

MOLES & VOLES

Moles & voles rank right up there as everyone's least favorite animals, along with mosquitoes, warthogs and no-see-ums. Contrary to popular belief, moles and voles are not the same animals, nor do they do the same damage. Moles are meat eaters, and their main food source is white grubs. Voles are vegetarians and go after the tender roots and shoots of plants. The tunnels you might step on in the garden are dug by moles, but used by both sets of animals. Try as you might, neither pest is easy to get rid of, but it can be done. Here's a few tips on how to do it:

MOLES: Since moles are grub-eaters, it stands to reason if you get rid of the grubs, then the moles will follow. There are several ways to accomplish this. There are a couple different products on the market that you can use each season to keep the grub population to a minimum. Some of them are Bayer Grub Control with Dylox, and Scotts Grubex. While these products are effective, they are not environmentally friendly, and they need to be reapplied each year. A better choice is Milky Spore. Milky Spore is available as a small granular substance that can either be applied by hand or put in a lawn spreader. The bacterium contained in Milky Spore stays in the soil until it is consumed by passing grubs that digest it. It then consumes the grub and is redistributed into the soil. The more grubs you have, the more easily it spreads. It is safe for children and pets, and won't harm the environment. It is expensive, but in the long run your investment is returned time and time again. One to three applications are needed over a period of one to two years, depending on which form of Milky Spore you choose. After the first 2 years, you don't need to worry about it for 10 to 15 years. We also sell a gas cartridge called a Giant Destroyer that has a good kill rate. It looks like a small stick of dynamite—light the fuse, shove the cartridge in the hole, stamp the hole closed and walk away. It emits a gas that will kill moles in the immediate area.

VOLES: Voles are rodents, and thus related to mice. Any poison that will kill mice can be used on voles. We sell a product called Ramik that works well for this problem. It looks like green dogfood—just chuck a couple down the holes as you're walking thru the garden. Another alternative is to use Permatill or Volebloc when you plant. This is a permanent solution, as it never breaks down. Dig your hole as you normally would, line the entire hole with Permatill or Volebloc (same product, 2 different names), place your plant in the hole, backfill, place more Permatill over the top of the rootball, and finish covering with soil and mulch. Permatill is extremely sharp so voles won't tunnel thru it.

For more information, come in and see us, or call us at 804-360-2800.

