
Voles

A gardener's guide to deterring voles from your landscape



Voles are rodents. Their life expectancy is short, but they have multiple litters per year. They are vegetarians with a diet of plants, grasses, and roots. Changes in land development can move them to new areas. Look for shallow tunnels/pathways ending in a small hole.

Suggestions/Solutions:

- Studies have shown that killing and trapping is not as effective as repellents or predators. Applying poisons or baits may kill predators such as cats, dogs, hawks, owls, snakes, and foxes, effectively worsening the problem.
- Scent repellents do work, but need reapplications. The most effective repellents have castor oil as the main ingredient.
- “Mole chasers” are vibrating devices that are pushed into the soil, which send out pulses that repel rodents to other areas. These devices are not effective when the ground is frozen. At Tagawa, we carry battery and solar powered chasers.
- Voles are attracted to junipers and areas with large amounts of rock mulch. Rock mulch and concrete walls protect them from most predators and keep them warm year round.
- Before planting bulbs, soak in repellents, as tulips are a favorite of voles.
- For flower beds, the best protection is a raised bed with 1/4” hardware wire lining the bottom. Roots will grow through wire, but main roots will stay safe.