

## EARTHWORMS IN LAWNS

Earthworms are beneficial to our lawns and gardens. They till the soil making it more fertile as they feed. They pass soil through their bodies and it often piles up on the ground as small 'ant hills' of granulated soil.

They are helpful, but can also be aggravating. Their digging can be so much that they make the soil soft and the piles of soil can bury turf in some cases.

Experts differ in their opinions as to whether this digging hurts the plants. A good watering will settle the soil and should be sufficient in most situations to alleviate injury.

To see if you have earthworms, drench the soil in the area with a soap solution. Mix one ounce of lemon dishwashing detergent in one gallon of water. Pour over the affected area when soils are moist, piles are present and temperatures are warm. The worms should come to the surface within three minutes. Look closely, they can be small.

There is no insecticide labeled to kill earthworms. Remember, they are generally beneficial. In fact, gardeners that want to keep them have to be careful to avoid using chemicals like Sevin (carbaryl) on their soils since this may kill the earthworms.

For more information contact the Houston County Extension Service at [wchance@uga.edu](mailto:wchance@uga.edu) or by calling (478) 987-2028.