

Moles aren't rodents but can be pesky nonetheless

Two types of moles are found in the United States. Mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*) is the most numerous and widespread. The star-nosed mole (*Condylura cristata*) isn't an important mole pest.

Moles aren't rodents, but rather insectivores. Eastern moles have pointed snouts, greatly enlarged, rounded front feet with stout claws, and a short, nearly naked tail.

They are 6 to 8 inches long with short, velvety gray to silvery-gray fur that conceals their small eyes and ears.

Moles can be destructive pests in lawns, gardens, nurseries and other planted areas.

Despite the damage done by moles, there are beneficial aspects, like soil penetration of air and water and providing food for some birds and snakes.



Kimberly J. Moore

Moles feed primarily on earthworms, insects and other soil-living animals along with various seed and vegetable matter. They usually don't eat bulbs or the roots of garden plants, but several mouse species will.

Moles are active day and night year-round. They are most active near the soil surface during the spring and fall on damp days or following rain.

When the ground surface

freezes in winter or dries out in summer, moles use only the deeper burrows. Peak activity occurs in the morning, although moles work throughout the day and night.

Mating occurs during February and March, with a single litter of three to five young born after a six-week gestation period.

Young moles grow rapidly and leave the nest to fend for themselves at about one month of age.

Moles produce two types of tunnels: surface runways and deep runways. Surface runways are the raised ridges visibly running through lawn areas.

The mole is capable of extending surface runways at the rate of 100 feet per day. Surface runs may be used daily or intermittently.

They connect with the deep runways located 3 to 12 inches below the surface.

Deep runways are often main runways, which are used daily as the mole travels between surface runways and the nest. The soil excavated from the deep tunnels is pushed to the surface in volcano-like mounds.

The number of mounds or surface ridges in a yard doesn't indicate how many moles are there.

One acre supports 2 to 3 moles; yards immediately near forested areas or weedy fields may experience continual mole invasions.

Trapping is the best method of control, especially if patience, practice and persistence are applied.

Use only mineral oil, not motor oil or WD-40, to lightly lubricate traps. Remove rust and dirt with a wire brush.

Grub elimination from lawns won't eliminate moles, since grubs are only part of the mole's diet.

Hence, moles often are present in grub-free lawns. Trying to kill moles with fumigants or poisoned baits is useless. Additionally, ultrasonic and other vibrating devices are worthless in getting rid of moles and other pests.

Many home-remedy approaches can be hazardous to human health, companion animals and wildlife or detrimental to the environment.

Kimberly J. Moore is extension educator for agriculture and natural resources at the Johnson County Purdue Extension Office.

GET BUSY

Chicken and noodle dinner set for today

Greenwood Masonic Lodge, 592 N. Meridian St., will host a chicken and noodle dinner today.

Homemade noodles with chicken, mashed potatoes, vegetables, salad, rolls, dessert and beverages will be served from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Carry out service will be available.

Cost is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children ages 3 to 10.

The meal is sponsored by Greenwood Chapter 390 of Order of the Eastern Star.

Proceeds will benefit area families with food and clothing needs.

Speaker relates tragic experience at college

Mark Sterner will share his experience as a drunken driver responsible for the deaths of three of his fraternity brothers at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in the Branigin Room of the Napolitan Student Center on the Franklin College.

Sterner's program, "DUI: A Powerful Lesson" recounts the accident that took place while he and his friends were on spring break. It serves as a reminder of the importance of responsible behavior.

Sterner has spoken to more than 1 million college and high school students and was named "Speaker of the Year" by Campus Activities Magazine in 2004 and 2005.

This event is free.

Adoption information available at workshop

Attorney Steven Kirsh of Carmel, a 2005 U.S. Congressional Angels in Adoption award recipient, will speak at an adoption workshop from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday at the Bartholomew County Public Library in Columbus.

Kirsh will talk about adoption laws and procedures. Additional workshop speakers will focus on international adoption, adoptive family and child needs and birth-parent issues.

Take a day trip to Kentucky by train

Johnson County Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring a dinner train trip in New Haven, Ky., from 2 to 11:30 p.m. May 18.

Cost is \$75 per person.

