



# Mole

*Talpa europaea*

## Quick facts

**Order** Eulipotyphla

## Conservation status

GB *Least concern*

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England *Least concern*

Scotland *Least concern*

Wales *Least concern*

Global *Least concern*

**GB trend** *Stable*

**Size** Body 113 - 159 mm;  
tail 25 - 40 mm

**Weight** 72 - 128 g, males  
larger

**Life span** Average 3 years,  
maximum 6 years



**Mammal  
SOCIETY**

The mole's short black fur, spade-like forelimbs with large claws, fleshy snout, and tiny eyes are adaptations to its subterranean lifestyle. The mole is found throughout mainland Britain, but is not present in Ireland.

### Habitat

Most areas where the soil is deep enough for tunnelling; uncommon in coniferous forest, moorland, sand dunes.

### Behaviour

Lives underground in deep system of hundreds of metres of permanent and semi-permanent tunnels; surface tunnels usually short-lived, in shallow soil and newly cultivated fields.

### Diet & Feeding

Earthworms make up most of diet; insect larvae eaten in summer. Worms may be stored in tunnel chambers alive and immobilised by bite to head.

### Reproduction

Males expand territory during breeding season to find females. 3 - 4 young born in spring, disperse above ground at 5 - 6 weeks of age.

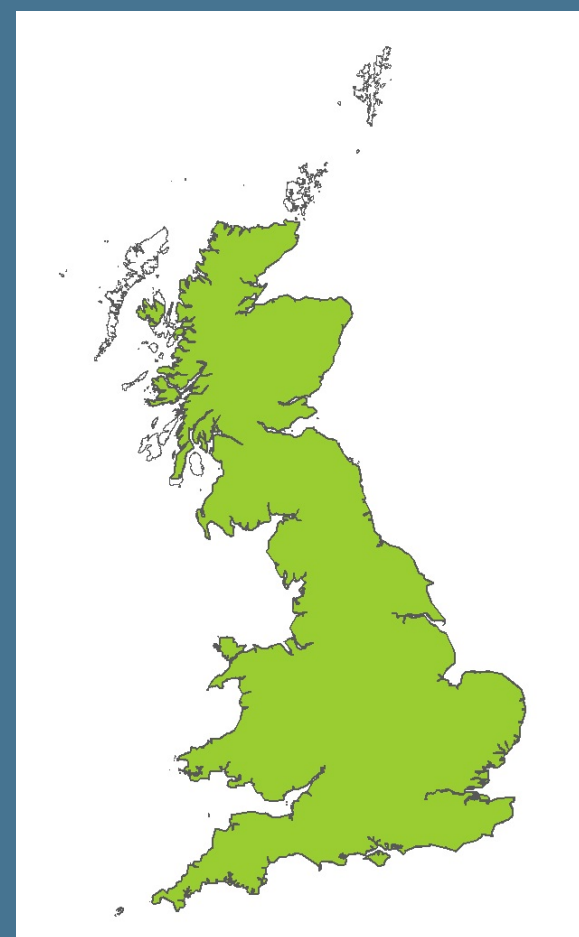
### Conservation & Threats

No legal protection in UK.

Frequently regarded as pests as surface tunnelling in newly planted fields may cause crop damage and mole hills may damage farm equipment or be considered unsightly.

However, moles can also be beneficial to humans; they can control cockchafer and carrot fly populations by predated on larvae, and tunnelling helps drain and aerate heavy soils.

## Range



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