

MOLES & OTHER PESKY DIGGERS



Kentucky Cooperative Extension



It starts with us

CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

Destructive tunnelling in expensive lawns and gardens.

Separating roots of plants from soil causing dieback or death.

Notorious for raised tunnels irritating gardeners.



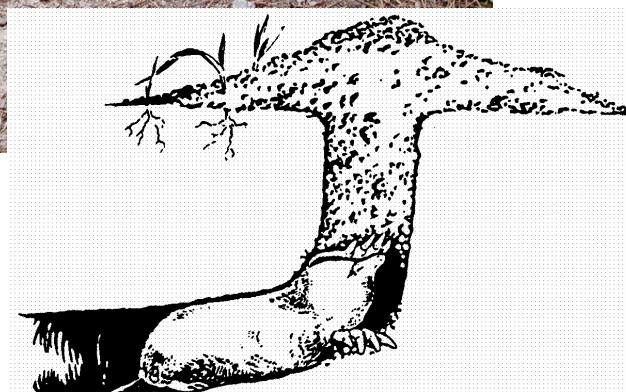
MODUS OPERANDI

- Insectivore
- Adapted for life underground
- Solitary (works in small numbers)
- Most active early morning and evening-year round
- Voracious appetite for earthworms, grubs, invertebrates



#1 The Mole aka The Eastern Mole

Mole Tunnels



Mole Management

EXCLUSION

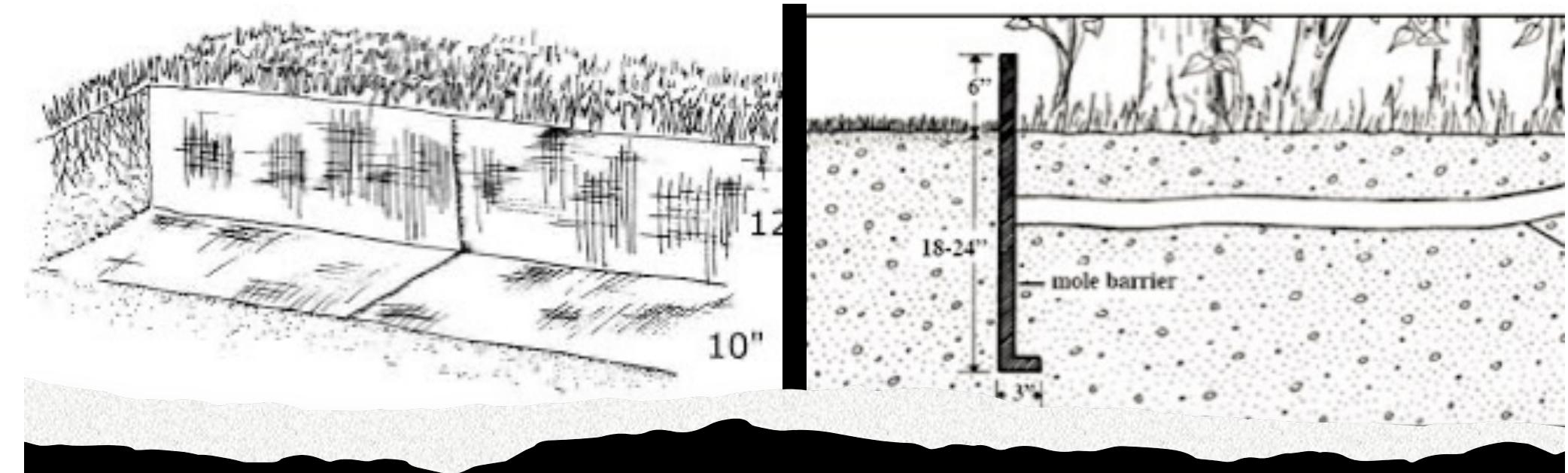
PREDATORS

REPELLENTS

CHEMICAL

BAITS

TRAPPING



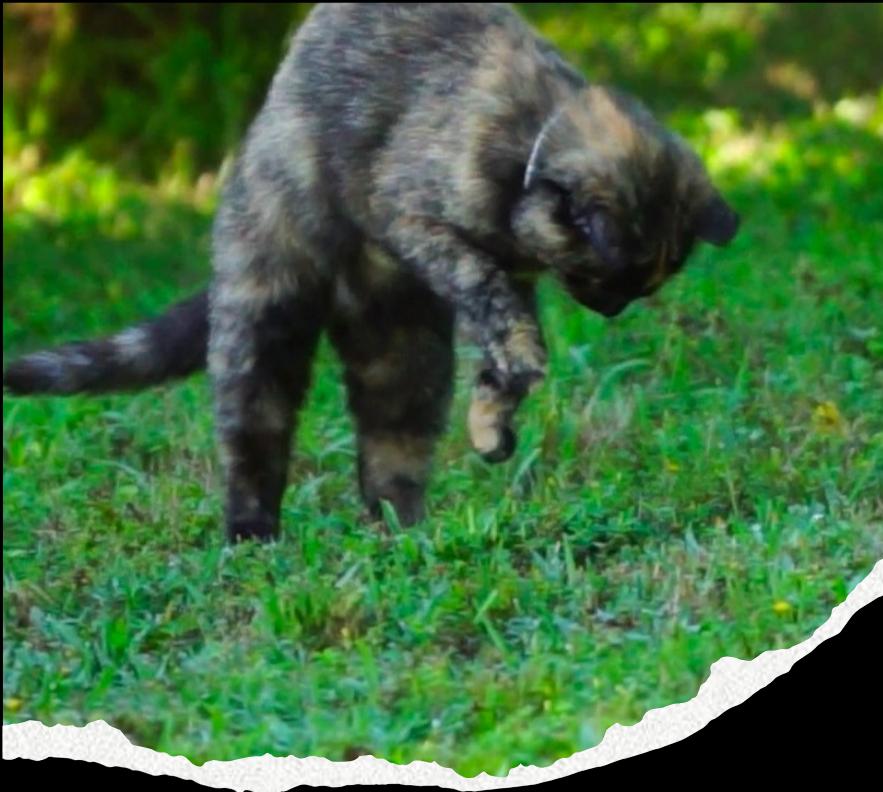
Exclusion

