

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Notes: "Floating plastic litter" also means pieces of pieces of plastic products, pieces of pieces of pieces of plastic products, and, well, you get the idea. Plastic doesn't biodegrade. It photodegrades. Sunlight breaks it down into smaller and smaller pieces. Or it gets busted up into smaller pieces, even into powder, by (in this case) waves, sand and rocks. A North Carolina scientist named Anthony Andraday says this in a story in a magazine called *Orion*: "Except for a small amount that's been incinerated, every bit of plastic manufactured in the world for the last fifty years or so still remains. It's somewhere in the environment."

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Q. Dear Twig: So what about nurdles?

A. So this: So dumped, lost, littered and accidentally spilled nurdles — plastic pellets used to make plastic things (doll heads, P-51 models, the keyboard I'm clacking this on, etc.) — **"are distributed widely in the ocean and are now found on beaches all over the world."** So say Japanese scientists in a scientific journal called the *Marine Pollution Bulletin*.

Look for them if you go with your mom or dad to the beach this summer.

Q. Look for Japanese scientists?

A. No, nurdles. But wait a minute, sure, why not? Look for Japanese scientists too. In fact, any scientists. You can learn a lot from a scientist.

Q. Such as?

A. Such as — to get back to what we were talking about — this: **"Floating plastic litter is one of the most widespread and abundant marine pollutants."** So says a South

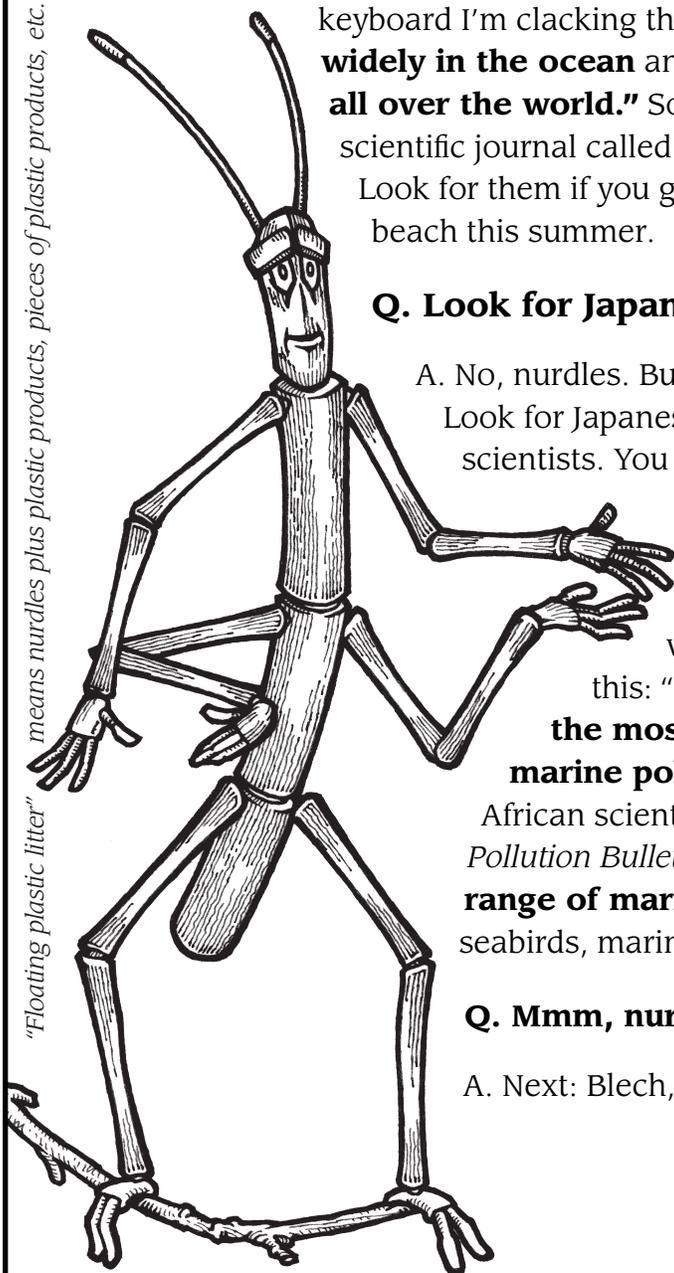
African scientist, also in the *Marine Pollution Bulletin*. "It is **eaten by a wide range of marine organisms**, including seabirds, marine mammals, turtles and fish."

Q. Mmm, nurdley.

A. Next: Blech, nurdley.

Twig

"Floating plastic litter" means nurdles plus plastic products, pieces of plastic products, etc.



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