

# Trapping Best Scourge For Moles

**Dear Plant Doctor:** My neighborhood in Southport is alive with moles. I heard from a lady in Pennsylvania that they used limestone to get rid of them. I have always heard that you do not put lime on centipede grass. Another neighbor has bought traps and used diazinon.

I would appreciate your opinion on this matter.—Southport, N.C.

**Dear Plant Doctor:** Moles are taking over my yard. What is the best means to eradicate this pest from my premises?—Danville, Va.

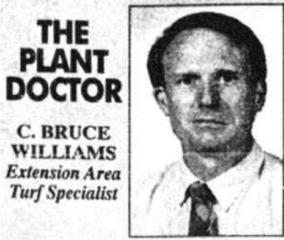
**Answer:** In North Carolina, the most common and pesky mole is the eastern mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*). Two moles not considered pests are the rare star-nosed mole (*Condylura cristata*) and the hairy-tailed mole (*Parascalops breweri*). Neither of these two moles regularly frequents the coastal plains. The North Carolina Wildlife Commission enacted regulations to protect the rare and endangered animals. Hence the reason for the following red tape: The best control for the eastern mole is trapping. However, a depredation permit must first be obtained from the N.C. Wildlife Commission or your local game warden.

Limestone will not control moles. And yes, too much limestone can be detrimental to your centipede grass.

"Juicy Fruit" gum will not control moles.

Poison peanuts will not control moles. Moles do not eat vegetable matter. They feed exclusively on grubs, worms and other soil-inhabiting creepy-crawlies. Poison peanuts will probably kill a number of non-targeted animals in your neighborhood.

Insecticide use on your lawn to kill all grubs will not totally control moles. An "insect-sterile" lawn is an invitation to disaster. For example, some researchers think severe ground pearl infestation (an insect



**THE PLANT DOCTOR**  
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problem without a cure) is due to the eradication of ant predators by insecticides or other methods. Use insecticides to control grubs only when a grub problem is indicated. For more information, send me a SASE for "Insect Management in Turf," AG447.

The eastern mole is a very solitary animal. Most "mole" problems result from the activity of one or two animals that are very active although it may appear otherwise.

The best mole control is a spear-type trap. The first objective is to locate a frequently used runway or surface tunnel. An easy way to locate a regularly used tunnel is to cave in a short section of all visible runways, and then to check each day to see which runways the mole has reopened. Repeat the this caving in and checking for two or three consecutive days and you can identify those runways for your trap.

Set your mole trap over a collapsed portion of the active runway you have identified. If you have not captured the mole in two days remove the trap and move to a new location.

Foxes, snakes, birds of prey, cats and dogs are effective predators of moles. You can probably encourage the wildlife and decrease your mole problem naturally.

A gardening friend of mine prides himself on his ability to spear moles

with a pocket knife. He tells me the best time of day for the hunt is just prior to sunrise.

Stealth and quiet are essential. Watch for the earth to move while the tunnel is being formed and then jab away.

If this is ALL too gruesome for you, just realize that moles are critters in nature just like rabbits, squirrels, and birds. A mole tunnel does have some positive benefits—it aerifies your lawn.

For more information on controlling moles in your lawn, send a SASE to me for "Mole Control".

Send your gardening questions or comments to *The Plant Doctor*, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.

## Volunteers Sought To Help At Shelter

Volunteers are needed at Hope Harbor Home to transport women and children to classes and counseling groups on Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays, according to Cathy Swaim, executive director.

They are also needed to work with children on Wednesday mornings while their mothers attend parenting classes.

To volunteer or get more information, call Swaim at 754-5726.



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

## Civitan's Install Officers

The South Brunswick Isles Civitan Club installed new officers at its Oct. 6 meeting. Shown above are (front, from left) Helen Inman, chaplain, and Hazel Caison, secretary; and rear, Sarah Tripp, treasurer; Evan Gore, president; and Tommy Phillips, president-elect. Not pictured is assistant secretary Carol Smith.

## Bolivia School Festival Is Friday

"Fall Into Literacy" will be the theme of Bolivia Elementary School's Autumn Fest. Fri., Nov. 5, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the school.

A variety of game booths will be offered, each decorated to reflect a book title, in keeping with the literacy theme.

Storybook character, turkey gobbling and karaoke contests are planned, along with "Wheel of Fortune" and a hayride. A live disk jockey will report throughout the evening over WCCA-Radion Station in Shallotte. Hotdogs and drinks will also be available.

Proceeds will be used to buy classroom supplies, said Ruth Gore,

president of the school's PTA, which is sponsoring the event.

Bolivia School is located on U.S. 17 Business in Bolivia.

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