

Goodbye! (Hope you had a wonderful April Fools Day) April has arrived and that means it is time to check those worm bins. If most of your paper is gone your worm bin is ready to be harvested! Give the worm lady a call and she will set up a time for you to harvest your worms so that you can give your plants some castings and your worms a nice new bed. If you still have lots of paper do not worry. We can harvest worm bins into May and June. Now back to our look into worms. Last time we were talking about how worms arrived in North America from Europe. This month we are going to look at the worms that were already here.



The Native Worm

It is believed that most worms died during the ice age (10 to 50 million years ago) when glaciers grew from the Arctic into more temperate areas. However there were a few species of worms that survived in areas where there were no glaciers. Some of these regions in Canada include the West Coast of BC, some areas of the Yukon and Eastern and Atlantic Canada. While we do not often find many species of Native worms there are different types some of which include:



Arctiostrotus perrieri: A Native worm to BC

Aporrectodea bowcrowensis. A native worm to Canada and can be found in Alberta. It has no colour (not even white) and has only been found in Porcupine Hills in an unglaciated area.



Arctiostrotus vancouverensis. This worm can be found in the soil beneath specific trees like western hemlocks and silver fir. Sometimes this worm is also found in old stumps. When it is young this worm is unpigmented but will have an orange-brown flush once it grows up. This worm lives in Vancouver Island (where it gets its name from) and Washington state.

Bimastos lawrenceae. This is a very rare worm. To date only five have been studied. This worm was found on Vancouver Island near Port Alberni. Since it was found in this location it is believed that this worm used to live across the Canadian North America. With this evidence it is believed that this species of earthworm was able to survive the ice age.

Sparganophilus eiseni. This worm is commonly called the American mud worm. It often lives in muddy areas like stream, river, pond or lake banks. This is a special worm as it is one of Canada's longest worms and its clitellum (band) is found very close to its nose. This worm is generally unpigmented but will sometimes appear to be pink with blue and green iridescence. This worm lives in Ontario.

Send any questions, art or inquiries to:
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