

Earthworms and Soil Life

Within a typical garden soil is an ecosystem consisting bacteria, fungi, moulds and a myriad of animals from tiny insects to larger earthworms. Most of these are vital to the health of the soil. Earthworms play a key role here.

Earthworms constantly move through the soil, processing the organic matter through bodies. This breaks it up and increases beneficial microbial activity, increases nutrient availability to plants, improves crumb structure, increases water holding capacity and allows better penetration of plant roots, water and oxygen into the soil.

Encouraging earthworms. Check your earthworm population in the cooler, wetter time of the year. Introduce some if you have few or none. Feed them by allowing leaf litter to remain and mulch the surface. Bury your kitchen scraps in holes 10-20 cm deep throughout the garden. Over time this will provide enormous benefits. Keep the soil moist and keep digging to an absolute minimum. Avoid using toxic chemicals in the soil.

