



Photo: EarthwormWatch.org

## Management

If you already have Jumping Worms, take action to mitigate their impact *in addition to* practicing prevention.

### Kill Jumping Worms in Soil

Jumping Worms and their cocoons cannot survive temperatures above 40°C (104°F). Increasing temperature above 104°F in your soil for 3+ days is one way to manage Jumping Worm populations.

### Increase Soil Temperature

- Tarp sections of soil or compost that receive direct sunlight
- Temporarily place soil in plastic bins and place in direct sunlight
- Apply a vermicide
- Mix 1/3 C ground yellow mustard seed into 1 gallon water; pour slowly over the ground; the irritated worms will surface so you can collect them
- Perform a controlled burn

## Prevention

Prevention is the first line of defense against invasive species, and the most cost-effective. Follow prevention protocols to minimize spread.

### Soil and Organic Material

Jumping Worms and their cocoons are in soil, compost, and other organic materials.

When you are transport material from one property to another, or bring home a new potted plant, it is essential to **check all soil and organic material for worms and cocoons.**

- Clean dirt and debris off shoes and equipment before entering a new area
- Examine plants before transplanting
- Buy bare-root stock when possible
- Inspect compost, mulch, and soil
- Never share compost, mulch, soil, or plants that might have Jumping Worms
- Worms bioaccumulate and may poison poultry
- Always put jumping worms in the trash. Do not compost!

### Fishing Bait

Jumping Worms are commonly sold as fishing bait because of their sustained erratic thrashing movements.

- Never buy bait named Jumping Worm, Asian Jumping Worm, Crazy Worms, Alabama Jumpers, or Snake Worms
- Seal all fishing bait as tightly as possible
- Destroy unused fishing bait. Do not compost.



## Jumping Worms

Most of the worms we love and cherish in our gardens are, like Vermont's State flower the red clover, non-native. However, when a non-native organism harms its host ecosystem, it is considered invasive.

Jumping Worms are invasive and can dramatically change soils, causing erosion and loss of nutrients. Jumping Worms accelerate decomposition of vital organic matter by voraciously eating through mulch and forest duff. This depletes the soil food web and exposes the forest floor to more extreme temperatures.

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## Visualizing Changes in Soil

LEFT:

Jumping Worms damage the soil. They consume its nutrients. Over time, soil turns into coffee ground-like granules. As these granules aggregate and harden, they begin to repel water. The soil becomes more porous and dries out.

RIGHT:

Worms can clear a forest of leaf litter in just a couple of months, as these pictures taken in Jacobsburg State Park near Nazareth, Pa., in June 2016 (left) and August 2016 (right) show.

– Photos by NICK HENSHUE

Was this helpful? Need more info? Email [LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com) or [LesleyPollitt@gmail.com](mailto:LesleyPollitt@gmail.com) or call Laurel at (802) 368-2439.

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