



The Earth Moved: On the Remarkable Achievements of Earthworms

By Amy Stewart



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In *The Earth Moved*, Amy Stewart takes us on a journey through the underground world and introduces us to one of its most amazing denizens. The earthworm may be small, spineless, and blind, but its impact on the ecosystem is profound. It ploughs the soil, fights plant diseases, cleans up pollution, and turns ordinary dirt into fertile land. Who knew?

In her witty, offbeat style, Stewart shows that much depends on the actions of the lowly worm. Charles Darwin devoted his last years to the meticulous study of these creatures, praising their remarkable abilities. With the august scientist as her inspiration, Stewart investigates the worm's subterranean realm, talks to oligochaetologists—the unsung heroes of earthworm science—who have devoted their lives to unearthing the complex life beneath our feet, and observes the thousands of worms in her own garden. From the legendary giant Australian worm that stretches to ten feet in length to the modest nightcrawler that wormed its way into the heart of Darwin's last book to the energetic red wigglers in Stewart's compost bin, *The Earth Moved* gives worms their due and exposes their hidden and extraordinary universe. This book is for all of us who appreciate Mother Nature's creatures, no matter how humble.

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The Earth Moved: On the Remarkable Achievements of Earthworms By Amy Stewart Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Even Charles Darwin found the lowly earthworm fascinating: all their tiny individual labors in tilling the soil and nourishing it with their droppings add up over time to a massive collective impact on the landscape. In this absorbing, if occasionally gross, treatise, gardening journalist Stewart (From the Ground Up) delves into their dank subterranean world, detailing their problem-solving skills, sex lives (Darwin noted their "sexual passion") and shocking ability to re-grow a whole body from a severed segment (scientists have even sutured together parts of three different earthworms into a single Frankenworm). Intriguing in their own right, earthworms stand at the fulcrum of the balance of nature. In the wrong place, they can devastate forests, but in the right place, they boost farm yields, suppress pests and plant diseases, detoxify polluted soils and process raw sewage into inoffensive fertilizer; indeed, humanity's first great civilizations may have risen on the backs of earthworms, say some of the creature's most fervent champions. Stewart writes in a charming, meditative but scientifically grounded style that is informed by her personal relationship with the worms in her compost bin. In her telling, worms become metaphors-for the English working class, for the process of scientific rumination, for the redemption of death and decay by life and fertility-and serve as a touchstone for exploring the ecological view of things.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-In this fascinating book, readers are taken on a journey underground to see the impact worms have on humans and on our planet. Referring often to Charles Darwin's *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, through the Action of Worms, with Observations of Their Habits*, Stewart educates on the vital role these creatures play in growing crops, how they can neutralize the effects of nuclear waste on soil, and their ability to regenerate new body parts. An avid gardener, the author begins with the worms crawling through her own backyard before visiting them in such destinations as an endangered redwood forest in California, a sewage-treatment plant in San Francisco, a nature preserve in Minnesota, and The Giant Worm Museum in Australia (which is shaped like a 325-foot-long worm). A book that's as enlightening as it is entertaining.-
James O. Cahill, Fairfax County Public Library, VA

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From [Booklist](#)

No less a scientist than Charles Darwin wrote one of his most popular books on how earthworms were responsible for creating the rich uppermost layer of soil, and garden columnist Stewart's equal fascination for this spineless, subterranean earth mover (and ingestor) shines through in the chatty text. She explains the differences between red worms that thrive in compost piles and worm bins, nightcrawlers that dig their deep burrows in the soil, and gray worms that live around plant roots. She examines the work of scientists as they discover new species of earthworms, looks at the role of earthworms in soil ecology, dissects the anatomy and taxonomy of the world's earthworms, and discusses the interactions of human and worm. The importance of earthworms to the organic farmer and backyard gardener is one of Stewart's key points. This quirky book will find a niche in all gardening and natural-history collections. *Nancy Bent*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Betty Lavery:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or read a book called The Earth Moved: On the Remarkable Achievements of Earthworms? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have different opinion?

Michael Davis:

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Michael Davis:

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Jack McCurdy:

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