

New Zealand Flatworm

Arthurdendyus triangulata



Identification:

A wooden board or plastic sack weighted with soil placed on bare ground will attract the worms. The purplish back, oatmeal fringe and underside make them unmistakable. They may extend to 12cm (5"), but when found under boards or bags they will usually be curled into a flat spiral. The larvae may be found in glossy black cases, about 7x5mm, like small blackcurrants.



New Zealand Flatworm

Arthurdendyus triangulata.

Photo © Murdo Macdonald.

Distribution:

Widely distributed in Highland in gardens. It has established in the wider countryside in W Ross, and possibly other places. Blue <2010; green, 2010 on.

When to look for it:

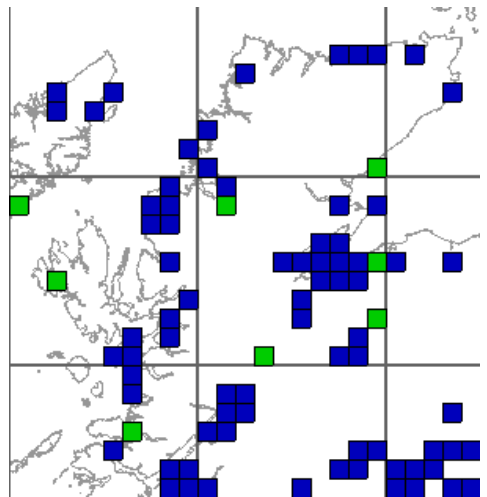
The worm may be found all year, but is usually discovered during the gardening season.

Similar species:

There are other alien flatworms in UK, but they are much scarcer and differ in colour.

Notes:

New Zealand Flatworm is a predator of earthworms and a serious garden and agricultural pest. If you have them in your garden, keep a jar with concentrated solution of table salt handy. The worms die instantly when dropped in. Take precautions against spreading them to new sites by transferring plants or soil, though they are very efficiently and uncontrollably carried by animals.



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