



# Co-Existing with Voles

447 Winthrop Road, Deep River, Ct. 06417  
(860) 526-9056 [www.acergardens.com](http://www.acergardens.com)  
email – [acer@acergardens.com](mailto:acer@acergardens.com)

Voles have become an increasing problem for some in this area but they are often confused with moles. Because moles and voles are seldom seen, it is important to find out what you are dealing with.

Moles construct and use feeding tunnels, usually just beneath the surface of your lawn and the tunnels appear as raised ridges. They enlarge these tunnels as they travel back and forth, connecting them into a series of networks which go deeper into the ground, throwing up the characteristic little mounds of earth onto lawns. Moles are carnivores, feeding on earthworms, beetles, ants and lawn grubs. Any damage they do to plants is inadvertent. They actually help to aerate the subsoil.

Voles, on the other hand, travel on surface runways that connect their shallow burrows and they leave visible tracks. Although they prefer the stems and blades of grass, voles are herbivores and will attack the root systems and leaves of shrubs, trees, grasses, flower bulbs and plants. If you notice a plant drooping and pick it up to discover no root system left, you have voles! Their large and frequent families make them difficult to control but there are some ways to lessen the damage.

Keep mulch at least 1”-3” away from trees and bushes to reduce their hiding areas. (Nocturnal, they prefer not to venture into uncovered areas as their natural predators, such as owls, will spot them quickly.) Be sure your garden is weeded and your lawn mowed. Because they do not hibernate, it is particularly important not to leave piles of sticks and twigs around for them to nest and hide in. Young trees can be protected by wrapping the lower trunk with wire mesh. Vole boxes and bait are available at the nursery. Put out year round, they are proving helpful in reducing the vole population.

You can also make it difficult for voles to gain a foothold in your garden by using plants that are considered vole resistant. Plants with a dense root system appear to survive better than those with a loose, spread-out root system.

## Vole Resistant Plants

<b>Plant</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Bloom Time</b>
<b><u>Perennials</u></b>		
Helleborus	Hellebore	April-May
Iberis	Candytuft	April-May
Pulmonaria	Lungwort	April-May
Anemone	Wind Flower	May, August, September
Alchemilla	Lily-of-the-Valley	May
Amsonia	Star Flower	May – June

Brunnera	False Forget-Me-Not	May – June
Corydalis	Yellow Bleeding Heart	May – September
Iris germanica	Iris	June
Peonies		June
Euphorbia	Spurge	June – September
Achillea	Yarrow	June – September
Gallardia	Blanket Flower	June - September
Lamium	Dead Nettle	June, July
Nepeta	Catmint	June, July
Hemerocallis	Daylily	June – August
Dicentra	Bleeding Heart	June – August
Leucanthemum	Shasta Daisy	July – September
Aconitum	Monkshood	July – September
Lavender		July – September
Ligularia	Leopard Plant	August - September
Cimicifuga	Bugbane	September
Nipponanthemum	Montauk Daisy	September – October

## **Ground Covers**

Lamiastrum	False Lamium	April-May
Pachysandra		May
Vinca Minor	Myrtle	May
Lirope	Monkey Grass	July
Phuopsis	Crosswort	July-August
Cerasostigma	Leadwort	August-September

## **Ferns** - most plants

## **Grasses** – most plants (does not include Hakonechloa)

## **Bulbs**

Galanthus	Snowdrop	March
Hyacinthus	Hyacinth	April
Chionodoxa	Glory-of-the-Snow	April
Narcissus	Daffodils	April
Fritallaria		April – May
Muscari	Grape Hyacinth	April – May
Scilla	Wood Squill	April – May
Convallaria	Lily-of-the-Valley	May
Allium	Flowering Onion	May – June
Colchicum	Autumn Crocus	September

Every gardener's experience with voles is different. If certain plants have proved vole-resistant for you, please let us know when you next visit the nursery so that we can expand this list.