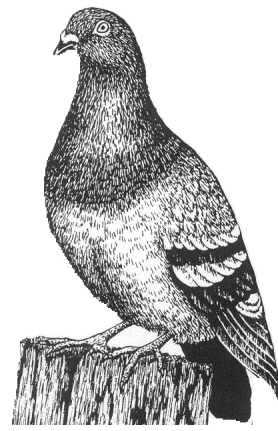


CRITTER CONTROL FACT SHEET

PIGEONS



INTRODUCTION

Pigeons (*Columbia livia*), which are also known as rock Doves, are a non-protected bird species under the U.S. Federal Migratory Bird Act. They are descendents of rock doves from Europe and Asia and were introduced as a domestic bird into North America.

Since coming to North America, the pigeon escaped and formed feral populations, which have resulted today in pigeons being the number one pest bird in urban and rural areas across the United States.

BIOLOGY AND HABITS

Pigeons typically have a gray body with a whitish rump and red feet. The average weight is 13 ounces and average length is less than 12".

These birds feed on grains and seeds, but also will feed on garbage, insects, fruits, and vegetable matter in urban areas.

Females lay 1 or 2 white eggs that hatch in 17-19 days. The adult birds nest year round and can produce up to 10 young per year.

The pigeon can roost or nest on any man-made structure that provides shelter from environmental conditions. This advantageous adaptation has made them a nuisance to humans.

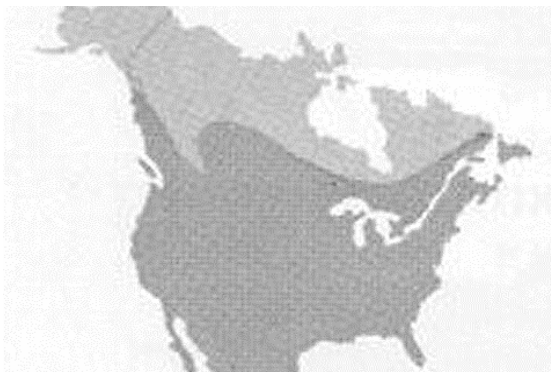
Pigeons can often be seen roosting on rooftops, under bridges, on building ledges, under canopies and other sheltered structures.

DAMAGE

Pigeon droppings cause excessive damage to property, buildings, automobiles, and machinery. The droppings deface and accelerate the destruction to buildings and can also kill vegetation. Pungent odor and aesthetic appearance is unpleasant to passing pedestrians and customers.

Economic losses are significant, due to the need to clean droppings, repair damage, and to maintain safe working conditions. Feathers can plug ventilation units and can cause other associated problems including numerous health hazards.

Range of the Pigeon in North America



HAZARDS

Pigeons carry numerous diseases that can be transmitted to humans, pets and livestock.

Pigeon droppings harbor dangerous fungi and airborne spores, which, if disturbed and inhaled, can cause serious illness.

Transmittable diseases associated with pigeons are histoplasmosis, cryptococcosis, toxoplasmosis, pigeon ornithosis, encephalitis, and salmonellas.

Pigeons can host numerous ectoparasites as well, such as ticks, flies, fleas, mites and biting lice. These ectoparasites infest buildings and bite humans and pets.

CONTROL

Pigeons control is best accomplished with a integrated bird management program, utilizing a combination of control techniques.

Habitat modification is the elimination of food and water supplies, along with nesting and loafing sites, to help reduce the population.

Another technique in dealing with pigeons is by excluding them from structures that they use as nesting or loafing locations. Exclusion work is done with nylon or wire netting, bird spikes or using electric shock fences.

Trapping pigeons in warehouses or enclosed areas is also an effective method to control the population. Various types of live-traps can be used to remove pigeons.

Dispersal tactics and chemical repellents are employed as well, to reduce pigeon numbers in a given area. Some examples of dispersal techniques are shell-crackers, visual devices, and bird distress calls. Chemical repellents are sticky substances used on ledges, railings, or structures to discourage roosting on those areas.

MANAGEMENT

To successfully manage a pigeon population you must have an integrated pest management plan. Critter Control uses more than one approach to eliminate nuisance birds from an area and also manages the clean up and eradication of ectoparasites from the loafing, feeding and nesting sites of the birds.