- Option for small areas such as flower beds
- Hardware cloth 12 inches deep bent to 90° angle



Repellents

- Thiram – may be applied to protect bulbs
- Castor oil and castor oil products, such as Mole-Med® or MoleChase® - show minor effectiveness in repelling the eastern mole
- Mole Bean Plant – not proven; also poisonous to humans and a weed/ not recommended



Predators

- Domestic cats and dogs



Chemical

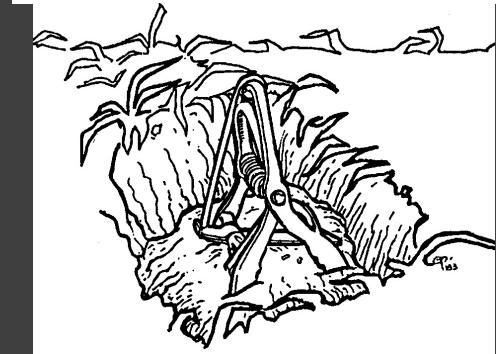
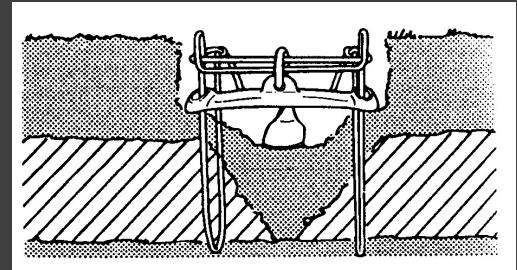
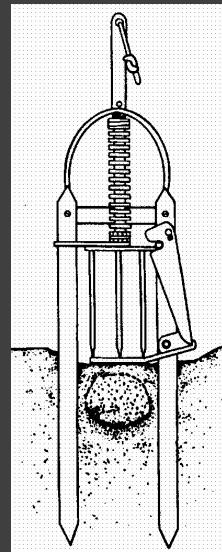
- Insecticides may reduce grub / earthworm populations
 - success may be limited
 - timing is mid-June to mid-July
- Fumigants (e.g., Al. phosphide, sodium nitrate / sulfur)
 - limited success when placed in deep burrows
 - serious human health implications possible

