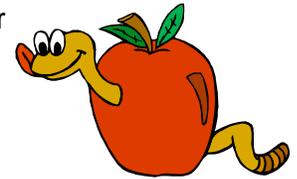


**Hello,** and Happy Holidays! Before you leave for Christmas vacation, make sure that your worm friends are well taken care of. Maybe you would like to decorate their box for the holidays and get them in the spirit too! To take care of the worms for the holidays; add 455grams of chopped food for them to feast on. Be sure that their bedding is fluffed and moist like a wrung out sponge. Ensure that the bin is away from a window or a heat source before you leave. Have a very Merry Christmas!



## The **Annelid** Phylum

While you're getting ready to spend time with your family for the holidays, the worms are getting in touch with all of their relatives too. There are about 9 000 different worm-like animals in the annelid phylum (like a family). What they all have in common is that they all have very well developed segments. The bodies of annelids are long and rounded with bristles or hairs. Here are some of the worms' cousins:



### **Tommi the Tapeworm**

Tommi lives in a cow's intestinal tract. Tapeworms are parasites, that means that they have to live off or in something to survive. Tapeworms look like long, flat ribbons and get anywhere between one millimetre to 30 meters long. Tommi is 30 feet long and has between 1000-2000 segments. There are over 3500 species of tapeworms and are found around the world, but they aren't very common in Canada or the US.



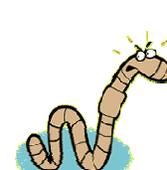
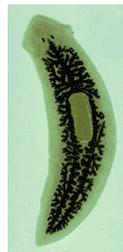
### **Lucinda Leech**

Lucinda is one of the over 600 species of leeches, all of which are parasites. She drinks blood by biting into the flesh with her 3 jaws and releasing an anti clotting chemical. Leeches are commonly used for medicinal purposes and help stop clotting on healing patients or when it is unwanted or dangerous. Leeches are found in the water and even in leech farms. They can absorb 5 times their own weight in blood within 20 minutes.



### **Fern the Flatworm**

Fern can be found in your local pond or stream or even under a rock. Flat worms have the ability to regenerate any part of their bodies. They commonly grow more than one head or tail at a time and can have up to 10 of each. Some flat worms are so talented that they can regenerate a whole worm from any piece of their body. When feeding, the flatworm shoots a tube from its mouth that carries enzymes that immobilize its prey, making it easy for them to eat it up.



### **Eric the Earthworm**

Earthworms live in the dirt below our feet and in our gardens. They are the soils' natural plough. By burrowing into the dirt, they let air and water get in. There can be a million earthworms in one acre turning 10 tonnes of debris, leaves and stems in a year. They secrete mucus to moisten their skin so that they can breathe. Just like the Red Wiggler, they breathe through their skin.



### **Benny the Bearded Worm**

Bearded worms live on the ocean floor in the cracks or chimneys. Bearded worms can be about 10 feet tall and have bright red tentacles called cirri that protrude from the leathery tubes that are their bodies. The cirri trap plankton and tiny hairs called cilia carry the plankton to the bacteria that act like a mouth. Because they have no mouths, there is bacteria inside the tubes that break down the food so that the worms can absorb the nutrients.



Send any questions, art or inquiries to:

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