



Gopher Resistant Plants

Ah yes, the perennial gopher problem. There is a reason they made the movie Caddyshack!

In all honesty, there is not one sure-fire solution to removing gophers from your garden. Results will vary greatly from yard to yard and may even differ from year to year in the same yard. Experimentation and persistence will ultimately give you the best success.

- 1** The first defense is prevention and barricades. You can accomplish this by installing wire screen 2' below and 6" above all around the proposed planting area. This can take some work but that is what they rent trenchers for.
- 2** Use gopher cages / baskets at the time of planting. These flexible, wire mesh containers come in sizes from one gallon to 15 gallon. Dig a hole, line with an appropriate basket, and place your plant inside. Fill soil as needed. The steel used will be strong enough to prevent the animals from chewing through to the main roots.
- 3** In our stores, we carry a product from Bonide called MoleMax. It's active ingredient is Castor Oil, and it is an effective means of repelling moles and gophers that can be safely used around children, pets and plant life. In it's granular form, you just sprinkle it around most of the yard (focusing on active areas) and water it in just a bit. This will hopefully urge the gophers to move out of the yard. It also comes in a liquid form that hooks up to your hose. You can use smaller sprayings, say 1/4,1/4,1/4 etc to direct the animals to the point where you want them to exit your yard. Fish emulsion has also been used.
- 4** Trapping to reduce the population is advised. This is especially effective in spring and fall. If you use Havahart traps, it is recommended that you bait with a mixture of peanut butter and molasses spread on wheat bread. Check and reset traps frequently.
- 5** Poison baits are available but recovery is difficult and secondary poisonings of pets or owls is possible.
- 6** Gas bombs have also been used but usually only after complete rage has set in.
- 7** Vibration devices also have some success. We carry a product called Sonic Mole & Gopher Chaser. This is a vibrating wand that you insert into the ground and the vibrations drive the gophers out. It vibrates on and off every minute or so. In clay-like soils, one per yard is enough, however, in sandy soils I recommend two. In addition to this battery operated one, there is also a new solar powered version that should work just as well.

Keep in mind that gophers are crafty and they adapt to many of the things we do to try to get rid of them. It requires patience and sometimes a variety of "cures" to get them to go away.

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Continued 

The following plants are usually left alone by gophers. Note: many deer resistant plants are also gopher resistant.

Shrubs

Arbutus unedo
Buddleja
Callistemon
Ceanothus
Escallonia
Euonymus
Grevillea
Heteromeles
Hydrangea
Michelia
Nandina
Oleander
Rosemary
Westringia
Ilex
Coleonema
Citrus
Raphiolepis
Ribes
Cistus
Manzanita
Feijoa
Boxwood
Brugmansia

Perennials

Begonia (fibrous)
Diets
Lantana
Lavender
Nepeta
Penstemon
Salvia
Vinca minor
Artemisia
Euphorbia
Shasta Daisy
Clivia
Heuchera splendens (scarlet Cor-
albells)
Juncus
Festuca
Nierembergia
Digitalis
Oregano
Thyme

Bulbs

Scilla
Narcissus/Daffodil
Amaryllis belladonna
Allium
Muscari
Tulbaghia
Onion
Garlic

Trees

Fraxinus
Eucalyptus
Apricot
Avocado
Pomegranate

Unfortunately, the following plants have been identified as sure bet gopher foods:

most bulbs, most vegetables. Especially carrots, peas, potatoes and parsley, Aster, Campanula, California Poppy, Lavatera, Miscanthus, Phormium, Rose, and Salvia uliginosa.



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