

# Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



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**Notes:** The Web site given is for the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, which places the Slate turkey in the Watch category, as opposed to, for example, the Critical or Threatened categories. The Watch category means this: "Fewer than 2,500 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 10,000." Slate or Blue Slate turkeys fall into the general category of "heritage" turkeys, as do such others as Bourbon Red, Royal Palm and Narragansett. Read how a group called Slow Food USA is helping develop a heritage turkey 4-H project at <http://www.slowfoodrr.org/localprojects.html>.

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**Q. Dear Twig: Are there really blue turkeys? My friend I met at the fair this summer said there really are. I think it would be kind of cool to raise one for a 4-H project.**

**A.:** Blue turkeys, eh? Are they really cold? So cold their beaks are chattering, chik-chik-chik? No.

Are they really sad? Sad because their BFF Tom-Bob, not them, got picked to be the model for those **giant inflatable Thanksgiving turkeys** that people stick in front of their houses? (OK, I admit it, they are rather stunning.) Nein!

Nope, blue turkeys aren't cold. Aren't sad. Aren't blue like a **bluebird**. Blue like a **blue jay**. Nor even blue-green like **algae** or **Squidward** or **Squidward covered in blue-green algae and the algae is cold and sad**. Nuh-uh.

But, yes, in fact, blue turkeys exist. They belong to a breed called **Slate** or **Blue Slate**, a rare, old breed indeed.

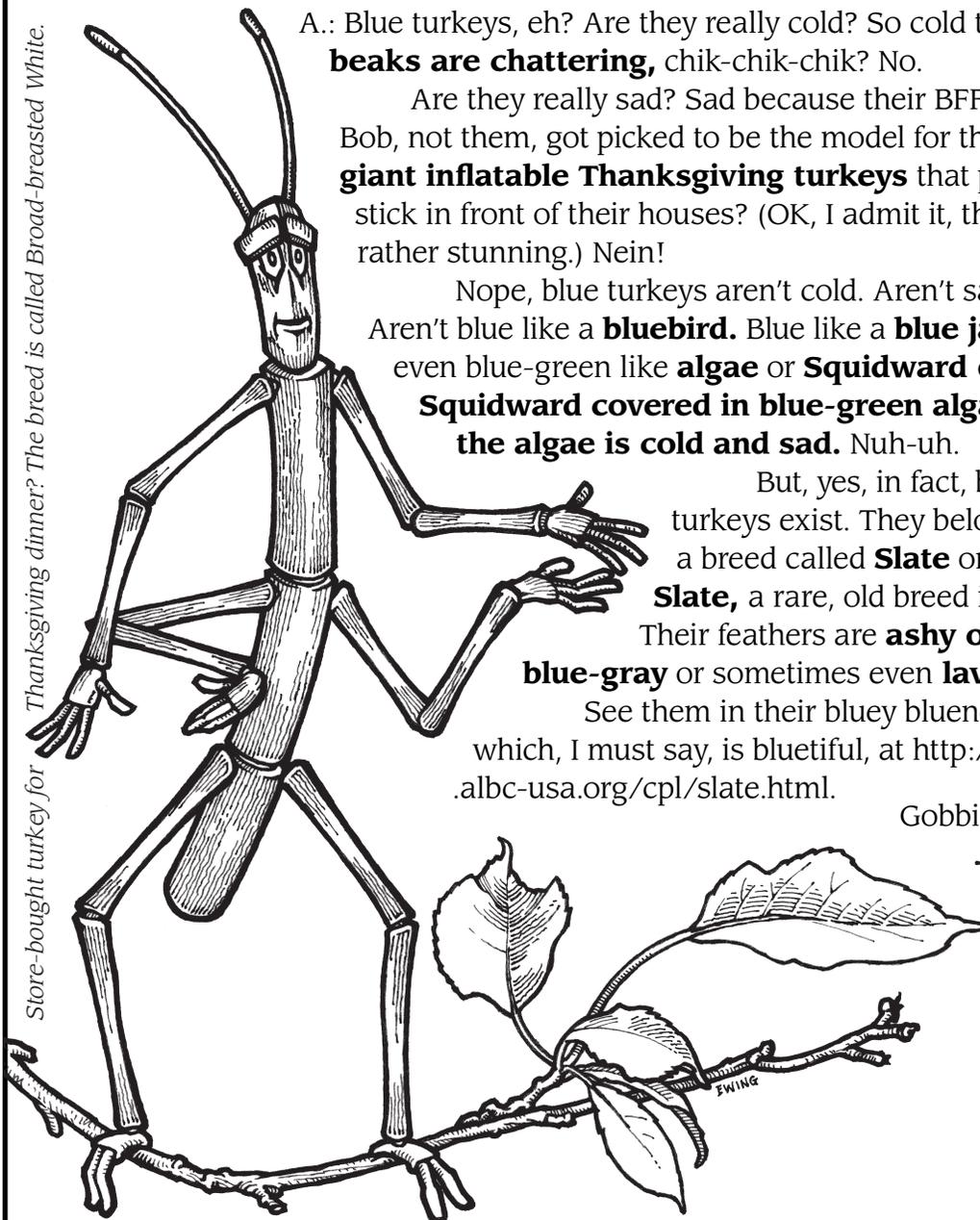
Their feathers are **ashy** or **slaty blue-gray** or sometimes even **lavender**.

See them in their bluey blueness, which, I must say, is bluetiful, at <http://www.albc-usa.org/cpl/slate.html>.

Gobbily,

Twig

Store-bought turkey for Thanksgiving dinner? The breed is called Broad-breasted White.



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