

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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MOLES, Potent Destroyers of Good Turf

WITHIN the boundaries of the United States there are five groups of true moles. Inasmuch as they are quite alike as far as activities are concerned we shall not classify them.

WHAT MOLES FEED UPON.

All species live chiefly upon earth-

worms and other insects that inhabit the ground. To the extent that they destroy harmful insects they are beneficial to the farmer but in lawns they, of course, do considerable damage by heaving up the soil, which causes the grass to dry out quickly. It is in moist rich soils that moles usually operate. When a mole is living in a lawn it cannot conceal the evidence of its presence. Ridges or conspicuous mounds plainly indicate the runways.

The ridges show the direction and course of the animal's hunting paths, which are so close to the surface that the sod or soil crust is raised. The mounds indicate deeper tunneling for they are formed of earth pushed up from lower workings where the soil is too compact to be simply

crowded aside. In Farmers' Bulletin No. 1247, distributed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, we find the opinion expressed that moles work only at regular intervals each day, morning, noon, and evening. But they are no more active at one time of day than another. If an

opening is made into a mole's runway the little animal will invariably repair the breach when it next comes that way.

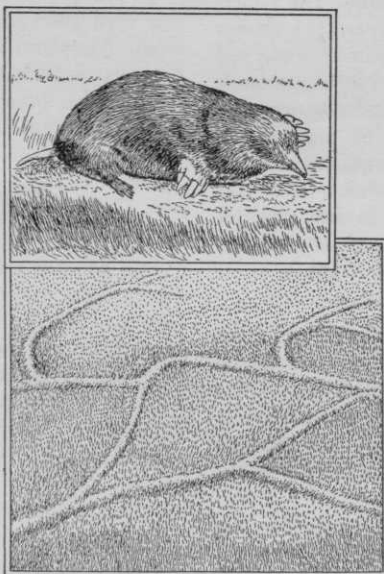
MOLES MATURE RAPIDLY

Moles grow and develop with astonishing rapidity. For example, in the Puget Sound country most of the young are born in the latter half of March and spend the month of April in the nest. By the last of May they are so well grown that the ordinary observer would not be able to distinguish them from the parent. This rapid

growth accounts for the fact that the small young mole is seldom if ever trapped. The mole's appetite seems insatiable. In captivity it will sometimes eat more than its own weight in a day.

CONTROL METHODS.

But our problem here is to explain the



The Mole and his handiwork

various methods by which moles may be destroyed and not to dwell at too much length upon their personal habits. The three accepted methods of combating moles are trapping, poisoning, and asphyxiating.

KINDS OF TRAPS.

Many types of mole traps are manufactured in this country, all of them being made of metal and depending for their operation on the same sort of tripping device. The trigger pin is designed to rest upon an obstruction, such as a board, placed in the mole's runway when the trap is set. The trap is sprung when the mole follows its natural instinct to reopen the runway by burrowing through or upheaving the obstruction. The American traps are of three types: (1) choker loops, (2) clipping or scissor jaws, and (3) impaling spikes. No importance need be attached to the admonition that one should use gloves to prevent the animal's getting the scent of human hands. Experience has shown that this doesn't affect the catch in any way. A good strong garden trowel is the best tool to use in setting mole traps.

POISONING MOLES.

So many satisfactory experiences have been reported in the killing of moles by poisons in lawns and golf courses that we feel more inclined to recommend it rather than trapping. Various poisons and methods by which they are introduced are as follows:

CALCIUM CYANIDE. Open the burrow every five feet and place in it a teaspoonful of this poison and close the opening without stamping it down.

CARBON BISULPHIDE. Pour a teaspoonful into the burrows at points about five feet apart. Close the holes as recommended for Calcium Cyanide to retain the poisonous fumes.

STRYCHNINE. (Credit is due Mr. Inglis of Savannah, Georgia, for this idea.)

Take raw peanuts, squeeze the end of each shell, insert a crystal of Strychnine and then put a peanut in each runway. This method Mr. Inglis finds much more effective than trapping.

PARADICHLORBENZINE. This vicious sounding chemical is recommended by the Department of Agriculture for destroying the peach tree borer. It is commercially obtainable in the form of a powder which, when placed in the ground, gives off a heavy poisonous gas which penetrates the soil. It should be dropped into the runways every six to ten feet and the soil put back. About a teaspoonful should be used. The moles end their activities immediately.

POTASSIUM CYANIDE. (Here is a poison used successfully at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland.) Small cubes of raw potatoes were immersed in a 20% solution of this poison and inserted in the burrow at 10 or 12 foot intervals. There is no danger of injury to children or livestock in using the poison in this manner.

ARSENIC ALSO USABLE.

Still another remedy has recently been reported by one of our thoughtful customers, Mr. W. T. Whittington, Marion, Illinois. "I successfully rid my lawn of moles by digging down in their runways at various places and putting in a handful of shelled corn that I had previously soaked in a water solution of arsenic. There is no danger to dogs or chickens because the poison is covered."

ASPHYXIATING.

Attach a garden hose to the end of the exhaust pipe of an automobile. The connection may be made secure by using electricians' tape or by wrapping with an old inner tube. Insert the other end of the hose in the runway and allow the motor to run for twenty minutes. Carbon monoxide will kill the moles if the runway is tightly sealed. Any openings should be closed with mud. When the



moles have been killed, iron out the ridges with a roller.

