

GLOSSARY

Drilosphere: It is the part of the soil influenced by earthworm secretions and castings. Specifically, it is the fraction of soil which has gone through the digestive tract of earthworms; or the lining of an earthworm burrow. The average thickness of the drilosphere (lining of an earthworm burrow) is 2mm.

Fauna: The animals of a particular region, habitat, or geological period.

Termites: A small, pale soft-bodied insect that lives in large colonies with several different castes, typically within a mound of cemented earth. Many kinds feed on wood and can be highly destructive to trees and timber.

Epigeic: Earthworms that live in the topsoil and deposit wormcasts on the surface.

Endogeic: Earthworms that build complex lateral burrow systems in all layers of the soil.

Anecic: Earthworms that build deep vertical burrows and surfacing to feed.

Humify: Convert (plant remains) into humus.

Microbiota: The microorganisms of a particular site, habitat, or geological period.

Phylogeny: The branch of biology that deals with phylogenesis.

Phylogenesis: The evolutionary development and diversification of a species or group of organisms, or of a particular feature of an organism.

CFU: A colony-forming unit (CFU) is a unit used to estimate the number of viable bacteria or fungal cells in a sample. Viable is defined as the ability to multiply via binary fission under the controlled conditions.

Midgut: It is the portion of the embryo from which most of the intestines develop. After it bends around the superior mesenteric artery, it is called the "midgut loop".

Vermicast: It is also called worm castings, worm humus or worm manure, is the end-product of the breakdown of organic matter by an earthworm.

Biofertilizer: It is a substance which contains living microorganisms which, when applied to seeds, plant surfaces, or soil, colonizes the rhizosphere or the interior of the plant and promotes growth by increasing the supply or availability of primary nutrients to the host plant.

Vermiculture: The cultivation of earthworms, especially in order to use them to convert organic waste into fertilizer.