

**A large gathering of Worm Slugs *Boettgerilla pallens* in a Worcestershire garden.**

Gary Farmer

**Bert's back.**

Since first reading about the Worm Slug *Boettgerilla pallens* (aka Bert the Gorilla) in *Worcestershire Record* (Westwood 2001), I have been searching for and very occasionally finding this unusual little mollusc. Its thin body allows it to live unnoticed in places with very little space. I have found them between piled paving slabs, roofing tiles and other abandoned building material. I have even seen one washed out of a worm burrow next to a stream during flooding. But, on the few occasions that I have encountered Bert, I have only ever found single specimens.



01. Cluster of Worm Slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer

That is until August this year. While moving a large glazed plant pot in my garden I noticed lots of pale worm-like animals in the saucer beneath the pot (01). On closer inspection they were all pale Worm Slugs, at least fifteen, which is more than I had seen in total before. The conditions in the saucer were ideal, wet with the large plant pot pressed down on a small amount of silt that had washed through the pot over time. I felt quite guilty for disturbing these slimy little creature: the ideal excuse to stop the garden tidy-up!

With so many slugs present it wasn't long before they started spelling words (02, 03). Note, no slugs were harmed during the making of these photos ...



02. Worm Slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer



03. Worm slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer

**Reference**

Westwood, B. 2001. Looking for Bert-the-Gorilla, *Worcestershire Record*. 10:18

**Images**

- 01. Cluster of Worm Slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer
- 02. Worm Slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer
- 03. Worm slugs *Boettgerilla pallens*. Gary Farmer