

The Straits Times Forum

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Explore more humane ways to control bird population

By Amy Corrigan

I refer to the article, "Shocked by pigeon culling? Then stop feeding them?" (Feb 28).

The Animal Concerns Research Education Society (ACRES) is concerned that poisoning is still being used as a way of culling pigeons as poisoning tends to induce slow and painful death for the birds.

Culling the pigeons addresses only the symptom of the problem. It is essential to educate the public to stop making food accessible to pigeons.

ACRES would also like to highlight the following points:

- Culling by poisoning is potentially dangerous for pets, wild animals and even children who may consume the poisoned bait.
- Alternative and humane methods of bird population control are available. Progressive vector control agencies, such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency, have approved humane methods such as the contraceptive bait (OV0control) for pigeon control since 2007.
- Town councils can consider providing artificial nesting sites. Dovecotes or nesting boxes can be installed at low, one-off cost at these sites. Once pigeons have been encouraged to roost in these sites, their eggs can be collected regularly and destroyed. This is a simple, fast and very effective way to reduce pigeon numbers.
- Scientific research has shown that culling is completely ineffective as bird numbers can increase above pre-cull levels within weeks of the cull being carried out.

ACRES urges town council to cease the current pigeon culling operations using poisoning, as these are inhumane, ineffective and costly (involving third parties), and instead explore humane and effective methods.

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