Baits and Traps

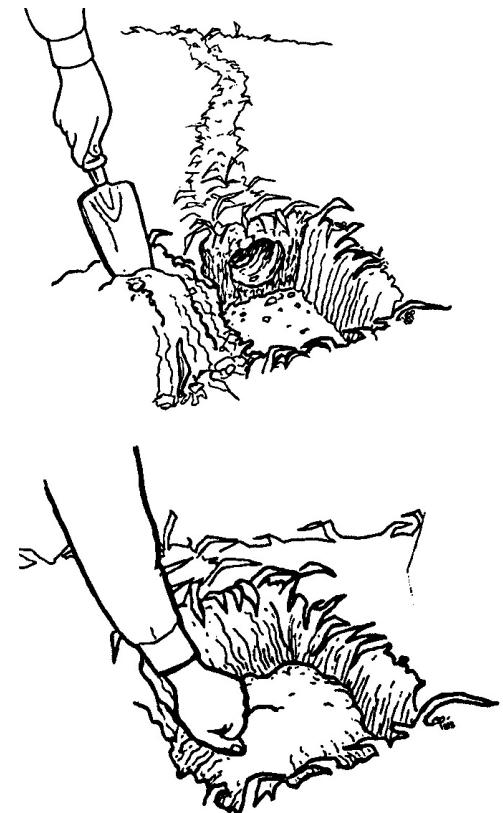
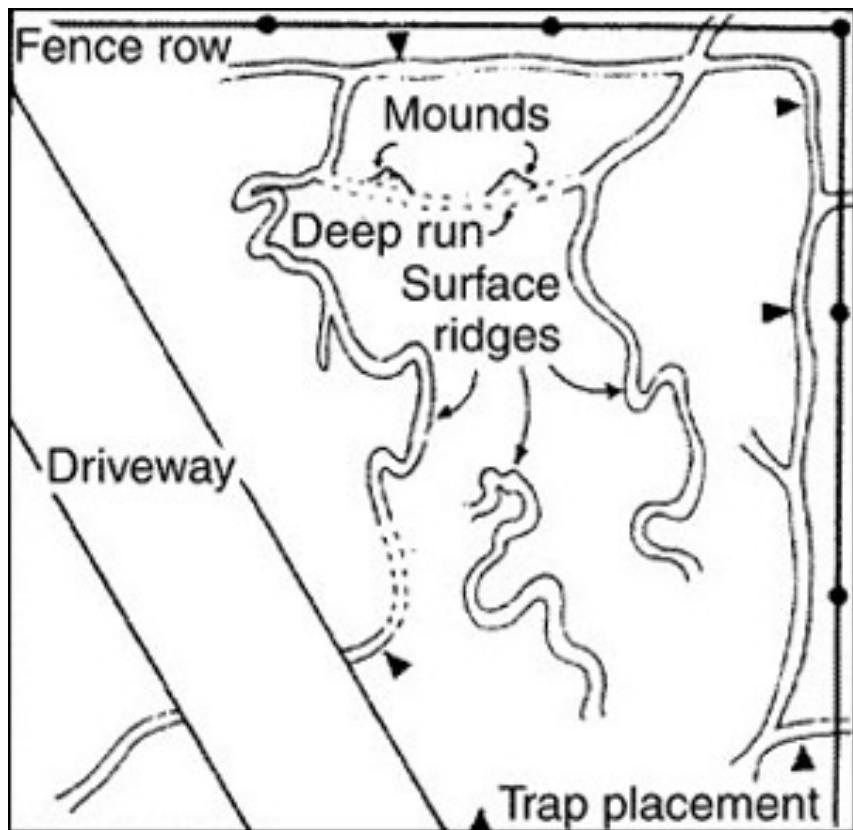
Baits - Talpirid



Traps – harpoon, choker-loop, or scissor-jawed



Baits and Traps



CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

Outstanding Warrant for gnawing of plants, girdling trees and shrubs.

Building extensive surface runways without a permit.



