

Pigeon (Rock Dove)

Unkind slang names: Feathered Rat or Ghetto Chicken.

Did you know? Originally, the Old-World pigeons were cliff-face dwellers; the species has simply adapted to urban artificial cliff-face dwelling. Egyptians used homing pigeons over 5,000 years ago.

Pigeons have the ability to sense the Earth's geomagnetic field.

Elephants and Pigeons have something in common -they hear infrasonic sounds (very low frequency).

One to two eggs are incubated for at least two weeks. Depending on the setting it is possible for them to breed year around, but most commonly have three broods beginning in early Spring. Both parents tend to the young. For the first few days they are fed 'pigeon milk'. The baby does not open its mouth for food but rather it dips into the parent's mouth for the food. It is quickly transitioned to seed and plant material. The babies leave the 'nest' after only two or three weeks. In most cases, they cannot fly at all but are still fed by the parents.

Is the baby truly orphaned?

1) The bird was brought home by a cat or dog. 2) The bird is still covered in down or pinfeathers, and the original nest cannot be found. 3) The baby has not pooped in an hour. 4) the original nest cannot be located and the young bird is hopping around. 5) sleepy or lethargic behavior. *Keep in mind that the parents will not care for the young if the original nesting spot has been moved (nor will they care for a fledgling that has been moved). Simply wait a few weeks and the family will have 'moved along'. Remove any signs of nesting before eggs are laid is the best practice.*

Solutions:

Limit feeding.

Remove or modify any flat covered surfaces. The Pigeon prefers a sheltered space that is flat to make its nest and to perch. To modify the space, angle a piece of wood at a 45 or 0 degree angle.

Bird wire - single strand, coiled, or porcupine, can be installed along ledges, railings, awnings and rooftops.

Netting can be used to treat large areas. Attach the netting to the eave or roof and drape over front of the 'problem area'. This has been successful under bridges, on beams and girders of building. Door curtains have been used for warehouses and other building with large loading dock doors.

Scare devices such as plastic owls are merely temporary.

Chemical repellents such as Avitrol and Polubutene sticky gel is not recommended. Licensed professionals may be permitted to use a 2007 EPA approved contraceptive product called OvoControl-P. They may also be able to offer the repellent made with the chemical Anthraquinone.

Provide a preferred nest site – a dovecote. By creating a better nesting site and using negative conditioning practices for the unwanted nesting site, there is harmony.

Although there are no direct human infections caused, it is known that Pigeons are carriers of Cryptococcus and Salmonella and are linked to Histoplasmosis.

Bird Wire and Roost Inhibitor vendors: www.birdbarrier.com, www.birdbgone.com, www.birdbusters.com, www.birdguard.com, www.bird-x.com, www.catclaw.com, www.nixilite.com

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology is an excellent resource. <http://birds.cornell.edu>

Tips on how to prevent birds from striking your window, www.flap.org

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