



1. **Fall Store Hours**
2. **Moles and Ground Squirrels: How are they different, what do they do, and how can you deal with them if you've got them in your yard and garden?**

Nov. 6th E-NEWS

With the time change last weekend and the fact that it's so dark out at 5:00pm now, our hours of operation have changed. **Monday through Saturday, the market will be open from 9am to 5pm but Sunday hours will remain as they were as 1pm to 5pm in the afternoon.** We will also be closed this coming Tuesday, Remembrance Day.



We'll be gearing up this next week to get our **Apple Lane Gift Shop** ready for Christmas. While we don't do a 'Christmas Décor Store' the way that Nico's does, we will have lots of great gift ideas with a smattering of Christmas décor items thrown in for good measure. So don't mind the mess as we do the changeover and come in and check out all the cool stuff we've gotten in: more fashions, more kitchen ware, and more gift ideas for everyone on your gift list.

The new workshops that I announced last week have been filling up quickly. We still have a couple of spots open in the **'INDOOR FAIRY GARDEN'** workshop which is being held this Saturday (Nov. 8th) at 2:00pm. Let us know ASAP if you'd like to take part. Cost of the workshop is \$25+GST and includes all supplies.



Indoor Fairy Garden



Merry Greeting

Because the new **'MERRY GREETING'** Christmas Door Swag workshop filled up so quickly, I'll be leading a second session later the same day at 1:30 (November 29th). There are 5 spaces open for that second session with the cost being \$29+GST including all supplies. We had so much making the door swags last year and I'm sure it will be great fun this year, too.

GARDEN TIPS OF THE WEEK: Moles and Ground Squirrels

In last weeks' newsletter I wrote about the differences between voles (field mice) and mice and about what you can do to prevent or, at least, minimize the damage done by voles in the garden. This week, as promised, I've got information on moles which are really very interesting critters, as it turns out.

Moles are generally larger than voles or mice (3-7" long depending on species and whether

male or female), have a hairless pointed snout, very small eyes and ear canals (with no external ears) that are hidden by their short, thick fur, and, most notably, have large forefeet with long, broad webbed toes and claws. The hind feet are small and narrow with slender claws and the tail is short.



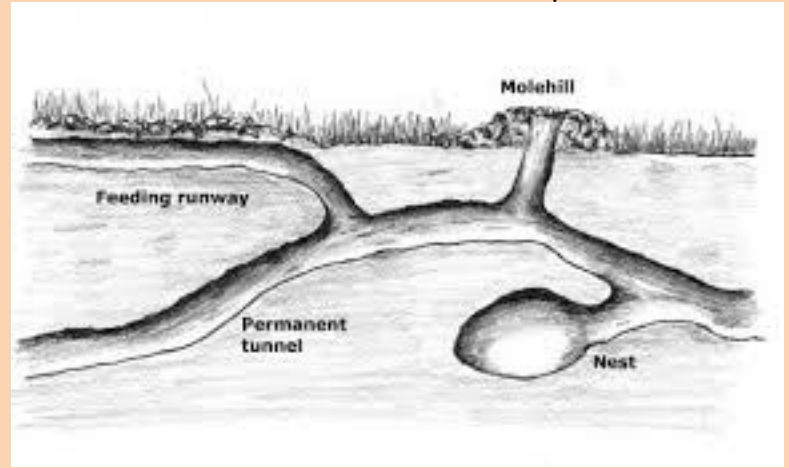
Moles are **NOT RODENTS**. Their preferred food is earthworms although they will also eat grubs and small invertebrates such as mice, voles and shrews. They **DO NOT EAT PLANT MATERIAL** but will gnaw roots to get them out of the way when building their tunnels. Because moles are Insectivores, they do not have the large incisors characteristic of rodents and, in fact, have small teeth incapable of eating vegetation and roots.



Mole grabbing an earthworm

While a huge number of soil mounds might lead you to believe that you have a large population of moles, this is not the case in that moles usually live a fairly solitary existence. The only time there will be multiples is during spring mating season and when raising their young. There is only one litter per year consisting of 2

to 6 young. Moles live underground, rarely coming to the surface and need an **extensive** system of under-



ground tunnels because they need to eat 70-115% of their body weight every day; that's a lot of worms!! (An interesting little note I found on moles is that they paralyze worms with their saliva and store them in 'larders' for later consumption!)



