

The Garden Mole



TALPA EUROPAEA

FACT SHEET

Description:

Moles are small, burrowing mammals found throughout Europe, known for their cylindrical bodies, velvety fur, and powerful forelimbs for digging. They have small eyes, no external ears, and a sensitive nose for detecting insects and worms. Moles primarily live underground in gardens, woodlands, grassland and arable land creating extensive tunnel systems to find food.

Legislation:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986
- Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996
- Animal Welfare Act 2006



POTENTIAL ISSUES

- **Damaging Lawns and Gardens:** Moles can create a network of tunnels and mounds in gardens, lawns, and agricultural fields. This can cause damage to crops, especially root vegetables, and ruin the aesthetic appeal of a well-kept garden.
- **Disruption to Plant Growth:** Their burrowing can disrupt root systems, leading to poor growth in plants and potentially killing delicate vegetation.
- **Damage to Turf:** The tunnels moles create can weaken turf, making the lawn spongy and prone to collapse underfoot. This damage is often more pronounced during wet conditions. Tunnels also pose a tripping hazard for humans and livestock.

SIGNS OF INFESTATION

- **Molehills:** The most obvious sign of a mole infestation is the appearance of molehills—mounds of earth that are displaced from the underground tunnels.
- **Raised Lawns:** Tunnels beneath the surface may cause the lawn to become uneven and spongy, creating a bumpy appearance.
- **Shallow Tunnels:** Tunnels may be visible in flower beds, gardens, and grassy areas, especially during the spring and summer months.
- **Visible Tracks:** Sometimes, moles leave trails in areas where they have tunnelled close to the surface.

CONTROL

- **Trapping:** Trapping is one of the most common methods of mole control. Moles are caught in special traps designed to capture humanely.
- **Habitat Modification:** Reducing food supply for moles can help control the population. This may involve using techniques to limit insect populations in the soil, such as reducing excessive watering and improving drainage that reduces insect growth. Inserting barriers can also help deter burrowing.
- **Encouraging Natural Predators:** Attracting natural predators like owls or hawks can help control mole populations, as they prey on these small mammals.

DEVELOPMENT

BREEDING PERIOD	March & May
LITTER SIZE	2 - 7; average 3 - 5
EARS OPEN	around 2 weeks
EYES OPEN	around 2 weeks
YOUNG WEANED	4 - 5 weeks
SEXUALLY MATURE	9 - 11 months

If in doubt, contact a trained and professional Pest Technician.



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