



For more information on urban wildlife in Saskatoon visit saskatoon.ca/wildlifemanagement or contact Urban Biological Services at 306-975-3300.

Pocket Gopher



Pocket Gopher Characteristics

Appearance

- Named for the fur lined pockets on their cheeks that are used to store food.
- Fur is light brown to black and lighter on the underside.
- Front claws modified for digging.
- Eyes almost closed.

Behaviour & Habitat

- Pocket gophers are native to Saskatchewan and are common in Saskatoon.
- One pocket gopher is capable of constructing a large network of below ground tunnels (up to 75 square metres).
- Tunnels are used to find food and mates.
- Females have one litter of 4-6 young in May or June and the pups disperse in late summer or fall.
- Create distinct mounds of soil that do not appear to have an entrance. They use a soil plug to hide the burrow entrance.
- These mounds may cause damage to equipment.

Diet

- Pocket gophers are herbivores and feed on many different plant species.
- Feeding occurs primarily below ground but pocket gophers will also feed on the surface.
- Pocket gophers feed in gardens and can damage vegetables, particularly plants with below ground tubers (e.g. carrots and potatoes).

Co-existing with Pocket Gophers

Advice for Residents

When pocket gophers become problematic, consult home and garden centres for advice on managing them on your property.



Pocket gophers are commonly called moles in Saskatchewan and the term gopher is used to describe ground squirrels. However, true moles are members of the family Talpidae. There are no mole species in Saskatoon with the closest species, the star-nosed mole, occurring in southern Manitoba.

