

Lumbriculus

Carolina ! CareSheet

Lumbriculus variegatus, commonly known as blackworms or California blackworms, resemble miniature earthworms but are aquatic, living in the sediment and silt of freshwater ponds and lakes. Their transparent bodies reveal many of their internal organs.

Add spring water to replace water lost to evaporation. If the water begins to cloud, replace it until it remains clear. Eventually the paper towels disintegrate and waste residues accumulate. To clean the habitat, decant the water, being careful not to pour out the paper and worms that remain at the bottom. After rinsing the paper and worms with spring water, refill the pan to the original level and add new pieces of towel. The frequency of cleaning depends on population density, temperature, etc., but it is unlikely that the habitat will need cleaning more than once per month, and you probably can go several months between cleanings. Occasionally “harvest” the surplus worms and use them for classroom experiments, live fish food, or starting duplicate cultures. Maintenance of at least 1 duplicate culture is recommended for sustained culturing. Under these conditions, worms will reproduce asexually and cultures will thrive for years.