



INSECTIVORES

INSECTIVORES, members of the mammalian order, small animals with several conservative anatomical characteristics. They retain five digits on all limbs and walk or run with soles and heels on the ground (plantigrade). They have flexible snouts and relatively small eyes and ears, sometimes lacking external evidence of either one or both. Most of them are solitary and nocturnal. They are carnivorous and predatory, although not all are exclusively so; many feed also on carrion and some, hedgehogs particularly, take some vegetable matter as well. As their name suggests, most feed on invertebrates primarily. Three families are represented in Persia and Afghanistan: hedgehogs, family Erinaceidae; moles, family Talpidae; and shrews, family Soricidae. (Illustrations, maps of distribution in Persia, and brief species accounts in Persian are to be found in Hušang Ziā'i's book; illustrations and species accounts in English are provided by Fred A. Harrington; another Persian summary of the Persian insectivores is in Eskandar Firouz's work.)

There are four species of hedgehogs in Persia and at least two in Afghanistan (HEDGEHOG).

Moles (



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