



MoleMatters Issue 26 July 2011

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# The MoleMatters

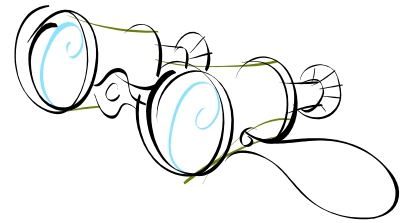
**Newsletter of the Guild of British Molecatchers**  
**Committed to traditional molecatching skills and welfare of the mole**

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## **Watching moles.**

We came across this website recently - [www.molewatchlive.com](http://www.molewatchlive.com)

It appears to be a new website set up to watch moles underground – nice idea. Check it out. If you manage to get the webcam feed(s) to play, let us know what you think (and how to do it!)



## **Bright Future.**

Cast your mind back to 2006 when the use of Strychnine for mole control was banned throughout Europe - in part because of the inherent and somewhat indiscriminate harm and suffering it caused not only in the target species but in the environment in which it was employed and, very occasionally, to the person applying it. In general, this move was greeted with approval by the public at large although some of those with vested interests in the use of this poison did kick up a bit of a fuss at the time.

It was this ban that saw a resurgence in mole control by traditional and humane trapping methods in Britain; a revitalisation that was not without approval from the public, legislators and some (perhaps the more thoughtful and far-sighted) sectors of the pest control industry.

It goes without saying that there are still people involved in mole control who advocate the use of other poisons, in particular, the use of gas (metallic Aluminium Phosphate).

Those involved in the use of Aluminium Phosphate gas to control moles are becoming increasingly aware of the pressures placed on them by public opinion, existing and new legislation (anyone wishing to buy or use these products will have to produce photo ID and evidence of training in the future) and the requirement to adhere to safe, acceptable and approved working practices.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

We are proud to launch a new look MoleMatters newsletter with a circulation not only to all members of the Guild of British Molecatchers but also to anybody who is interested in moles and molecatching (by subscribing via the link on our new website).

To those who have joined the Guild or subscribed since we published Issue 25 we extend a very warm welcome. We hope you enjoy this, our inaugural "public" edition.

Let us know what you think and if you have anything you would like to "bang on" about.

## SOMETHING TO SAY?

The MoleMatters team would love to hear from anybody who has something to relate in these pages – to submit content (pictures, tall tales, letters, articles, comments on articles previously published or simply your musings) for consideration for inclusion, please [contact us](#)



In order to address the issues raised by these pressures, the Metallic Phosphide industry has set up a register of stockists and users and is set further to regulate working practices in a bid to sustain the use of these products. It is particularly noticeable that both Certis Europe Ltd and Rentokil-Initial (UK) Ltd are founder members of the Register of Accredited Metallic Phosphide Schemes (RAMPS) in the UK. One of the stated aims of this umbrella organisation is "...to ensure the continued and sustainable use of the products." Is this to be read as a consideration of the best interests of the target species and the environment? Or, is there a small echo of "vested interests – vested interests – vested interests" to be heard?



The Guild of British Molecatchers is confident that the stiffening of regulation around the use of gas will, in due course, strengthen the case for trap use in mole control. Trap use in which the target species and only the target species is affected. Trap use that is effective in all soil types. Trap use that is humane.

The future for traditional molecatchers is bright, the future is trapping.

Email your thoughts and comments on this article for possible publication to: [molematters@guildofbritishmolecatchers.co.uk](mailto:molematters@guildofbritishmolecatchers.co.uk)

## Accreditation - hard or not?

With any form of testing, if you know the answers, the test is easy, if you don't, it is difficult. The Guild of British Molecatchers accreditation process is aimed at asking people undertaking mole trapping to consider their level of knowledge and to enhance it with some new study.

For many, the return to learning comes as a shock. A large variety of sources for the correct answers are consulted - the most common being; internet research, asking those who have already completed the process and asking for help on web forums. On web forums, this issue has created quite a stir - including responses like:

- Who needs a certificate to catch moles?
- You can catch them or you can't.
- What are you gaining from this apart from a sticker?

Do these comments instil confidence in molecatchers or their clients? We believe not!

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## SOMETHING TO SELL? NEED SOMETHING?

If you have something to sell to other molecatchers or are in need of something – just let us know and this space could be yours – it's FREE for full members. Our contact email is at the bottom the newsletter or can be accessed from the Guild's website.



*You could  
be saying  
something  
in this  
space.*

*Go on,  
give it a  
go.*

The Guild of British Molecatchers' accreditation scheme makes no claim that it will impart the ability to catch moles. Like anything with a practical element involved, it is experience that will provide the practical skills. However, the accreditation process does provide the candidate with knowledge to understand the quarry and thereby assists in an understanding of the "rules of engagement" and enables competition on a "level playing field".

The broad cross section of knowledge imparted to candidates undergoing the Guild's accreditation process enables a better understanding of the mole, its habits, its life cycle, its biology and its habitat. In so doing, the accreditation process affords both the amateur molecatcher and the working professional molecatcher an opportunity not only to present a professional mien to their clients (more especially so when asked a searching question) but also to inform and consequently improve their mole control abilities.

If you are debating whether to apply for accreditation or, having applied, if you are having difficulty finding the answer to a question, the Guild will guide you through the process. We assist with further "clues" to ensure the levels are successfully completed. During this process we help the candidate to fill the gaps in their understanding of both mole facts and mole trivia.