We invite the mole-killing experiences of other LAWN CARE readers.



Fall is the Time For New Lawns

THE TIME of year is approaching when new lawns should be made. Builders of new homes who want to start right should ask for our booklet "LAWNS" and if a Creeping Bent lawn is being considered, ask for "BENT LAWNS." Ground should be broken up and the grading completed during July or August, the seed bed carefully prepared and fertilized. It is an excellent plan to have the surface fined, ready for seeding by the first of September. (This applies to most northern states. For Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and corresponding sections of Canada, August 20th is safer.) While we have specifically mentioned new lawns we may add that fall is also the best time for improving and re-making old ones. The lawn that is weedy and struggling along year after year with a hard pan soil or a sour, impoverished one, should be spaded up and re-made. It will be the cheapest policy in the long run. Most lawns were not started right, which is almost the same as saying they *never will be right*.



Sodium Chlorate is Not Common Salt

DURING the past few weeks a number of persons have written us to the effect that they had asked the drug stores for Sodium Chlorate to try out one of the weed killing suggestions and were told that it was simply common table salt. We sincerely trust that no one who has used Sodium Chlorate in weed control has used any surplus in the salt

shaker. The difference is in the words *Chlorate* and *Chloride*. Sodium Chlorate is a poison used successfully in the destroying of many of our worst pests. Lawn weeds that succumb to it are Poison Ivy, Speedwell, Quack Grass; on the farm, Canada Thistle, Wild Morning Glory, Iron Weed, and Burdock. As a lawn weed destroyer we refer to February 1930 and February 1931 issues of LAWN CARE for a Sodium Chlorate discussion. While Sodium Chlorate should be obtainable at almost any drug store, if not found we can secure it for you.

Caution: Sodium Chlorate is both poisonous and inflammable.



Dandelions Fierce

OVERPRODUCTION has entered the field of Dandelions. Did you ever see as many as the spring of 1931 brought forth? While there are many remedies on the market we have not yet heard of any more effective than Iron Sulfate. But if you have discovered a more successful killer, please write us about it. Here is your opportunity to do a good deed by spreading the information among at least 60,000 lawn enthusiasts, for we will reprint all the suggestions received, in the next issue of LAWN CARE, and will bring them to the attention of our readers again in the spring of 1932, when another dandelion battle will be on.



Knotweed Next

AUGUST LAWN CARE will feature Knotweed unless there should be a general call for some other species. It is a nasty weed as the name would imply. You may have it in your lawn and called it many uncomplimentary names. We shall present an excellent illustration so you can identify Knotweed readily.

Grass Coarser

This Spring

YOU MAY have noticed that grass has grown ranker and coarser than usual this spring. It has been true even of fine grasses such as the bents. Soil experts account for the condition in this way. The drouth of last fall resulted in an accumulation of nitrates in the soil. There was not enough rainfall to leach them out and not enough growth of vegetation to use up the normal amount available. With the adequate moisture supply of this spring these nitrates were set free and the growth of grass and other plants was abnormally stimulated. Close frequent mowing of grass during such a period is advisable to prevent turf from becoming coarse and ugly.

WEEDS ADMIT DEFEAT.

"Your Turf Builder has produced such a perfect lawn on my place that it is pronounced one of the finest in the city. The grass is so thick that weeds admit defeat and have retreated to the neighbors' premises. It is really the most perfect growth of grass I have ever seen."—J. G. LEPEREX, Decatur, Illinois.

Crab Grass Subdued

"Two years ago last summer I assumed supervision of a small estate to bring the landscaping around to a satisfactory appearance. The previous owner had allowed crab grass to grow very tall, and in late summer, when we started operations, the grass had full control. The grass was cut and raked several directions until we had nearly all the branchlets cut. We then sowed your seed and later used fertilizer to boost a rapid autumn growth. We used quite a bit of ammonium sulphate because this is not helpful to crab grass and does force blue grass.

"In summary, the program was to keep the crab grass from stooling out and covering the blue grass; to seed and to nourish the blue grass to great vigor, and to retard the crab grass growth. Improvement was great the following summer and better last summer. In fact, this place placed second in the National Yard and Garden Contest year before last; the lawn was no small part of the reason for the rating. This is my recommendation to those who would control crab grass."—A. VERNON COALE, Landscape Architect, Peoria, Illinois.

"The Spotting Method of Weed Eradication" is the subject of an article which will appear in the August issue of LAWN CARE. The author is E. P. Deatrick, agronomist at the University of West Virginia.

Scott Publications

The following may be had for the asking:

Scott's Seed Guide, a 72-page book of valuable information for the man who farms.

Bent Lawns, an illustrated booklet which tells how to make and maintain a Creeping Bent Lawn.

Converting to Creeping Bent, a folder which explains four methods of remaking and improving an old lawn by using Bent.

Lawns, a small booklet of condensed facts about the making of a new lawn and the improving of an old one.

In addition to the above we will send to anyone a full set of the issues of LAWN CARE which have preceded this one. There have been fourteen and the following lawn pests have been discussed: Plantain, Crab Grass, Dandelions, Moss, Grubs and Beetles, Chickweed, Buckhorn, Ground Ivy, Yarrow, Earthworms, Heal-all, Ants, Speedwell, and Creeping Buttercup.