

## Moles



# Bolton Council

### What do they look like?

Moles are small mammals that have dark brown fur and large shovel shaped front limbs that are used for digging, very small eyes and no external ear flaps. The breeding season is between February and June usually with one litter of between 2-7 young. These are born in underground nests.

### Where do they live?

The mole is widespread throughout Britain; adult moles are solitary and live almost entirely underground in tunnels which can extend over a large area. They will have two depths of tunnels. The deepest will be between 2-8 inches or more below the surface. The soil excavated from these tunnels is pushed out of the system and forms 'mole hills'. The other type of tunnel is a 'surface tunnel' that is just below the ground and can be recognized by soil or grass pushed up as a ridge along the length of the run. These shallow tunnels are not as permanent as the deep tunnels.

### What do they eat?

Moles eat earthworms and this is what attracts them to your lawn.

### Pest Status

Moles are classed as a nuisance pest and can be extremely irritating for keen gardeners due to molehills forming in lawns.

### Control

- Traditional solutions have included the control of earthworms. However, earthworms do a lot of good, improving drainage and breaking down organic matter in the soil. By removing or controlling the earthworms you will control the moles but the price is high, as you will damage your soil.



## Control (continued.)

- Trapping is the best method for removing young, inexperienced moles. This can be done by householders or by a professional pest control company. This type of control is best carried out between October and April when moles tend to be at their most active. Locating the deep runs can be done by probing the ground with a stick. When a run is located the stick will suddenly give and it can then be excavated. The key to trapping is to set the trap without introducing any foreign scents. To achieve this, use old traps or buy new ones and bury them in the ground for a few weeks so that any new odours are removed. Before you touch the traps you should also rub soil over your hands to hide your own scent. The trap should then be placed in the mole run so that the trap sits just above the run base. Once the trap is set make sure that no light can get into the mole run by adding soil around the top of the trap. Trapping is a very difficult procedure and unless you are experienced, you are unlikely to entirely remove the problem. **TRAPS MUST BE CHECKED DAILY.**
- You may be able to encourage moles to leave your garden by using a strong smelling garden disinfectant such as Jeyes Fluid or similar. **ALWAYS FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS** which can be found on or attached to the container. Seek further advice from the retailer if necessary. Due to moles highly developed sense of smell this strong smelling chemical can act as a deterrent. You will probably need to continue with the procedure for about ten days to achieve positive results.
- **Professional Help;** Your Local Authority can provide a service for the removal of squirrels from inside properties, however, there may be a charge involved). Alternatively, commercial pest control companies are listed in Yellow Pages and Thompson's Local Directory.