Successful completion of the accreditation levels combine to create an overall comprehensive knowledge of both moles and their control. And, yes, successful candidates do receive a certificate and a sticker. It costs nothing other than a little time and patience to achieve and after all, if it was easy then there would be no point in awarding accreditation.

Those who have successfully completed the Guild's accreditation process at any level and those who are striving to achieve accreditation should be proud of what they accomplish and prominently display their success. Well done to all.

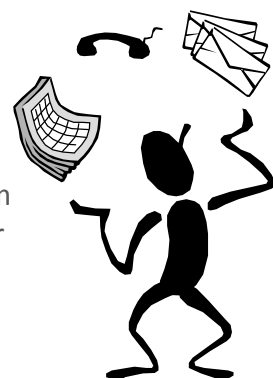
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## Serious about mole catching?

At The Guild of British Molecatchers we definitely are!

In recognition of those members who have worked to create this unique and leading group for moles and mole control in the United Kingdom, the Guild, from time-to-time, acknowledges certain individuals for their

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## Membership Matters

From the Membership Secretary.

Fellow members and supporters of the Guild of British Molecatchers – we have one member as far away as Afghanistan (keep safe).

There are going to be interesting and exciting times ahead, with membership numbers on the up.

Keep the practice!

Regards,  
Martin

P.S. Please use your membership number when contacting the Guild - Cheers

## Webmaster's Report

The new website has now been on line for about a month and in this first month there has been an increase of 62.8% in visitors to the new "Find a Molecatcher" page when compared with the old page. Of course, some of those visits will be members checking their entries on the appropriate area pages but a significant proportion of those visiting the site are people in search of a molecatcher. Mr Google has been kind to us and is already listing the new site.

I am reliably informed by the membership secretary that there are still some full members who could be advertising their services on the website but are not, at present, doing so. All I can say is "Don't miss out - get on board!"

contribution to the Guild's accomplishments to date. Without their dedication and support the Guild would fail to function as an organisation striving for welfare, care and professionalism in mole catching; a Guild that might otherwise disappear under a welter of bureaucratic paperwork or fall to the mercy of those seeking only financial gain.

The Guild has grown and will continue to grow through the commitment and effort of its members. Here, we identify and reward particular individuals who have worked, and continue to work for the Guild's future by conferring upon them the position of "Honorary Life Member." These people are - John Noblett, President of the Guild; Mark Payne, Senior Representative and regional representative for Wales; Martin Noble, Membership Secretary and Patrick Pakenham-Keady. A special "Thank You" to you all.

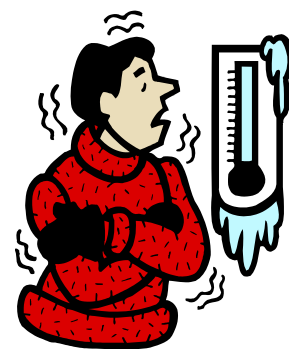
## Tip of the month

By Mumble

After a red hot and dry spring and a damp summer to date, I thought it just might be the right time to annoy you all by thinking of winter and in particular trapping when the ground is frozen solid for weeks on end or covered with a layer of snow.

Do you just sit back and wait for it all to go away? There are advantages to this approach – think of your toes being warmed at a blazing log fire. There are also disadvantages – this approach rather ignores the important task of putting food on the table and pennies in the meter if you are a professional molecatcher.

Personally, I absolutely loathe the cold weather – all the more so when it is damp. I'm a thin (who said skinny?) sort of chap and I feel the cold badly so, as a present to myself last year, I went shopping on line for some electrically heated clothing. I ended up buying a jerkin – fantastically "toasty". It was not cheap (more especially so since I bought a couple of spare batteries – the one supplied is not really man enough) but not really expensive either. A recent search on line seemed to point to [www.primrose.co.uk](http://www.primrose.co.uk) as being a possibility for some decent deals.



So, wrapped up warm, I was able to get on with the business in hand and keep my customers happy too!

My golden rules for trapping in the snow and frost:

1. Keep an eye on the weather forecasts and try to set traps in "windows" in inclement weather. Remember that you will need to

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# PARTY TIME!



**OK – So Christmas is not too far away now (I know, I know)!**

**Is there anybody out there who would like to organise or coordinate a get-together for fellow members in their area?**

**How about starting with posting a notice here in the August/September edition of MoleMatters?**

Tip of the month. Continued

- revisit the set traps during the next day so plan ahead.
2. Mark the trap locations clearly so that they can be found even if a foot of snow falls overnight!
  3. Frost hardened ground is difficult (or impossible) to probe so look for the sheltered areas that are protected from frosts and the areas that are inclined to thaw in the middle of the day – these are also the areas that the mole will be working at a trappable depth.
  4. Under a blanket of snow, the ground will be soft. If you have been to a site before, your records should show where the main runs are, so set traps there.
  5. Never cover a trap site with only snow.
  6. Never place soil on the trap itself as frozen soil will stop the trap from operating properly or at all.



Trapping in a really hard winter may not be as simple as trapping in a mild spring but determination pays off and there is nothing half so good as returning home to a warm bath with the knowledge of a job well done and a customer satisfied and impressed by your fortitude.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.  
Mumble.

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## Is a mole running you ragged?

We all have “difficult” moles to deal with from time-to-time. You can ask one of the Guild’s Master Molecatchers (anonymously if you like - just choose a pseudonym) for their considered and experienced opinion. This is a free service for members of the Guild and the general public alike.

Visit <http://ask.guildofbritishmolecatchers.co.uk>

If you want to comment on, or add to, a published response from a Master Molecatcher to a particular query – you can!

