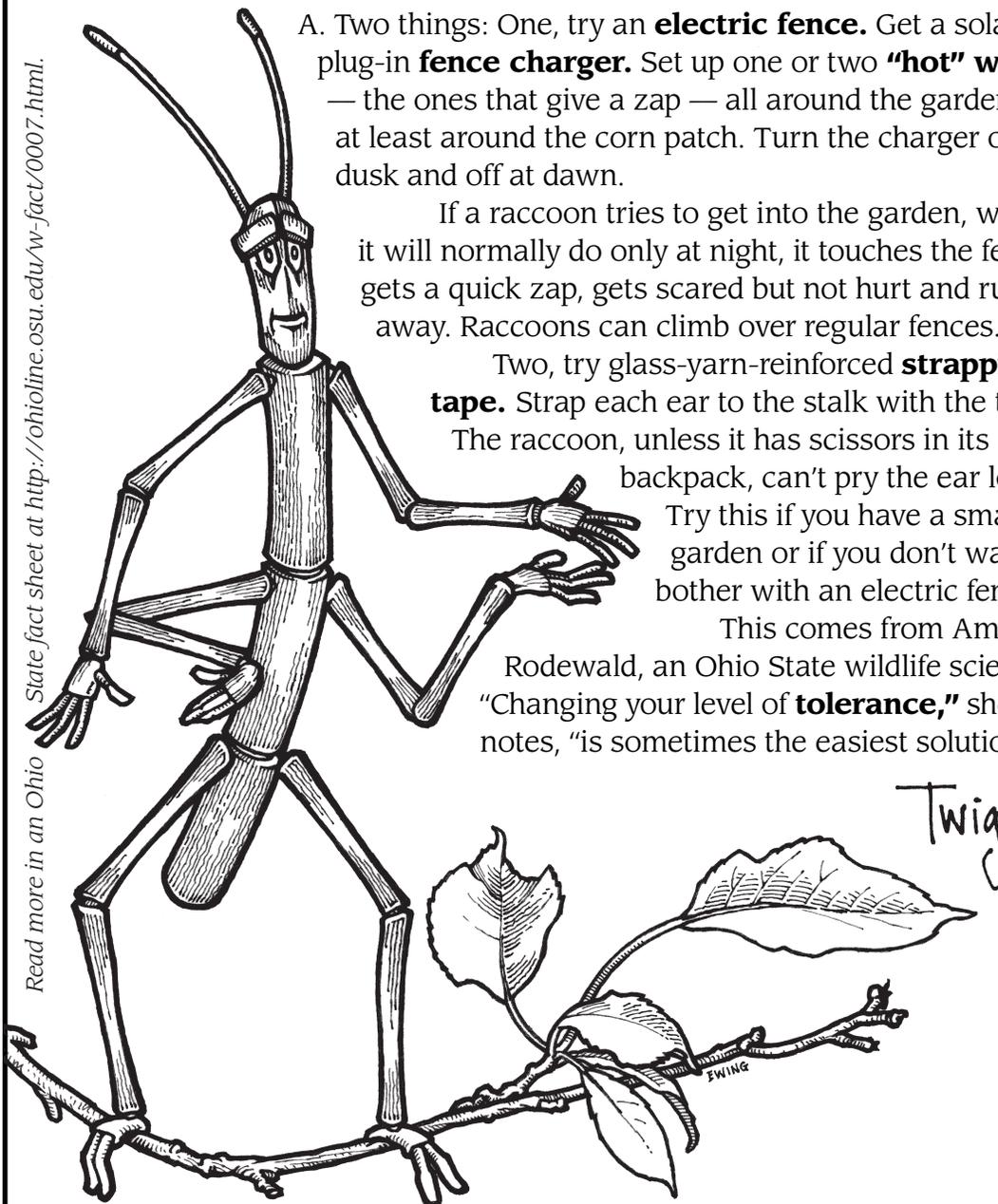
If a raccoon tries to get into the garden, which it will normally do only at night, it touches the fence, gets a quick zap, gets scared but not hurt and runs away. Raccoons can climb over regular fences.

Two, try glass-yarn-reinforced **strapping tape**. Strap each ear to the stalk with the tape.

The raccoon, unless it has scissors in its backpack, can't pry the ear loose!

Try this if you have a small garden or if you don't want to bother with an electric fence.

This comes from Amanda Rodewald, an Ohio State wildlife scientist. "Changing your level of **tolerance**," she notes, "is sometimes the easiest solution."



State fact sheet at <http://ohioline.osu.edu/w-fact/0007.html>.

Read more in an Ohio

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)).