

GOPHER FACT SHEET
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A quick list of gopher facts as discussed at the May 14th, 2-22 Pest Panel.
More detailed information available on the [OVF Website under the FAQ section in the upper menu bar.](#)

DIET

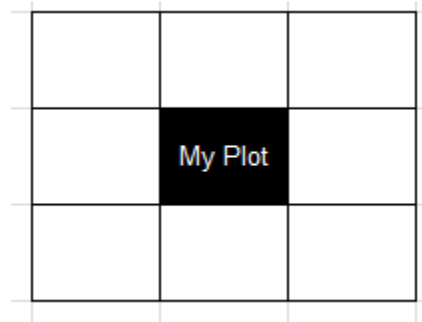
Gophers use their sense of smell to locate food.
Gophers prefer herbaceous plants, shrubs, and trees.
They like the roots and fleshy portions of plants.
Gophers will pull the entire plant down into their tunnels.
Sometimes gophers will come out about a body length or so but always stay within reach of the tunnel hole.

BREEDING

Gophers can have pups at about one year of age; they generally live around 3 years.
Females usually have two litters per year in the Fall and Spring, but up to three litters in irrigated urban areas.
Litters average five to six pups but can go up to thirteen.
Pups are expelled from the burrow as soon as they are weaned and not allowed to return.

BURROWS

Burrow systems are usually 6 to 14 inches below ground.
Nest and food storage chambers can be as deep as 6 feet depending on soil conditions.
Gophers like irrigated soils for easy digging; flooding gopher burrows makes it easier for the gopher.
A single gopher can move more than 2 tons of soil per year.
Burrows for a single gopher can range from 200 to 2,000 square feet, i.e.
one 15 x 15 foot plot is 225 square feet; 2,000 square feet is approximately 9 OVF garden plots.



There is only one gopher per burrow.
Gophers will fight to the death to protect their burrow from other gophers including family members.
Gophers inspect the entire burrow system every 24 hours looking for intruders or tunnel damage.
If your trap has not been sprung after 48 hours then consider moving it.

The tunnels or runways consist of a main tunnel with several short lateral tunnels.
The diameter of the tunnel depends on the size of the gopher (2 inches to 5 inches in diameter).
Shallow lateral runways branching off the main runway are used primarily to search for food.
The crescent mound is formed because the gopher is pushing the dirt to the surface at an angle.
Gophers plug the holes when they are done because light makes them feel exposed.
Probe for the main tunnel in the opposite direction of the crescent mound.