

Beltrami County Trash Talk!

Jumping Worms in Minnesota, and possibly Beltrami County:

Why should Beltrami County Residents be concerned?

Jumping worms (*Amyntas* spp.) are an invasive species native to eastern Asia. In fact, no earthworms are native to Minnesota.

Jumping worms contribute to major forest ecosystem disturbance and are also troublesome for homeowners and gardeners. They negatively impact soil structure and reduce plant growth.

Earthworms, including jumping worms, are ecosystem engineers. By changing soil characteristics, they contribute to a number of other ecosystem shifts that may ultimately increase allergies and Lyme disease, reduce crop and forest productivity, and reduce forest biodiversity.

Like all earthworms, there are no research-based management options, so preventing their introduction and reducing their spread are the only two proven forms of management.

****Composting sites are starting to no longer accept Dirt or Sod at their sites due to contamination. We don't want our composting site to get contaminated. Because normal composting sites do not get hot enough to kill pathogens, there is movement to close sites like ours and mandate that all composting sites are controlled and can meet the further reduce pathogen (FRP) composting requirement.**

What to look for?

- Jumping worms can be 1-1/2 to 8 inches or more in length.
- They are similar in size to other earthworms such as nightcrawlers or some of the larger angle worms, but their clitellum (collar-like ring) and coloring are different.
- The clitellum is located 1/3 the length down the worm from the head, and it is smooth, cloudy-white and constricted, unlike the swelled saddle-like clitellum of European earthworms.
- These worms may jump and wiggle noticeably when disturbed. They can move across the ground in an "S" pattern like a snake.
- Jumping worms live for only one season.
 - They hatch in late spring in 1-4 inches of soil.
 - The worms grow during the summer and the adults start laying eggs in August.
 - We don't know how many eggs each adult can lay.

- Eggs are very small but can be identified. Removing eggs is likely impractical.

Management?

- There are no pesticides labeled for worms in the United States. No products can legally be used in Minnesota as pesticides, including for jumping worms, if they are not labeled and regulated by the EPA and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Prevention is the only known management for worms.

This information was from the following website, and if you want to learn more please visit the following website: <https://extension.umn.edu/identify-invasive-species/jumping-worms>