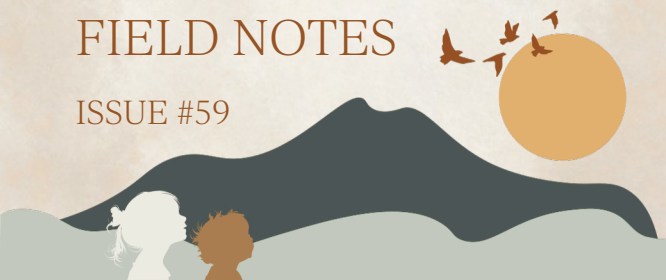


Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #59



Earthworm

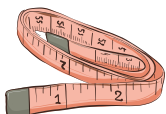
INVERTEBRATE

RECYCLERS

Earthworms live in the ground and turn organic material like dead plants back into soil. The poo that exits the worm's body is called worm castings and is sold to gardeners as fertilizer.

FUN FACT

The African giant earthworm holds the title as the longest worm in the world. While it typically grows to 6 feet (around 1.8 meters), it has been measured at 21 feet (6.4 meters) in length. Can you measure that out on your floor?



HAVE YOU HELD A WRIGGLY EARTHWORM?

Have you ever ventured outside after it has rained? I love listening to the rain from inside my house and walking outside after the rain has stopped. The rain often brings relief from the hot summer temperatures, making it an ideal time for a walk. I get concerned, however, when I find earthworms on the sidewalk or the street. When I pick one up, they wriggle around, nervous that I may eat them. They often wriggle right off my hand as they make their escape.

Earthworms breathe by cutaneous respiration. This means that air enters their body through their skin. When the soil is full of rainwater, it is hard for them to breathe, so they will come out of the ground in search of oxygen. They move easily across the wet ground to find a dry spot and may end up on a hard surface like a sidewalk or the road. Without eyes, they can get disoriented and lost. They do not know their way back to the soil where they are safe and have food. Remaining above ground makes them vulnerable to birds looking for a tasty treat.

I often see Robins searching for food during and after a rainstorm. Earthworms are a favorite and nutritious snack for many birds, snakes, toads, moles, and other animals. Don't be afraid to rescue a lost earthworm from the sidewalk. They may thank you by wriggling back into the ground.

Paul wrote in Philippians 2:4, "Let each of you look not only to his (or her) own interests, but also to the interests of others". When you see someone in need, you can help them. You can encourage them by offering kind words or a smile. You can ask your parents to help if the need is greater. Jesus said in Luke 19:10, "For the son of man (Jesus) came to seek and save the lost." Jesus rescues the lost so that we can live with Him forever.

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