

Jumping Worms

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Native species: species that has developed over hundreds of thousands of years in a particular region and is in balance with the ecosystem

Invasive species: species originating from a different location and CAN disrupt the natural system leading to ecologic, economic, and/or environmental damage

Illinois earthworms-18 native species located: 1. Epigeic-litter dwellers on top surface
2. Endogeic-first few inches of topsoil
3. Anecic-subsoil deeper down

"Jumping worms" = "Alabama jumpers" = "Snake worms" = "Crazy worms" = "Asian Jumping Worm"

Physical characteristics:

- *Stay in the top litter area
- *8-12 inches long, RIGID body with a sheen on the skin
- *Cream-colored clitellum starts about segment #14, encircles the body, and is flat

Life cycle:

- *Adults noticed between June-October
- *Cocoons are very small and can overwinter in soil <20 degrees F.
- *Hatchlings come out when air temp >50 degrees F. and mature in 77-93 days

Damage done:

- *Reduce surface litter by 84-95% (accelerated decomposition)
- *Increased nutrient loss and large soil aggregate size
- *Changes the microhabitat affecting other animals
- *Reduction in herbaceous plant cover
- *Increases non-native plant growth
- *Lawn damage-patchy brown areas with bare spots

Spread:

- *Mulch, compost, soil, plants, vermiculture, bait

Management:

- *PREVENTION!!!!
- *Nothing approved for control!!!

Homemade solution for soil worm screen:

- *1 gallon water mixed with 1/3 c. ground mustard
- *Pour slowly over soil and observe worms that surface