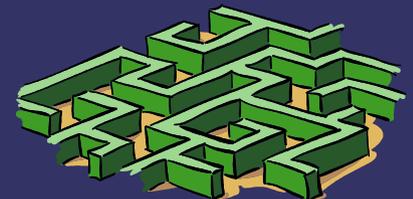


Ryan Kollmann and Michael Seehusen

present

Earthworms



Specific Classification

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Annelida

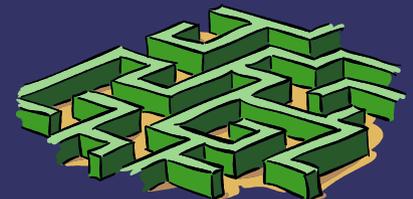
Class: Clitellata

Family: Lumbricidae

Order: Haplotaxida

Genus: *Lumbricus*

Species: *L. terrestris*



Physical Characteristics

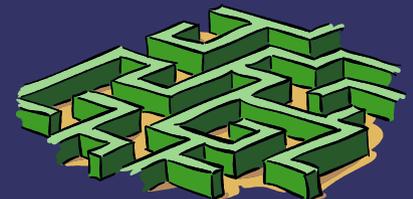
Can measure up to 6 meters

Look like a tube inside of a tube

The outer layer is made up of a series of circles wrapped around the body

The inner layer of muscle runs along the length of the body

Food enters in the mouth and exits out the anus



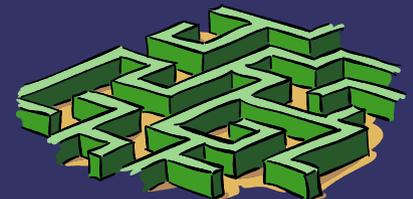
Habitat

Main habitat is soil

Decaying plant matter or manure

Decaying conifer logs

Mud near streams



What it Eats

They don't eat dirt, like many people believe
Earthworms eat decaying plant and animal
matter and they usually swallow some soil
with it

The soil passes right through and exits as
castings

The decaying matter is what earthworms ac-
tually need for nutrients and energy



Reproductive Information

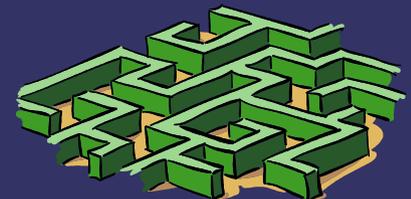
Hermaphrodites, cannot fertilize themselves

Mating pair overlap front ends

Earthworms are hatched in cocoons for 30 to 60 days

Babies are born fully grown except for lack of sex structures

Average life span is 4-8 years

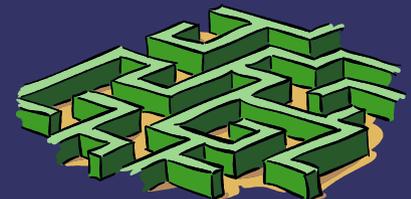


Enemies

Snakes, birds, moles, toads and even foxes are known to eat earthworms

Beetles, centipedes, leeches, slugs and flatworms also feed on earthworms

Some types of mites parasitize earthworm cocoons or the worms themselves



Earthworms and Humans

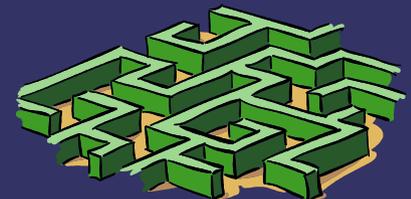
Converting organic matter into rich humus

Keeps soil structure open by burrowing

Humans often kill them for recreational activities such as fishing

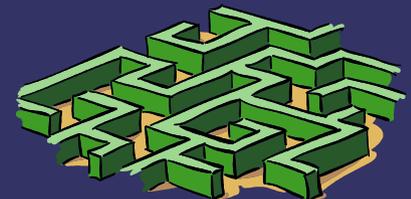
Many worms are killed either accidentally or for no real purpose

While this may happen frequently, the species is not endangered



Interesting Facts

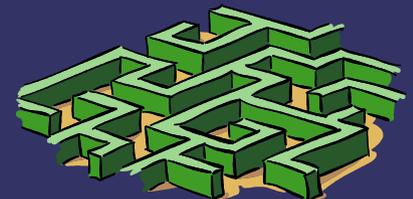
Have been kept alive for 6 years, but in the wild probably live two years at the most
Do not have lungs, breathe through their skin, and can live under water for a while;
Do not come to the surface during rain to escape drowning, but rather to find a mate since their mobility is much better on wet ground
Lack eyes but are light sensitive



Facts cont.

Can detect the motion of a robin (that can hear the earthworm in its burrow)

May survive being frozen if the freeze is not too rapid



Pictures



THE END