MODUS OPERANDI

- Rodent
- Eats grasses, forbs, seeds, tubers, bulbs, rhizomes, bark
- Active day and night, year-round
- Breed year-round
- 3 species in KY - Meadow Vole, Prairie Vole, Pine Vole



#2 The Ghost aka The Vole

Vole Tunnels



Vole Management

TOXICANTS

EXCLUSION

HABITAT MODIFICATION

TRAPPING

Exclusion

- hardware cloth under bulb plantings and flower beds
- hardware cloth cylinders protect seedlings / young trees





Habitat Modification

- mow yard closely and often
- eliminate weeds, ground cover, and litter in shrubbery
- mulch with a gap around tree trunks



Toxicants

- Toxicants
 - Zinc Phosphide most commonly used
 - single-dose, restricted-use pesticide
 - pelleted, grain bait, and powder formulations
 - also sold as mole / gopher bait
- Anticoagulant baits

Traps

baited snap traps during fall / winter can be effective



CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

Aggressive when threatened.

Unlawful Entry – by digging in lawns, under house foundations; taking residence under house, porches, etc.

Known to kill poultry, beehives



WARNING! Armed and Dangerous.

MODUS OPERANDI

- Omnivore
- Weasel Family
- Inactive in winter
- Nocturnal
- Very susceptible to rabies



#3 The Muscle aka The Striped Skunk, aka polecat



Skunk Holes

- 3- to 4-inch cone-shaped holes
- or patches of upturned earth

Skunk Management

HABITAT MODIFICATION

SHOOTING

TRAPPING



Habitat Modification

- Keep property clean of debris where skunks could find shelter or food
- Clean up after pets eat outside
- Seal off all openings to the foundation with hardware cloth
- Fence out skunks from landscaped areas, gardens

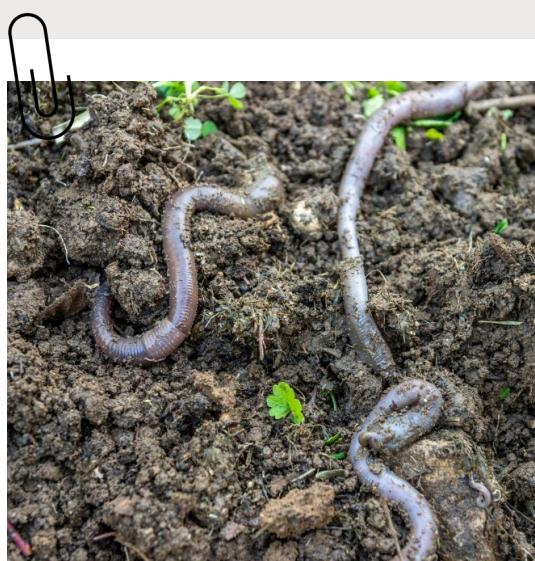


Trapping

- Variety of live traps available (10"x 10"x 30")
- Cover the trap with a heavy canvas
- Bait with canned or fresh fish
- Locate near the den entrance if know
- Transport in the back of a truck

CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

High populations lead to turf damage.



MODUS OPERANDI

- Decomposers
- Improve soil composition
- Considered beneficial

#4 The Insiders aka Earthworms





Earthworm Damage

CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT

Damages lawns, flower beds by burrowing in the ground or rooting for insects or grubs.



WARNING! Recently sighted.

MODUS OPERANDI

- Insectivore (mostly)
- 12-17 lbs
- Mainly nocturnal
- Poor eyesight
- Do not tolerate freezing temperatures
- Related to anteater, sloth



#5 The New Guy aka The Nine-banded Armadillo



Armadillo Damage

The Authorities

- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources:
<https://fw.ky.gov/Wildlife/Pages/Nuisance-Wildlife.aspx>
- Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management
<http://icwmd.org/>

Contact Info:

Matthew Springer, Ph.D.

Assistant Extension Professor of Wildlife Management

mattspringer@uky.edu

859-257-8633

UK Forestry : <http://forestry.ca.uky.edu/matthew-springer>

UK Wildlife Damage Website: <http://forestry.ca.uky.edu/wildlifedamage>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UKWildlifeExtension/>