



**Alderney**  
Wildlife Trust



**States of**  
Alderney

# Media Release from Alderney Wildlife Trust and the States of Alderney

Date: 24/11/2025

## New Invasive Flatworm Found on Alderney

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Obama flatworms (*Obama nungara*) have been found for the first time on Alderney in autumn 2025. Reports have originated from two locations across the island and have been verified by experts.

Obama flatworms are native to the south of Brazil and Argentina, but have subsequently become invasive in a number of locations across Europe, with the first report for Europe coming from Guernsey in 2008. The flatworms can be identified by their large size, up to 10-cm long, and broad shape. They are dark brown, with black dorsal streaks and a pale underside, and their egg capsules are 5 mm black cocoons.

Similar to the Australian flatworm, the Obama flatworm's diet includes native earthworms, and this potentially impacts the species dependent on them (including small mammals and birds) and could limit the role of earthworms in decomposing dead organic material in the soil. Earthworms complete many important ecosystem services, with their burrowing increasing the availability of nutrients to plants, as well as improving water infiltration and soil aeration. Predation by any of the invasive flatworms is therefore concerning for the future fertility and health of Alderney's soils and could have negative impacts on growers across the island.

### What can you do?

Invasive flatworms are mainly spread accidentally through horticultural and gardening practices. Good biosecurity when moving or planting new plants could help limit the spread of the flatworms across the island:

- Checking soil around new plants before planting, especially the root ball and inside pots.
- Checking any gardening equipment for flatworms or their egg capsules before use, or when moving between sites.
- Not giving or receiving plants or reusing topsoil from areas known to be infested, including between plots or beds in gardens.
- Treating any infected plant pots by immersing the whole pot (above the root ball) in water >30 °C for 40 minutes.

To dispose of invasive flatworms, cover with hot or salted water in a sealed container like a jam jar. When the flatworm has died, it can be poured away without any additional precaution.

If you see any invasive flatworm, or believe you have seen one in the past, please report it with as precise

a location and date as you can provide, and ideally a photo. It is also important that potential sightings, even with rough estimates of dates and locations are reported, as this will help us to estimate how widespread the species is over the island and help with decisions as to how to respond to this new threat.

Sightings can be reported either to the [Alderney Biodiversity Centre](#), or by the smartphone iRecord app (available for [Apple](#) and [Android](#)), or directly to [ecologist@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:ecologist@alderneywildlife.org) (01481 822935). If you have any questions about recording Australian flatworms, please come into the Wildlife Information Centre on Victoria Street and ask.

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**Obama flatworm (credit: Matt Lewis, AWT)**

## Additional Information

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The flatworms are typically found in wet areas, including around streams and ponds. They may be found in gardens or plant nurseries, particularly in leaf litter or under non-porous material like paving slabs, plant pots or tarpaulins.

## Background

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### About the Alderney Wildlife Trust

The Alderney Wildlife Trust is one of the 46 [Wildlife Trusts](#) working across the British Isles. We are the youngest of the Wildlife Trust, forming 21 years ago and since then the AWT has received incredible support from a dedicated team of wildlife enthusiasts, what we like to think of as the 'TeamWilder'. This team isn't just limited to residents and AWT members, it includes people from all walks of life who have an interest in our island's wildlife, as well as supporters and organizations

from around the world. We work with the local community to engage them with their natural environment in order to protect Alderney's wildlife for the future.

[Our mission is to study, protect and champion Alderney's wildlife. We wish to see a thriving natural island where wildlife and natural habitats play a valued role in addressing our island's future and the climate and ecological emergencies that face us.](#)

***Alderney is a very special place and by helping the work of the Alderney Wildlife Trust you can make a difference. After all, if you love where you live, you'll want to look after it - Dr. George McGavin, Patron AWT***

## Notes to Media

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For further information, please contact:

Matt Lewis – [ecologist@alderneywildlife.org](mailto:ecologist@alderneywildlife.org)

For additional resources related to identifying the Obama flatworm, see

<https://www.alderneywildlife.org/wildlife/invasive-species/flatworms/obama-flatworms>

Submitting a record of Australian flatworms can be done through the Alderney Biodiversity Centre

<https://alderneybiodiversitycentre.org/record/enter-single>, or via the iRecord app which can be

downloaded for Apple from <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/irecord-app/id1094633183>, or for Android

from [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.ceh.irecord&hl=en\\_GB](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.ceh.irecord&hl=en_GB)