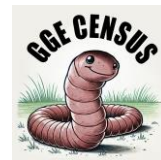


A Census of the Giant Gippsland Earthworm in South and West Gippsland



Help us locate the Giant Gippsland Earthworm

The Giant Gippsland Earthworm (GGE) is one of the world's largest earthworms and a threatened species. It is only found in South and West Gippsland, within a 440km² area bounded approximately by the Bass River Valley, Korumburra and Warragul. Almost the entire population of this threatened species is found on private land. This means for scientists and land managers to understand whether GGEs are surviving or declining, records from private landholders are essential.

As a resident or landholder in our study area, we need your help with this important conservation effort.

Please complete the questionnaire online (completing it online enables faster and more accurate data collection) and also record the location of GGEs on your property using our free App.

You can access the questionnaire either:

- Directly through the GGE App, or
- Via the Giant Gippsland Earthworm website gianteearthworm.org.au and navigate to Census Project

If you cannot use the online questionnaire, we've enclosed a paper version, please complete the paper version and return it in the reply-paid envelope.

To download the free App:

- Search for '**Giant Gippsland Earthworm**' in your app store.
- Look for the App with the cartoon worm logo.

This is the first comprehensive survey that has been done on this species in 45 years. It is also the first region-wide survey done in the time of Global Positioning Systems (GPS), enabling us to identify colony locations accurately. Information gained will guide future conservation efforts.

Where are GGEs found?

GGEs are commonly found close to creek banks, especially those that are not prone to flooding, along sloping gullies and on steep, south or west facing slopes with underground springs or soaks. They typically inhabit areas with moist blue-grey clay or red clay soils and live in complex permanent burrows that extend to around 1.5 m in depth.

Signs of GGE habitat may include buttercups (a herbaceous plant with yellow flowers), soaks or terracettes and crayfish chimneys, images of which can be seen on the following website:

<https://www.gianteearthworm.org.au>.

Completion of this questionnaire and provision of location data via the GGE App is voluntary. All data collected during this project will be treated as confidential. The collected data will be used to inform future earthworm conservation programs and policy development. Records will also be added to relevant databases such as the Biodiversity Data Repository (BDR). The BDR and other government data repositories are managed in accordance with the Australian Government's Protective Security Policy Framework and the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988*. No personal details or property details of earthworm habitat sites will be publicly disclosed in any form.

Thank you for assisting us with this important research by completing this questionnaire, which will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. **We would appreciate your response by July 31st.** Your feedback is very important to us. If you would like further information or assistance, please contact Joel Geoghegan at Bass Coast Landcare Network joel.geoghegan@basscoastlandcare.org.au

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