



# Marvellous MOLES


## Holy Moley!

Here with some more surprising animal facts for you, this month delves into the lives of a creature that's ever-so-cute, yet is often considered to be a bit of a pest - particularly amongst gardeners! We are, of course, talking about moles!

But why does something so cute get such a hard time? Well, it could be that, as moles live underground, many of us don't actually get to see their lovely faces up close! The main reason, though, is that they are the creators of those mounds of soil you see in your garden, in your local park and essentially across any grassy area... also called 'mole hills.'

Known for having paddle-like forefeet, moles dig their way underground through intricate tunnel systems, but these tunnels are more than just underground highways. They dig special chambers at the end of these tunnels that serve as bedrooms, areas to give birth and also kitchens!



A cartoon illustration of a dark purple mole with a pink nose and small pink claws, emerging from a brown molehill. The mole is looking to the right. The background is a soft-focus green field.

## Whilst we're on the subject of kitchens, what do moles eat?

Well, there's not a great deal of choice underground, so it's a good job they like earthworms! And it's their appetite for earthworms that sees moles turn up in our garden and 'turn up' is just the phrase here! This is where gardeners start to get angry at the sight of mole hills! But, the turned-up soil shows evidence of tunnel digging, which loosens the soil and forms channels for air and water, which helps plants grow!

## Do you find moles all over the world then?

You certainly do! Europe, North America, Asia and even parts of Africa. In fact, the only continents you won't find moles are Antarctica and South America.

## Let's hit you with some fun facts...

- Moles can dig up to 18 feet in one hour
- They have a great sense of smell, but they don't see very well
- There's no time for hibernation! Instead, moles work all year round to dig and catch food
- Moles are mostly solitary creatures and so live in their own tunnelling network
- Although there are over 41 million moles spread across Britain, there are no moles in Ireland or Northern Ireland

Moles really are fascinating creatures and the next time you hear someone giving them a bad name, just remind them how important they are to the soil. Oh, and it wouldn't hurt to remind them how cute moles are too!