Mole burrows in wet soil

Volcano-shaped Soil mounds

Because earthworms are the moles' preferred meal, it stands to reason that moles follow the earthworms. This means that when soil is wet and worms are close to the surface, mole burrows, too, are close to the surface. When soil is dry and/or warm in summer, worms move deeper into cooler, moister soil and consequently the moles go deeper, too. In winter when soil is cold at the surface, worms and moles both move deeper. The volcano-like soil mounds associated with mole infestation are made when the mole has to get rid of excess soil as it burrows its tunnels. *Moles can excavate up to 100 feet of tunnels per day in their quest for more earthworms!*

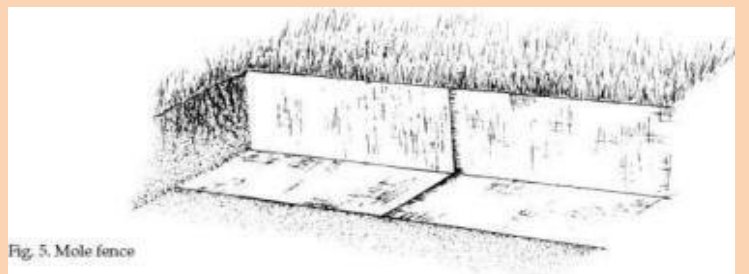


Fig. 5. Mole fence

If moles are a serious problem in your garden, the most practical and effective method of control is trapping. While exclusion tactics such as putting in

a wire perimeter barrier a foot deep and laid flat a foot under the edge (see diagram), their use is really only practical in small areas. Trapping can be done year-round but is most effective in early fall and in spring when moles tend to be living closest to the soil surface. There are a number of styles of mole traps on the market but they all work on the same principle and have to be set into an active, close-to-the-surface, tunnel. In order to determine if a tunnel is active or not, stomp the tunnel run flat; if the tunnel is again raised the next day, you have an active tunnel.

So now you know why most of the plant and root damage attributed to moles is *actually perpetrated by voles and by ground squirrels*. (More on ground squirrels next week.) And why many of the garden remedies recommended for moles just **DON'T WORK** because of a lack of understanding of how moles live and what they eat. There's even misinformation in garden books and on garden programs! **So FYI the following methods don't work: Lye, Drano, thorny branches, human hair, pickle juice, vibrating devices, ultrasonic devices, razor blades, gasoline, bleach, rodent baits, moth balls, juicy fruit gum, killing soil grubs, castor oil or soap, and fumigants.** If any of these deterrents have worked for you (and before you send me an email) let me just say this: whatever you did and the fact that the moles moved on was entirely coincidental. Moles move **OFTEN** in their quest to find more earthworms!

One of my product reps was telling me recently that she had heard a garden commentator say that the best way to get rid of moles was to get rid of grubs in the soil. **WRONG.** If there are lots of earthworms in the soil, it won't matter if you get rid of the grubs because earthworms are the favored food. And here's the irony; the more we add organic matter to our soils and use organic mulches to cover our garden beds, the richer our soils become and the higher becomes the worm population!! Is it any wonder that moles are having a hey-day in some areas?

If you have soil mounds in your yard or garden, go out and check to see if they're volcano-shaped with a hole *in the middle* or if they're crescent-shaped with a hole (if visible) to the side.



MOLE MOUND

GROUND SQUIRREL MOUND

Ground squirrel mounds are crescent-shaped and this is a good way to determine which critter you're dealing with. Ground squirrels **ARE** rodents and they can do a huge amount of damage to plants- damage often blamed on moles. Next week I'll give you the low-down on ground squirrels and how to get some control if you have these pesky animals in your garden.

FEATURED THIS WEEK

Nov. 7th – Nov. 13th

Apples in stock right now:

Ambrosia

Boskoop

Elstar

Empire

Gala

Granny Smith

Hanna Special

Honeycrisp

Spartan

Idared

Jonagold

Apricot apple

Golden delic.

Orin

Senshu

Sinta

Spigold

**We have: Anjou pears
Squash**

Best regards,
Harriet

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