

**Leaves = Food
for worms and
other animals.
This is called
organic matter
in the soil.**

Worm tunnels allow more water to enter the soil

**They act as a duct for rain & oxygen.
Help reduce dangers of water-caused
erosion! By letting the
water infiltrate into the soil quicker!**

**Worm tunnels
make it easier
for roots and
plants to grow.**

**As roots grow and reach the worm
tunnel they can get into the
ground easier!**

**Worm tunnels
allow air to enter
the soil.**

**Worms break through the muddy
soil after rainfall. These openings
in the soil help with successful
root and plant growth and allow
air to enter the soil!**

**Worms and
other animals
mix the soil by
tunneling.**





**Worms help
water
flow through
the soil!**

Worm Doo-Doo = Plant food

Worm castings are a mixture of organic substances, microorganisms, and soil. When passing through the digestive system of the worm these are mixed together forming an awesome fertilizer. The worm castings have a higher concentration of nutrients than the surrounding soil. Plants with roots growing in tunnels lined by worm castings show a better uptake of nutrients and healthier growth.





An earthworm can grow only so long. A well-fed adult will depend on what kind of worm it is, how many segments it has, how old it is and how well fed it is.

**A worm
has no
arms,
legs or
eyes.**



Source: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/facts/index.html>

**There are
approximately
2,700
different kinds
of earthworms.**



Source: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/facts/index.html>

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**Worms live where there
is food, moisture,
oxygen and a favorable
temperature.**

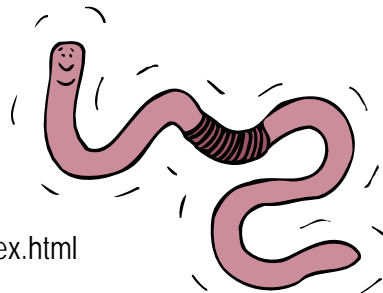
**If they don't have these
things, they go
somewhere else.**



**In one acre of
land, there
can be more
than a million
earthworms.**

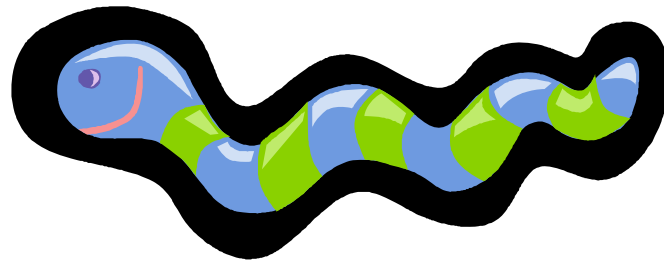


**The largest
earthworm ever
found was in South
Africa and measured
22 feet from its nose
to the tip of its tail.**



Source: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/facts/index.html>

**Charles Darwin
spent 39 years
studying
earthworms more
than 100 years ago.**



Worms are cold-blooded animals.



Source: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/facts/index.html>

**If a worm's
skin dries
out, it will
die.**



**Worms can
eat their
weight each
day.**



Q. How do worms eat?

A. They don't have teeth but they have strong mouth muscles. Dew worms or nightcrawlers often surface at night to pull fallen leaves down into their burrow. When the leaf softens a little they pull off small bits to munch on. Worms also "swallow" soil as they burrow.

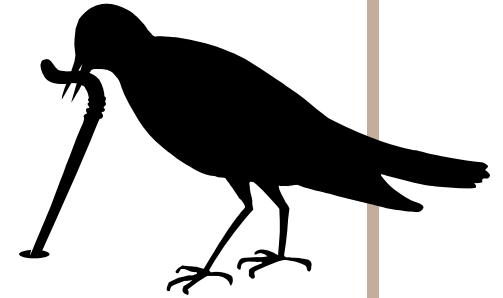


Q. Why do earthworms stay underground and seldom come out of the soil?

A. Darkness lets them avoid being dried out by the sun. If their skin dries out, they can no longer breathe. Light paralyzes them if they're in it more than an hour. Then they can't move back to the safety of the soil.



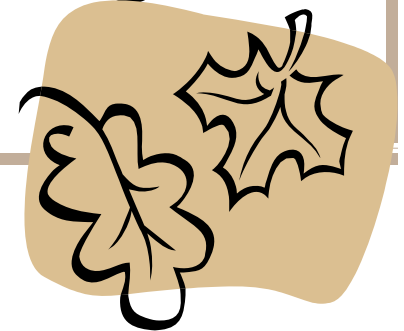
Q. Why do robins tug at earthworms in the soil?



A. Worms use the many tiny bristles or setae on each of their body rings to help them crawl as well as to anchor themselves firmly in their burrows. The robin has to tug because the worm is gripping the soil!

Q. What do earthworms eat?

A. Earthworms eat soil! Their nutrition comes from things in soil, such as decaying roots and leaves. Animal manures are an important food source for earthworms. They eat living organisms such as nematodes, protozoans, rotifers, bacteria, fungi in soil. Worms will also feed on the decomposing remains of other animals.

