

Do you have some interesting **bugs** in your bin that you do not know if they should be there or not? Here are some reasons why they might be there, and what you can do about getting the bad ones out so they do not upset your worms anymore.

## **Bad Bugs—try to get rid of them!**

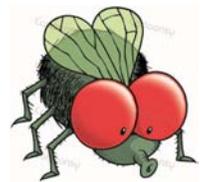
### **Ants**

**Cause:** Unburied food scraps

**Solution:** Make sure to bury your food scraps, and ensure the bedding is damp enough, as ants prefer dry spaces.



### **Fruit flies**



**Cause:** Exposed food scraps

**Solution:** Always cover the food scraps with bedding when you put new food in. If covering the food scraps for a few days doesn't get rid of the flies, you have a couple of options. One is to cover the bedding with cardboard or plastic, keep about two inches of moist bedding making it difficult for them to lay eggs on the food. Another option is to change the location of the bin, or make a fly trap (visit <http://www.wikihow.com/Get-Rid-of-Fruit-Flies> to see how).

### **Centipedes**

**Cause:** These may have made it in on leaves it brought in from the outside.

**Solution:** Make sure you don't confuse them with millipedes (which have 2 pairs of legs per segment) which are beneficial to your worm bin. Centipedes on the other hand, kill and eat your worms, and can be identified by their flat bodies and have one pair of legs per segment. Try not to touch them though, as they will bite and it will feel like you've been stung!



### **Mites**

**Cause:** There are always some mites present in a worm bin, but too many stress your worms.

**Solution:** If you have a lot of mites in your bin, call us at REAPS and we will add some calcium carbonate to it to kill them off. Mites are a serious problem for worm farms because they are parasitic on earthworms (they suck blood and body fluid from your little critters!).

## **Good Bugs—they're beneficial!**

### **Springless Springtails**

Small, wingless creatures are often very numerous in compost piles. They have small pear-shaped bodies and can jump! They chew on decomposing plants, grain and fungi making it easier for worms to ingest.



### **Millipedes**

These are long, slow-moving cylindrical creatures with 2 pairs of legs on each segment. They move slowly because they have so many short legs. Most millipedes are pretty small, but there are some species that are 28cm long! They also feed on decaying and dead matter in your bin, helping out your worms to eat all of the delicious food you feed them!



### **Sow Bugs**

These are flat-bodied crustaceans, and have a rigid, segmented exoskeleton with fourteen jointed limbs. They eat decaying vegetation, as well as plants you might not want them to eat like ripening strawberries and tender seedlings. They do good in the garden though, as they help turn soil and produce compost (just like worms)!



**Remember, if you still need help dealing with any bugs, please call the Worm Lady at R.E.A.P.S.!**

Send any questions, art or inquiries to:  
**The Worm Lady c/o R.E.A.P.S Box 444 Prince George, BC V2L 4S6**  
**Ph: 250-561-7327 or email: [thewormlady@reaps.org](mailto:thewormlady@reaps.org)**

Have you helped the environment today?

May is **Compost Awareness Month!** Do you know what *compost* is? Compost is made up of food scraps, leaves, wood chips, grass, and even paper that break down and create rich soil that plants love! You can make compost in your backyard by building a bin and putting things like raw food scraps (things carrot peels and apple cores) and leaves in it. If you leave the pile for long enough, with the help of water and high heat, soil is made!

It's like magic, but way cooler because you know how to do it yourself. It's kind of like what you're doing with your worm bin, except things are breaking down by more than just worms—there are a lot more bugs in a compost bin! Have a look at the drawing to see what a compost bin is made up of!



## Important Dates

**May – International Compost Awareness Month**

*Our Compost Demonstration Garden opens!*

*REAPS' Annual Plant Sale May 26th*

12 Canada Health Day

16 Endangered Species Day

22 International Day for Biological Diversity

27 Rachel Carson Day

International Migratory Bird Day (second Saturday)

Drinking Water Week

Composting Awareness Week

National Forest Week

National Sun Awareness Week (third week)

## COOL COMPOST CRAFT!!!

Here's a really interesting thing you can do at home to see how compost is made, as compared to plastic or whatever you choose to compare it to.



Get a container with 1-3 parts, fill with your objects to break down and soil, and watch everything break down (or not)!

Idea from <http://www.mamabzz.com/2011/04/earth-day-project-kids-compost-container-review-giveaway.html>