

Moles Fact Sheet

Moles can cause extensive damage to any lawn area. Large heaps of soil may appear overnight. Underground tunneling will cause areas to sink. These pose a special problem to the lawn owner.

Moles:

- are mammals that feed all year long
- prefer loose, moist, sandy soils as opposed to hard clay
- diet is mainly earthworms, snails, spiders and other insects
- will sometimes eat small quantities of vegetation
- rarely eat flower bulbs, roots and other plant material
- they do not necessarily mean that you have grubs – grubs are only present 2x/yr
- usually nest 6” to 25” below the surface
- nests are usually in shrub beds near foundation walls, fields or wooded areas
- will search for food by venturing out into turf areas, especially when the activity on the lawns is at its lowest point. This is generally in the late fall to spring under snow cover.
- will usually recede to protected areas as the soils dry and lawn activity increases

Control of Moles is a difficult task. There are many home remedies, such as gum, human hair, gas bombs, mothballs, poison bait and many more. They are generally ineffective. The white grub is one of their favorite foods and their presence should be checked either in the spring or late fall. One of the most effective means of control is to trap or kill them directly. There are special traps for moles available but standard mouse traps work and both need to be set carefully. They need to be placed along a permanent run and not under a hill of soil. The permanent run leads from their nests to the feeding areas. In setting the traps, be as careful as you can to cause the least amount of disturbance. You can also try a submerged can in the run as a trap. If you are not “faint of heart”, you can try to kill them directly. This may be accomplished by flooding the tunnels with a garden hose. You may have to try several points of entry for the water. As the moles surface, strike them with the back of a flat shovel. They will want to return to the safety of the tunnels so you must be prepared and act quickly. Two persons are more effective and the best results being in the morning or evening hours. This method will not work if the water flows into a drain tile. Be persistent, have patience or you can get a good hunting dog or cat! Good luck!