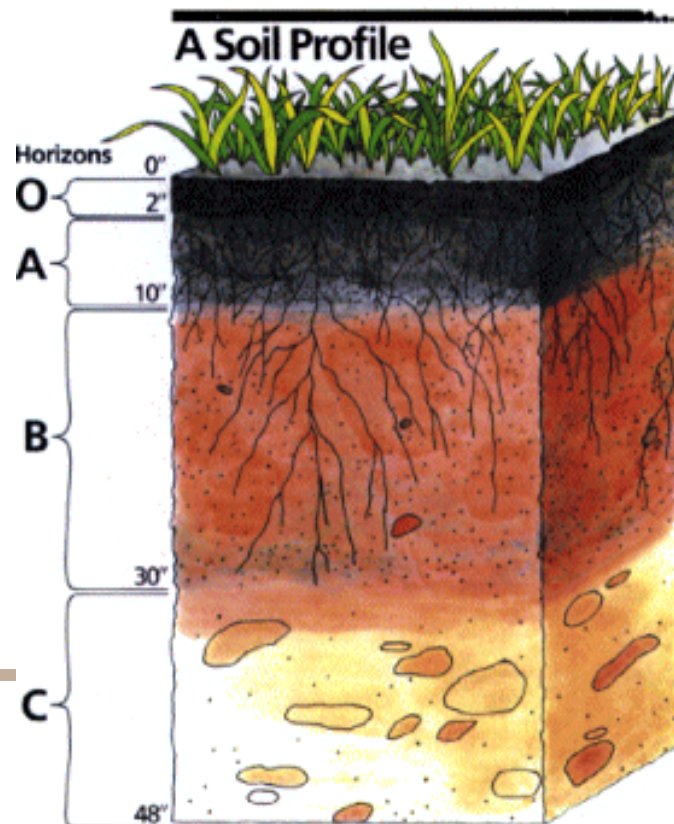


Q. Can worms crawl forward and reverse?

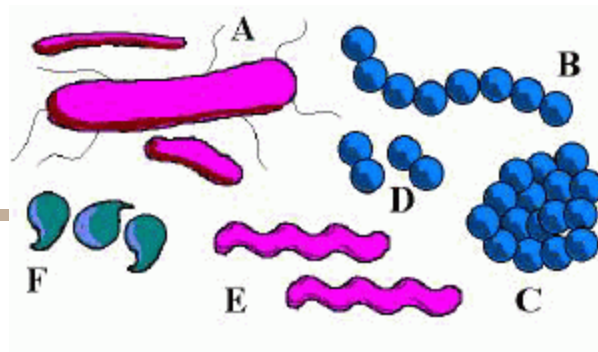
A. Yes. Even though worms can move both frontward and backward they tend to travel forward more.



**It takes more than
500 years to form
one inch of topsoil.**



In one gram of soil, there are over 5,000 different types of bacteria.



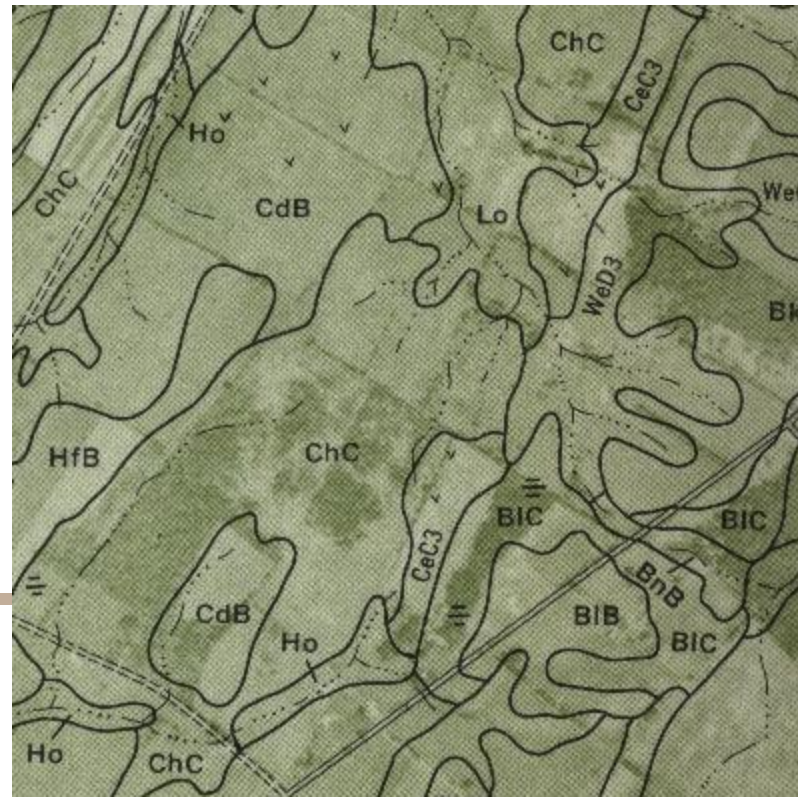
**Nearly all antibiotics
used to fight our
infections are
obtained from soil
organisms**



**One tablespoon of
soil has more
organisms in it than
people on Earth.**



**There are more than
70,000 types of soil
in the United States.**



Source: www.soils.org