

# FERAL PIGEON FACTSHEET

## Description

The feral pigeon is descended from domesticated strains of the rock dove and the wild breeding population is supplemented by escapes from pigeon lofts. Plumage colours are blue-grey, reds, chequered types to almost pure black.

They build their nests in or on buildings and other structures, where they are usually found on ledges or in hollows – often under eaves or on girders. Peak breeding season is between March and July although some are capable of breeding throughout the year. Incubation of eggs lasts about 18 days with fledging taking place about a month later.



## Problems pigeons cause

Much of the damage caused by feral pigeons arises from their infestation of buildings. Fouling of buildings frequently occurs at places where these birds nest or roost. Guttering and drain pipes may become blocked, leading to flooding and associated problems. Droppings present on pavements may cause a potential for slipping. Pigeons can also cause a noise nuisance.

## Transmitters of disease

Feral pigeons may also be regarded as potential transmitters of disease, although there is a lack of hard evidence regarding the transmission of disease to humans.

## Feral pigeon control

Food is the most important factor determining the size of a pigeon population and the best long-term solution to pigeon problems is to restrict the availability of food.

If pigeons are present in quite large numbers in your area it may be due to a local, readily available food source. If you are sure that a food source is not available, their presence may be due to the availability of shelter from the elements. In this case, it may be necessary to take steps to discourage these birds from roosting at the sheltered areas on your property.

### **Scaring Devices**

These devices, such as plastic owls or hawks have at best, only very short-term effectiveness against feral pigeons.

### **Proofing**

Mesh netting with a 50 mm net size can be used to keep pigeons off or out of certain areas. Bird point and sprung wire systems can also be used to deter pigeons ie. on ridges, window sills and around guttering.

### **For further advice contact:**

**Environmental Health Department**

028 9034 0160

**Private Pest Control Firm**

See Yellow Pages