

Feral pigeon

Assistance for residents



The Feral Pigeon is native to Europe, Africa and Asia. In Australia, Feral Pigeons are found in large numbers in capital cities and larger towns.

Feeding

Although it is mainly a seed-eater, the Feral Pigeon is often seen scavenging for scraps.

Breeding

- The breeding season predominantly extends from July to February, although they can breed at any time.
- Pigeons can lay up to 2-3 broods per year.
- The female lays one or two white eggs in a crude nest of sticks, grass, and twigs.
- Nesting sites are situated along coastal cliff faces, as well as the artificial edges including under bridges and apartment buildings with accessible ledges or roof spaces.
- Pigeons nest in large colonies which quickly deface buildings with their droppings.
- Pigeon flocks are mobile, having different nesting, roosting and feeding sites.
- Domestic pigeons can live for up to 15 years, although the average life span is three to four years.

Living with humans

- Pigeons are generally regarded as a potential health hazard to humans in urban environments, carrying such diseases as Ornithosis (sometimes called psittacosis or parrot fever), Salmonellosis (salmonella) and the fungal infection, Cryptococcosis, which may lead to meningitis.
- They also play some part in the transmission of such diseases as encephalitis and histoplasmosis.
- Pigeons can also sometimes cause dermatitis as a result of pigeon mites that migrate from nests and bite people. They do pose sporadic health risks to humans, however the risk is generally very low.
- Pigeons compete for food with native birds and increase the risk of disease and parasite transmission between domestic and native flocks.
- There are also economic costs associated with pigeons damaging public and private property through fouling these areas.
- Communal roosting and nesting habits create aesthetic and human health concerns.

Council Assistance

Sunshine Coast Council provides education to community in relation to feral pigeons. It is advised that local contractors be contacted in the first instance for removal of pest birds.