

## What you can do to stop the spread:

- Do not buy or use jumping worms for bait, vermicomposting or gardening.
- Only sell, purchase or trade compost that was heated to appropriate temperatures and duration following protocols for reducing pathogens.
- Clean compost, soil and debris from vehicles, personal gear, equipment and gardening tools before moving to and from sites.
- Be careful when sharing and moving plants. Always check for worms and know where your planting comes from. Buy bare root stock when possible.
- Dispose of all live jumping worms in the trash or place them in a bag and leave out in the sun for at least 10 minutes.

**We currently have no viable control methods but we can help stop their spread!**

Credits: Karen Ceballos, NY Master Naturalist  
Volunteer Program Assistant, CCE Department of  
Natural Resources

## Where to Report Sightings:

If you see jumping worms, please report your sightings to *iMapInvasives*.

This is an on-line, GIS based data management system used to assist citizen scientists and natural resource professionals working to protect our natural resources from the threat of invasive species. Sightings of invasive species can be reported with your smartphone, tablet or other mobile devices with an *iMap* mobile app, browser-based mapping tools or via *iNaturalist*.

Learn more at:

<https://www.imapinvasives.org>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/>

Please consider all the characteristics provided in this brochure for accurate identification. Provide details on the date, location and a good photograph.

If assistance with identification is required, contact our office; weekdays 8:30 - 4:00 at 845.677.8223 ext. 115

CCEDC, Farm & Home Center, 2715 Route 44, Millbrook, NY

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*Be on the lookout!*

## JUMPING WORMS



## An Invasive Species threatening forests and gardens

- What they are
- Where they are
- Help stop the spread
- Where to report sightings

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Dutchess County

## What they are:

All worms in New York state are introduced. The glaciers thousands of years ago eradicated native worms. Most of them are considered beneficial in our soil. Jumping worms however cause harm. They are designated a prohibited invasive animal under New York's 6 NYCRR Part 575 – Prohibited and Regulated Invasive Species (September 10, 2014) and cannot be sold, transported, or purchased in the State of New York.

Jumping worms, *Amyntas* spp., cause harm in forests, turf and gardens. They are voracious eaters, and can consume all the organic matter in the top few inches of soil in a few years. This layer supplies vital nutrients for plants and provides food, protection and habitat for wildlife. Jumping worms also dramatically raise the pH of the soil and make it highly susceptible to erosion. They can severely damage roots of plants in nurseries, gardens, forests and turf.

Jumping worms grow twice as fast, reproduce more quickly and can infest soils at high densities. Because jumping worms are more aggressive and their populations can grow faster than the common European species, they may outcompete existing worm populations.

## Where they are:

Jumping worms are widespread in the Northeast, Southeast and Midwestern US. They have been observed in multiple places in Dutchess County. Unfortunately, relatively little is known about them compared to European earthworms which are common throughout the Northeast.

Adult worms die when the ground freezes, but their young survive harsh New York winters in tiny cocoons. These cocoons are very small and dirt colored which makes it nearly impossible to spot with your own eyes. Cocoons can easily be spread in potted plants, in mulch, on landscaping equipment, tire treads and hiking boots.

The adult worms can be found in the summer on the soil surface and in the leaf litter, making them easy to find. They can live anywhere from urban parks and suburban backyards to rural forests.

Jumping worms are identified by both their appearance and behavior.

The best time to find and identify jumping worms is in late August or September when the adults are large.

## What to look for:

- Worms are smooth, glossy gray or brown and reside in the top 2-4" of soil
- Their milky white band (Clitellum) is smooth with the body (not raised) and completely encircles the body.
- They move quickly with a slithering, thrashing motion like a snake.
- They have smooth body segments.
- Jumping worms leave distinctive grainy soil full of worm castings. The soil becomes granular and looks like dried coffee grounds or ground beef.



PC Susan Day/ UW—Madison Arboretum

### Not to be confused with:



PC Holger Casselmann

Common invasive European species, have a raised or saddle-shaped, segmented clitellum and are slimy.