

Pigeon Information



In this page you will find all the basic information you will need to get started with pigeon keeping.

We love pigeons because they are the most diverse bird species on the planet. There are hundreds of different breeds of pigeons and this is where you might want to start. Figuring out what breeds you like is the most important step you can take. Some breeds are more difficult to raise than others and we will discuss the possibilities in these pages. We can help you understand your choices.

Another important step is to find a mentor where you live. We can help you there, too. We have contact information for various state and local organizations in this website.

What can you do with pigeons? That is a good question. There are several things that you can do. There are flying breeds, such as Racing Homers. These are the birds most well known for their ability to find their way home from thousands of miles away. There is nothing like the thrill of racing, especially when a bird you raised has returned home after several days of non-stop flying. If your bird returns home faster than everyone else's bird you win and receive accolades from your peers.

There are other flying breeds that are flown in competition, such as the Birmingham roller. This is a breed that will do somersaults while flying. They are trained in small groups, called kits, to perform their somersaults during competitions.

The following is quoted from the National Birmingham Roller Club, "Birmingham Rollers, like all domestic pigeons, possess a homing ability which drives them to return to where they feel safe and where they find sustenance. With this natural ability, breeders launch groups of Rollers into the air to watch and awe at their synchronized acrobatics. During competition, these groups (known as "kits") are judged on a variety of factors, including the number of birds rolling simultaneously, the depth of the roll, and the quality of the roll, as well as "kitting" ability."

The second thing that you can do is breed for the show circuit. There are literally hundreds of breeds to choose from, some rare and many that you can find being bred in your local area. There are many pigeon shows around the country where you can find many breeds to look at and talk with pigeon fanciers. These shows will be listed in the NPA Calendar. It is fun and rewarding to enter these local competitions and if you have chosen your breeding birds carefully you can win at these events. As you gain more experience and develop your own strain of high quality birds you could become an NPA Master breeder. You can breed for perfect genetics and maybe create a new color or a new breed to the hobby.

These are just some of the things that you can do in this fascinating hobby

Housing

The next most important topic to cover is where do you keep them. What kind of housing do you need?

Housing can be as simple as a large cage to very elaborate buildings with all the amenities such as water, food and supplies storage, places to separate sick pigeons as well as train pigeons for the show floor. You can set you lofts up for flying breeds such as Birmingham Rollers by building kit boxes and fly your "kit". You may be interested in racing pigeons and this would require a different style of housing or loft. Your imagination, time and money are the only things that you need to build an adequate living arrangement for your pigeons. If you have little money you may build a simple shed like structure. If you have lots of money you might build a structure with all the amenities built right in.

Feeding

The next topic to cover is what do you feed your birds. This can actually get very scientific. The nutrition needs of your birds can get quite detailed, just like your nutrition needs. Pigeons raised for show or flying often require different nutritional needs. We ask ourselves questions such as how much protein, fat, and carbohydrates do our pigeons need. These questions are important and the answer depends on what your birds are being raised for. Are they high flyers like the Tippler, or performing birds like the Birmingham roller or Racing homer? In these pages we will hope to address these questions. You will also find that a good supply of fresh water is very important, too.

Genetics

Some of us are interested in more scientific aspects of pigeon raising so we start to learn about and understand pigeon genetics. You will find that information here, as well. Ron Huntley has provided a primer on the subject and get into more advanced topics.

Health

Your pigeons health is important, too. While it may not always be possible to find an avian veterinarian, especially one who understands the unique needs of our show pigeons, it may also not be cost effective. We pigeons fanciers learn about the health and disease of our birds so we can recognize when something is wrong and ways to possibly provide the proper medicines. There are also parasites both internal and external that we deal with on a regular basis and some preventative care in this area is always good to understand. But don't worry too much because pigeons are a very hardy species and if well cared for rarely get sick.