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## Invasive Jumping Worm & Spruce Decline

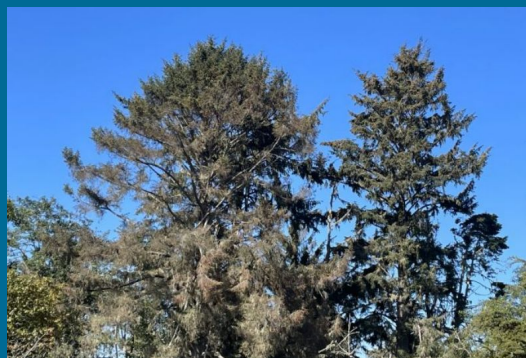
September 2023



### Jumping Worm is Here

Have your garden worms been acting crazy lately? The jumping worm, *Amynthas agrestis*, (sometimes called the 'crazy worm') is an invasive earthworm that has been recently reported in a couple of Humboldt County locations. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has labeled the jumping worm as an A-rated pest, meaning it can cause economic or environmental harm if it becomes established in the state.

It is typically introduced and spread via potted plants, potting mixes, or mulch and can be distinguished from other earthworms by a milky-white band (the clitellum) wrapping all around and flush with its body near the head as well as



### Spruce Trees: Not Dead Yet!

If you've been thinking that the spruce trees along the coast are on their last legs, you're not alone. With their brown canopies and dropped needles, the spruce trees are looking truly terrible this year. So, what's going on? We know of several factors contributing to the browning of coastal spruce trees, including invasive spruce aphids, giant conifer aphids, a tip-wilting fungus, and spider mites.

Although these pests and pathogens have all been hanging around in spruce forests for a while, we suspect that this year's rain pattern triggered an increase in the presence, resulting in a mass defoliation event. However, spruce trees are resilient, and as long

its characteristic “jumping” when disturbed. They tend to be found near the surface, just under accumulations of leaf litter or mulch, or under potted plants.

Have you seen it? Complete this [Jumping Worm Survey](#), and we will follow up with you.

Read more about identifying and controlling the jumping worm in the articles “[Look Out for the Jumping Worm](#)” and “[Jumping Worms](#).”

as they retain at least some green needles, these beleaguered coastal stands will probably pull through.

If you want to learn more about the canopy snackers responsible for this situation, read our “[Spruce Browning and Defoliation](#)” factsheet.

If your spruce trees have symptoms unrelated to defoliators or are having more long-term problems, check out our spruce diagnostic table [here](#).



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