

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT: ASIAN JUMPING WORM

Be on the look out in your home garden!

AMYNTHAS SPP.

First sighted in Pennsylvania in 2018, the Jumping Worm is an invasive species originating from Japan and Korea. They are known for rapid reproduction, displacing native ecosystem species, and depleting organic material, resulting in degraded soil quality.

HOW TO IDENTIFY:

Jumping worms have several identifying traits to distinguish them from earthworms (which are indicative of healthy soil)

- 5-6 inches in length
- Squirm or twitch when disturbed
- Clitellum (band around the middle) is milky white in color and flush with the rest of the body and connects completely (unlike earthworms, which are raised and have a gap)
- Found within the first few inches of soil, where organic matter is most prominent
- Soil structure becomes granular and has a coffee-grind appearance

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND JUMPING WORMS:

Do not spread contaminated soil, which may contain eggs, around your garden/farm or to others.

Collect identified worms and place in a sealed plastic bag to be thrown in the trash.

Avoid adding additional organic matter (compost, leaf litter) to your soil.

Cover contaminated soil with clear plastic. Both the worms and the eggs will die if exposed to 104°F+ for at least 4 days.

There are currently no pesticides labeled to kill this pest. Identification and proper disposal are the most effective method of removal.



Photo: John Esslinger, Penn State



Photo: Nebraska Invasive Species Program

HELP STOP THE SPREAD:

Stay informed and be vigilant!



Informational Sources:

Esslinger, John. "Another Challenging Pest Has Made Pennsylvania Its Home." *Penn State Extension*, 3 Sept. 2020, extension.psu.edu/another-challenging-pest-has-made-pennsylvania-its-home.

Sever, Megan. "Invasive Jumping Worms Damage U.S. Soil and Threaten Forests." *Science News*, 29 Sept. 2020, www.sciencenews.org/article/invasive-jumping-worms-damage-soil-threaten-forests.