The trip includes deluxe motor coach transportation, the train ride and a four-course dinner and a visit to a museum and a gift shop.

Registration deadline is April 1 at the Franklin Cultural Arts and Recreation Center, 396 Branigin Blvd.

Information: 736-3689

Christian singer performs contemporary tunes

Contemporary Christian recording artist Frank Bradford will perform at First Assembly of God, 904 S. Holland St. in Edinburgh at 6 p.m. March 26. Admission is free.

Democratic women's meeting includes lunch

Democratic state vice chairwoman Cordelia Lewis Burks will speak at the Indiana Democratic Women's Federation meeting March 25 at the Knights of Columbus, 511 E. Thompson Road, Indianapolis.

The Johnson County Democrat Women's Club is hosting the meeting.

Registration starts at 10:30 a.m., followed by a noon lunch.

Cost is \$15 for lunch. For reservations, call Matilda Foster at 736-4886.

Special Olympics practice begins Monday

Track and field practices will begin at 6 p.m. Monday for Special Olympics of Johnson County.

Special Olympics is open to participants age 8 and older.

Practice will be at Whiteland High School track, 300 Main St. Information: 738-7038 or 889-0435

Middle-school students put on stage production

The Center Grove Middle School North Drama Club will present the play "Krazy Kamp" by Tim Kelly on Tuesday in the gymnasium.

The play is the story of an exclusive summer camp for young ladies and a less posh boys camp.

The doors open at 6:30 p.m., and tickets are \$4. Information: 888-6685

Citizens gathering to bring trails to southside

The White River Trails Committee will conduct a community forum to organize a group of volunteers with a common goal to establish trails connecting neighborhoods, shops, schools and future parks in the area.

The forum is open to the public and will be at 7 p.m. April 12 in the White River Library community room, 1664 Library Park Blvd.

Don Cummings, past chairman of the Greenwood Trails Advisory Board, and Thane Morgan, current chairman of the board, will speak about trails and answer questions.

Information: Anita Knowles, 885-1290

• Metal

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

School Grizzly Cubs, Phil chose blue and white to decorate the brackets for his braces.

Will, a fifth-grader at Creekside Elementary, claimed top teeth loyalty to the Pacers by choosing blue and yellow.

On his bottom teeth, Will Endris changed moods by asking Martin for red and white to support Indiana University basketball.

"I'm going to put teeth conditioner on your teeth," Hunter said to Will Endris.

"It does have a yucky taste," she warned. "But only for about 30 or 40 seconds."

"Oh, man, this is nasty," he said.

"It's supposed to taste like cherry," Hunter said.

"It doesn't taste very much like



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT

Dentist Daniel Martin uses an ultraviolet light to harden adhesive used to affix braces to Will Endris' teeth. Endris and his brother, Will, got braces together.

cherry," he said.

Whenever there was a short break in the action, the brothers

popped up in their chairs to offer a bit of ribbing to each other.

"Phil teased me when I had to wear head gear," Will said. "I couldn't wait to put it on. And when I did, he said, 'You look stupid.' Isn't that right, Phil?"

Maybe for the first time ever, Phil didn't participate in sibling sparring. He was forced into silence as Martin finished attaching the bands to his teeth.

When both boys left their chairs at the same time to rinse out their mouths in twin sinks, they looked at their metal reflections in the mirrors.

"Phil, let me see," Will said. "Smile at me."

Sheepishly, Phil turned to his brother and offered a quick flash of teeth.

"Braces feel like little ice cubes stuck to your mouth," Will said. "Now I take back that I sucked my thumb when I was little. I gotta wear these till seventh grade."

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PET OF THE WEEK



Luna

If you wonder why a male cat has a name like Luna, it's because his previous owners thought he was a girl. But Luna is definitely a male cat.

He is a young, domestic long-hair adult with long black fur and a patch of white on his chest. Luna and other animals seeking homes will be at Tractor Supply on U.S. 31 in Franklin from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, when the Humane Society of Johnson County hosts a weekly adoption program.

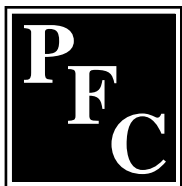
Call the Humane Society of Johnson County at 346-7001 for an adoption application.

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