

JUMPING WORMS

AMYNTHAS SPP.

WISCONSIN DNR FOREST HEALTH

Jumping Worms, (*Amyntas spp.*),

is an invasive earthworm native to East Asia. This active and damaging pest was found in Wisconsin in 2013. It is known and sold under a variety of common names including crazy worms, Alabama jumpers and snake worms.



Jumping Worm Basics

The name speaks for itself! They jump and thrash when handled, and behave more like a threatened snake than a worm. Jumping worms can be 1.5 to 8 inches long. The narrow band around their body (clitellum) is milky white and smooth, unlike other species which have a raised clitellum. A jumping worm's clitellum will also completely circle the body.

The Problem With Jumping Worms

Jumping worms change the soil, by disrupting the natural decomposition of leaf litter on the forest floor. They turn good soil into grainy, dry worm castings (poop) that cannot support the understory plants of our forests. In residential and urban areas they can also harm to ornamental plantings and turf.



Jumping Worms in Wisconsin

Jumping worms reproduce and spread quickly. It is extremely important for us to learn where they are in Wisconsin and help slow the spread. More details are coming in May regarding Best Practices for Reducing the Spread.

