

Worm Bin Creatures

Worms work in concert with many other creatures. Here are a few you will find in your worm bin.



Millipede

When I live in a worm bin I am usually less than an inch long. My name means a thousand legs but I don't really have that many. I have two or four legs on each segment of my body. I roll into a ball when disturbed.



Fruit Fly

I am a small fly. People don't like me but I don't bite, sting or make buzzing sounds. I don't harm earthworms either. You will see me around the worm bin, especially in spring and for sure if you forget to bury the food scraps. If I get too pesky, stop feeding the worm bin for a week or until I leave.



Soldier Fly Larvae

I hatch from an egg and will someday be a fly. I like hot weather and love to eat. Worms don't like me and may retreat to the lowest part of the bin until I fly away. You may want to discourage me by mixing in more shredded paper.



Sow Bug

I have 10 pairs of legs. That make me an isopod like my cousin the Roly Poly, but I can't roll up into a ball like him. I eat vegetation and old leaves. I am related to crayfish and lobsters. I breathe with gills so I must live in a damp, moist place.



White Worm

I look like a frayed piece of thread. I am a skinny, white worm, about an inch long. I am related to the earthworm. I like to eat food scraps too, especially acidic ones.



Ant

I have six legs. I help to decompose food scraps by breaking them into smaller pieces. I create tunnels and move soil clumps. I don't harm earthworms. If I get too pesky, it is probably a sign that the bin is too dry.



Worm Cocoon

I am the size of a tiny bead. Before I have hatched I am yellow and the shape of a lemon. After I have hatched I turn darker. Two or more baby worms are hatched at once.



Mite

I am so tiny it would take 25 of me to cover an inch-long line. My body is round and fat so it's hard to see my eight legs. I eat mold, soft leaf tissue and the manure of other organisms.

Questions?
Call Santa Cruz County's
Worm Doctor, Karin Grobe,
at 831-427-3452

www.compostsantacruzcounty.org

The School Composting Program is sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and produced by the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works Recycling and Solid Waste Division.