

Jumping Worms a new threat to Maine's wild spaces



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Jumping Worms

What are they

What is the threat

What can be done?

What are Jumping Worms

- **Jumping Worms (Amyntas) are from China and Korea**
- **They have been in Maine since 1899 but are now a growing problem**
- **The Amyntas Worm's characteristics**
 - They reproduce rapidly
 - They are aggressive wigglers
 - They are sold as bait
 - They have different body style from night crawlers
- **The Amyntas Worm's impacts**
 - They are non-native and have significant advantages over native organisms
 - It is illegal to import them into Maine without a permit

Earthworms vs Jumping Worms

- Both are used for fishing
- Both digest the top layer of soil
 - The amynthas worm depletes the soil castings are dry & cover the soil
- The rapid reproduction of the Amyntas worm allows it to out compete native organisms
- They look different

- **Crazy vs Nightcrawler**



Amyntas Worm and Nightcrawler, Photo courtesy Wisconsin DNR

What is the threat?

The State of Maine has a great website about this pest

The threat is spelled out well in this [video on You Tube](#)

Let's Unpack that information

They are fast eaters and they only use the very top of the soil

They are aggressive and will out compete other organisms

They reproduce quickly

The nests are small and easily spread

The Threat Explained

- **Leaf Litter is destroyed**
- **Top Layer of soil is left exposed**
- **Erosion happens easily**
- **Castings are dry and crumbly**
- **Cocoons are easy to spread**
- **Nutrients are washed away with the top layer of soil**



Amyntas Worm cocoon at yellow arrow, in granular castings, Photo by Marie Johnston, University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum

What can be done?

The State of Maine has several suggestions specific to Maine

Actions by landowners is spelled out well in this [video on You Tube](#) from University of Minnesota

Let's Unpack that information:

Buy Earthworm free mulch and top soil. Examine it before your spread it

If you have plants that your are moving, check them first and do not move if there are worms in the soil

Don't buy anything on the internet that is for making compost or raising bait worms

Dispose of bait worms properly

Clean off shoes and boots as you move from one area to another

If you find them, REPORT THEM!

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

REPORT YOUR JUMPING WORM SITINGS HERE:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/da099be43ba642799f9c359345257b2f>

A useful photo would show the clitellum and the head of the worm, as shown here (photo by Oregon Sea Grant Extension/OSU):

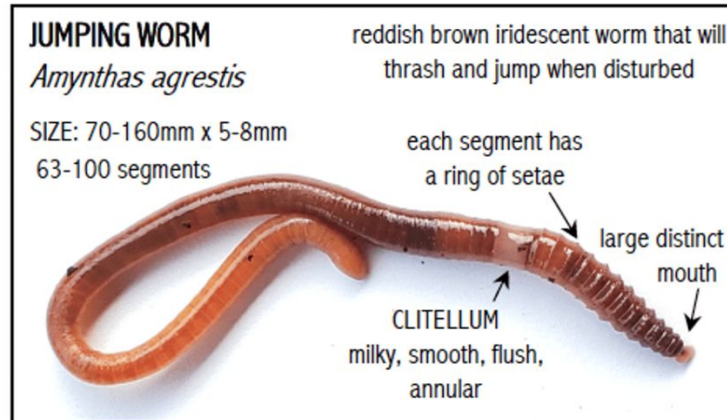


photo by Oregon Sea Grant Extension/OSU

Summary

- **Don't panic**, and don't move plants from infested area to new spots
- Remove and destroy any adult jumping worms in soapy water or a sealed bag, mustard solution can be used to bring them out of the soil
- Do not attempt to manage the worms with chemicals or products that are not labelled for that purpose. Currently, there are no pesticides or approved methods to manage jumping worms. Using products without this use explicitly included on the label is illegal.
- Solarization of raised beds may kill cocoons, must reach 104° F
- The University of Maine is beginning to research control methods. Contact me if you are interested in being involved in any upcoming projects.

DACF Amynthas worm website

maine.gov/dacf/php/horticulture/crazyworms.shtml

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Crazy/Jumping/Snake (Amynthas) Worms in Maine

On this page:

- [What are Amynthas Worms?](#)
- [History in Maine](#)
- [Why are Amynthas Worms a problem?](#)
- [Amynthas Worm Identification](#)
- [What can you do?](#)

What are Amynthas Worms?

Due to our history of glaciation, there are no native earthworms in Maine. Non-native earthworms from Europe (such as nightcrawlers)

European nightcrawler
Raised clitellum, further from head

FEATURED LINKS

- [Jumping Worm Report Form](#)
- [Jumping/Crazy/Snake Worms Fact Sheet \(UMass Extension\)](#)
- [Factsheet for Homeowners Impacts and Implications of Non-native Earthworms in North America](#)
- [State of the Science Jumping Worm Research & the JWORM Working Group \(Recorded Webinar\)](#)
- [DACF iMap Invasives](#)

CONTACT US

Resources

[Jumping Worm Reporting Form](#)

[Maine State Jumping Worm Page](#)

[Jumping Worm Guide from Oregon State](#)

[Best Practices for Plant Sale Donors and Buyers in
Maine](#)

RESOURCES

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