

Trapping in THPRD Community Gardens

First things first

Trapping is **not allowed** in our community gardens. Oregon rules also restrict what can be done with live-captured wildlife. Transport or relocation generally requires prior authorization through ODFW.

Why we don't use live trapping

- It does not solve the problem long term. When habitat is good, new moles quickly re-occupy tunnels.
- Relocation has poor survival and is not recommended as a humane approach. Agencies advise against it and permits are required for transport.

What to do instead

- **Castor-oil repellents**
Limited, short-term deterrence has been documented in some contexts. Reapply after rain. If used, treat paths and perimeters rather than inside edible beds. Effectiveness varies.
- **Path and edge management**
Keep paths firm and well compacted. Promptly collapse and tamp fresh surface runs in paths so they are less attractive over time.
- **Report hazards and leaks**
Let us know about irrigation leaks or persistent tunneling that creates trip hazards so staff can address shared-area issues.

Not allowed in shared spaces

Poisons, smoke bombs, or lethal traps. These create safety and non-target risks and are not appropriate in a public garden setting.

Also not recommended

- **Ultrasonic or solar “spikes”** lack reliable evidence of effectiveness for moles or gophers.
- **Predator reliance or decoys** does not reliably reduce mole activity. Moles are insectivores and territorial; habitat quality drives re-occupation.

Need help?

Share a photo and location if you are seeing a specific problem area. We can take a look and coordinate staff support for common-area fixes.

Sources

- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Wildlife Control Operators overview (permit requirements; off-site transport of live wildlife requires authorization): https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/license_permits_apps/wildlife_control_operators.asp ODFW
- Oregon Administrative Rule 635-435-0040, Transportation of Wildlife (live wildlife may only be transported with an ODFW transport permit or WCO permit): https://oregon.public.law/rules/oar_635-435-0040 ; <https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/oregon/Or-Admin-Code-SS-635-435-0040> OregonLaws+1
- ODFW Division 435, Wildlife Control Operators (limitations on relocation under WCO permits): <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/displayDivisionRules.action?selectedDivision=2993> Oregon Secretary of State
- UC ANR Integrated Pest Management, Moles Pest Notes (castor-oil repellents show mixed, short-term efficacy; western species data limited): <https://ipm.ucanr.edu/home-and-landscape/moles/pest-notes/> ; PDF: <https://ipm.ucanr.edu/pdf/pestnotes/pnmoles.pdf> UC IPM+1
- WSU Extension review of ultrasonic/subsonic pest devices (ineffectiveness): <https://rex.libraries.wsu.edu/esploro/outputs/report/Ultrasonic-and-Subsonic-Pest-Control-Devices/99900502108301842> Rex
- USU Wildlife Damage Management Conference paper on electronic repellents (limited or no proven efficacy): <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1144&context=wdmconference> DigitalCommons@USU
- Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, Living with Moles (re-occupation of suitable habitat is common): <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/species-facts/moles>