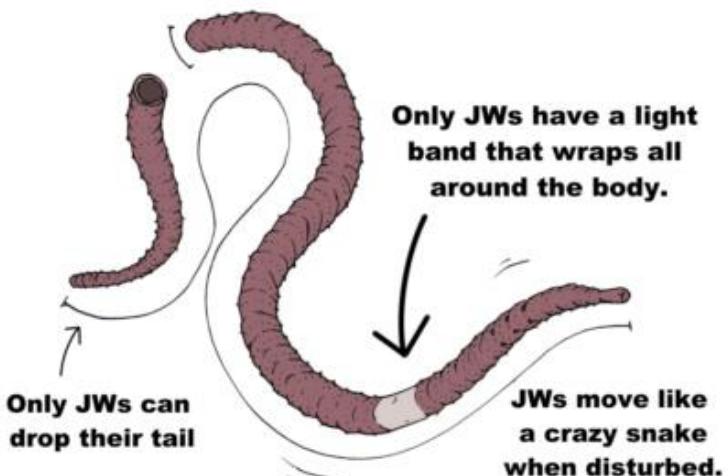


## How to Identify Jumping Worms



# Invasive Jumping Worms

## Spread the Word NOT the Worm!

### What's the problem?

Jumping Worms (JWs) are now confirmed in Ontario (Windsor-Essex (2014) (Dundas, Toronto, Wheatley (2021)). All earthworms in Ontario are non-native, but JWs cause much more damage & spread much more quickly. They can kill plants by stripping the soil of nutrients, leaving behind bare, dry granular pellets. They are a threat to our gardens & lawns, farms & forests, as well as bird and animal life.

### Prevention is Important!

There are currently no controls or pesticides to stop these worms. Become familiar with JW appearance, life cycle and snake-like movements. Jumping Worms die over winter, but their eggs survive in small cocoons and begin to hatch when temperatures reach 10°C. One Jumping Worm cocoon is enough to infest a garden. JWs will thrash & jump wildly if disturbed and may even drop a part of their tail. They are most easily identified, when they mature (July-Oct).

### Make a Difference by Reporting JWs

Ontario's Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System: [www.eddmaps.org/ontario/](http://www.eddmaps.org/ontario/)



Scan this QR Code  
for more information.



### What You Can do Now

**Bait:** Never use Jumping Worms for bait. Fish don't like them & they don't stay on a hook. Dispose of all unused bait in garbage, never on natural lands.

**Arrive Clean / Leave Clean:** Clean footwear before & after visiting any private, public garden or natural area.

**Ask Questions:** Ask nurseries, landscaping companies and soil, compost & mulch providers how they are controlling JWs. If they know nothing about JWs, then be concerned and offer to share information with them.

**Scout New Soil:** Check new mulch, compost, and soil for JWs.

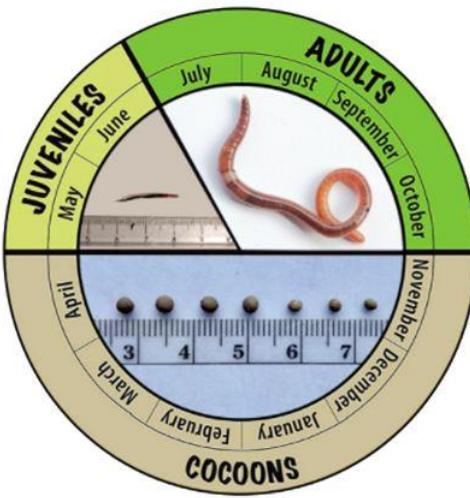
**New Plants:** Inspect the soil & roots before planting in your yard. Be aware that in spring, worms will be tiny & impossible to identify. Choose bare-root plants or grow from seeds when possible.

**Safe Disposal:** Kill suspected JWs by freezing, leaving in a bag out in the sun, or soaking in vinegar or rubbing alcohol. Discard in garbage.

**Infested Soil:** Soil can be placed in sealed plastic bags & left in the sun. Temperatures need to reach a min. 40°C for at least 3 days, before garden reuse.



Master Gardeners of Ontario  
April 2022



## Jumping Worms

Apr 12, 2022 | from GardenOntario

**This is important information for all Garden Societies and Clubs regarding invasive Jumping Worms:**

**"We are starting to get requests to advertise plant sales from various not-for-profit groups in our forum. In the past, this was a welcome sign of spring. In this age of Jumping Worms, it's a very scary proposition.**

**There is currently no effective treatment to rid your garden of Jumping Worms, so once you have them, it's too late to act. Prevention is the key to keeping your garden safe.**

**Whether you are the organizer or the buyer at any plants sales, there are things you need to know. They also apply to purchasing of plants, soil and mulch from any commercial suppliers and even receiving and giving plants to friends and neighbours.**

**Jumping worms hatch from eggs each spring, so it's not until late summer (August) that they are even identifiable. This makes the issue even more difficult.**

**If you're organizing a plant sale you may want to have an area where you can give out information about Jumping Worms.**

**You may also want to share any steps your organization has taken to make their plant sale as Jumping Worm free as possible.**

**Additionally:**

**Don't spread them. Clean your shoes before hiking, clean your tires if travelling to parks and natural spaces, and please don't share anything with soil from your garden if you have them.**

**Be very careful with spring plant sales. If sharing plants, wash roots and repot in quality soil-less mix. If purchasing from a grower, ask them about their protocols to protect against the spread. Better still grow from seed."**

**PLEASE NOTE: Spread the word and stop the spread. If you have these worms please report them to researcher Dr. Michael McTavish [michael.mctavish@alum.utoronto.ca](mailto:michael.mctavish@alum.utoronto.ca) and to [EDDmaps.org](http://EDDmaps.org).**