

Australoplana sanguinea (Dendy, 1891)

Size: 2 to 10 cm long, 2 to 5 mm wide.

Colour: orange or pinkish-orange (peach coloured) with pink front end. The pinkish tinge probably comes after feeding on earthworms.

Shape: long and thin and slightly flattened, more flattened at rest.

Eyes: many minute eyes (small black spots) round the anterior end and down both sides.

Feeding: feeds on earthworms.

Prevalence: Widespread in SW and NW England, fewer records elsewhere. First identified in the UK in 1981, a specimen found in Tresco, Isles of Scilly. Origin probably Australia.

Reproduction: mostly by fission, worms breaking in two and both parts regenerating into whole worms.

YouTube:

Australoplana sanguinea (the Australian flatworm) (UK):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXhaeDpz0L0>

Records in Ireland can be found at:
<https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/stats/taxon-stats>

Elimination:

This is almost impossible, but put any you find in a container (jam jar, soft drinks bottle) with some water and tightly close the lid/top. They will soon drown and decompose - and smell! It can safely be poured away.

Care should be taken to prevent distributing ANY alien species. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to knowingly distribute the following species: *Arthurdendyus* (*Artioposthia*) *triangulatus*; *Australoplana sanguinea*; *Kontikia andersoni*; *Parakontikia* (*Kontikia*) *ventrolineata*.



Australoplana sanguinea.
Upper: an extended specimen about 6 cm long.
The narrower end is anterior.
Lower: a resting specimen.



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