

GRINDAL WORMS

by Chase Klinesteker, SWMAS; from SWAM, January / February 1998 Issue

Grindal worms are small white worms only slightly larger than microworms. Their main advantage seems to me to be the fact that they grow in soil, not in a liquid medium that quickly gets a bad odor as microworms do. They are very prolific and can be collected in great quantities on top of the soil every time they are fed by sprinkling 1 -minute oatmeal over the surface. In about 24 hours, I take a spoon and scrape off the white masses of worms collected on the surface (after most of the oatmeal is gone). Then I rinse the worms under water in a clear plastic cup, letting the worms settle for about 30 seconds to the bottom. The fine soil particles will be in suspension and can be poured off. Repeat this rinse one or two more times and the worms are ready to be fed with an eye dropper to your fish. This culture can be neglected (forgotten) for weeks or even months as long as moisture is maintained in the soil. **WARNING! DON'T TRY THAT WITH MICROWORMS! - unless you are olfactorially challenged.**

I received the grindal worm culture in with the red worm culture that was being passed around SWMAS in 1996. I used 50% potting soil and 50% worm bedding (finely ground newspaper) and kept the soil fairly moist. Feeding pig feed (ground cornmeal) was recommended and seemed to get good growth of the red worms but later I tried oatmeal and it seemed to do just as well. At first I thought the white masses were baby red worms-- but they never grew up!

Almost any fish up to 2 inches will eat these tiny live worms, yet they can be fed to tiny fry that have not been very long on baby brine shrimp. They are a versatile, inexpensive and easy to care for live food for baby and young fish.