

Other Pests

Pests that are not insects, diseases, or weeds are included in the catch-all category of "Other Pests" on TurfFiles. This category currently includes clover mites, crayfish, earthworms, millipedes, moles, nematodes, and voles.

Clover Mites

Clover mites are in the Phylum Arthropoda, as are insects, but they have eight legs, rather than the six which are a defining characteristic for insects. Adult mites are smaller than the head of a pin, but can be seen with the naked eye. They live and feed in grass and clover. They may invade homes and may cause feeding spots on turfgrasses, but rarely do enough damage to turf to justify treatment.

Crayfish

Crayfish, closely related to lobsters, are mostly aquatic, but a few terrestrial species exist. They may create mounds of soil which can be annoying. Since they play an important role in aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, control measures are usually not recommended.

Earthworms

Earthworms belong to the phylum Annelida, and are usually considered to be beneficial in a lawn, since they help with aeration, water penetration, and thatch control. They rarely cause a problem, but extremely high populations may cause root disruption. They serve as a food source for moles.

Millipedes

Millipedes are in the Phylum Arthropoda, as are insects, but millipedes have many more legs than the six allotted to insects. Millipedes are attracted to dark, cool, moist environments that are rich in organic matter such as compost piles, heavily mulched shrub or flower beds, rotting logs, or the soil under logs and stones. They may occasionally damage soft-stemmed garden plants.



Moles

Moles are small mammals of the Insectivora Order. They eat insects, grubs, and worms. They eat 70% - 100% of their body weight each day. Moles are active all year long. They live in underground burrows and rarely come to the surface. An individual mole may tunnel as much as 40 - 50 feet a day. Before initiating a control program for moles, be sure that they are truly out of place. Moles play an important role in the management of soil and of grubs that destroy lawns.

Nematodes

Nematodes are microscopic, worm-like organisms that feed on the roots of all plants, including turfgrasses. They are usually grouped with turfgrass diseases because of their microscopic size, and because turf symptoms are similar in some respects to those caused by fungal diseases. The above-ground symptoms of nematode feeding are slow growth, thinning of the turf, poor response to adequate fertilization and irrigation, rapid wilting during dry weather, and weed invasion. These symptoms typically appear in irregular patterns across the turf stand, not in distinct circular patches.



Voles

Voles, which are often confused with moles, are rodents. Unlike moles, voles eat a wide variety of plants, most frequently grasses and forbs. Like the mole, voles are active day and night, year-round. The most easily identifiable sign of voles is an extensive surface runway system with numerous burrow openings. Voles may cause extensive damage to lawns, golf courses, and ground cover.

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