

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
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Notes: A connoisseur ("kahn-uh-SOOR") is someone who knows about and really likes something. Sources included *Katydids and Bush-Crickets: Reproductive Behavior and Evolution of the Tettigoniidae* by Darryl T. Gwynne; *Acoustic Communication in Insects and Anurans: Common Problems and Diverse Solutions* by H. Carl Gerhardt; "Acoustic and Mating Behavior of a Mexican Katydid ...," *Florida Entomologist*, September 1987; "Bat Predation and Its Influence on Calling Behavior in Neotropical Katydids," *Science*, October 1987; the Haiku of Kobayashi Issa, <http://haikuguy.com/issa/>; and the very cool though non-katydid-related *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide* by naturalist Robert Pyle.

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Q. Dear Twig: I know how katydids make that sound. [See last week.] What does it mean when they do it then stop?

A. In scary movies, it means one thing: **Bigfoot!** Ahhh! But of course those sorts of movies aren't real. Nor is Bigfoot. At least as far as science goes. There isn't any evidence. At least not yet. (Ahhh!)

So, yes, at night, a katydid will sing and sing and then call it quits. (Remember, only male katydids sing.)

Why? It might mean he's cold. The air cools off as night goes on. Katydids are **ectotherms** ("ECK-toe-thurms"). They need to be in warm-enough air to do what they want to do, include sing.

It might mean he's tired. It takes a lot of **energy** for Mr. K. Diddy to sing. Sooner or later he runs out of gas. Whew!

It might mean that he's found a **mate**, yay! That's why a katydid sings, of course.

Or it might mean that he didn't find Ms. Right that night but has given up trying. At least for the night. Better to wait, save his energy, for when there are Katies to sing to around.

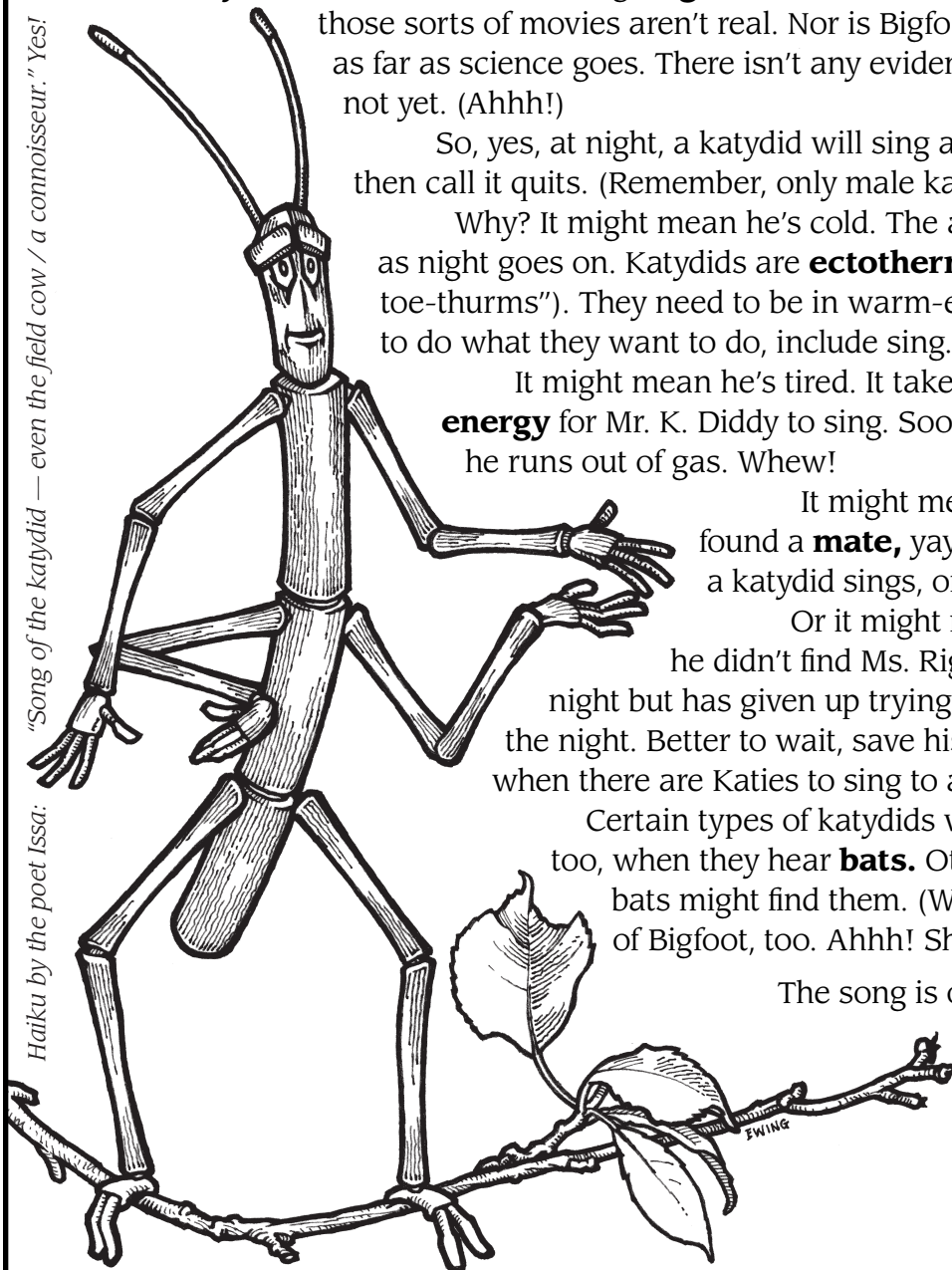
Certain types of katydids will clam up, too, when they hear **bats**. Otherwise the bats might find them. (Works in case of Bigfoot, too. Ahhh! Shhh ...)

The song is overly,

Twig

"Song of the katydid — even the field cow / a connoisseur." Yes!

Haiku by the poet Issa:



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