Learning About Pigeons

Presented by the
American Racing Pigeon Union
& the Sky Pilot program.

Great project booklet for 4-H,
Scouts, FFA, Boys & Girls Club,
Home School and much more.

AU AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.™

Sky Pilot ®

PIGEON POWER

There is a great deal of power in the wings of a pigeon.

Through the ingenuity of school teachers and youth group leaders, pigeons have helped young people understand science, writing, technology, art, history, math, geography and so much more.

Using a project-based theme enhances the learning process for students. Pigeon loft projects have been shown to improve test scores in schools and assist young people in developing leadership, citizenship and life skills.

On top of all that learning, it is just plain fun!

Projects have included alternative schools for "at risk" youth, 4-H and Scout groups for organized projects, and public and charter school for hands-on curriculum requirements. Additionally, students who chose to build their own lofts, learned the skill of carpentry, which is not normally available in structured education today.

With two race seasons in the racing Homing Pigeon sport, children and teens have an opportunity to test their skills in different loft situations. For example, one of the race seasons is the "old bird" season. That is for the Homing Pigeons that are already over one year of age. That season is in the spring of each year. For old birds, the young people test how well they exercise their birds and help them remember the way back home. Though the Homing Pigeon has the natural ability to find home, in the racing sport, they are given every advantage for success through the training and the excellent care they receive in their loft home.

The season can be a test for the bird, and it can be a test for the child or teen. It is an opportunity to become powerful and experience the power: The power to feel good about yourself. The power to focus on detail. The power to be the responsible person you know you can be. The power to set and meet goals. The power to make decisions more easily. The power to express your ideas and get along with a variety of people. The power for leadership, initiative, self-reliance, cooperation and sportsmanship. In the wings of a pigeon.

This booklet has been created by the American Racing Pigeon Union to provide instructional material for the study of raising and racing Homing Pigeons. Additionally, instruction is provided for showing Homing Pigeons and fancy breeds of pigeons. It is a great project booklet for 4-H, Scouts, FFA, Boys & Girls Club, Home School and much more.

(Information compiled by AU Lakes Zone Director, Ron Pairan & AU Bylaws Chair, Herb Cartmell)

For more information, contact the
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PIGEON HISTORY

Archeological evidence shows that people have been breeding pigeons for thousands of years. Pigeons have been raised since medieval times in dovecotes for meat and for their droppings, which makes excellent fertilizer for crops. They have also been used to convey messages since at least the time of the Roman conquest of Gaul (modern France).

The modern racing pigeon is believed to have been developed in the early 18th century in Belgium and England. Experts believe the racing pigeon was developed by crossing the Smerle, Cumulet, Dragoon, Horseman and Carrier pigeons. The first known race of record was held in Belgium in 1815. The first races covered only a few miles, but with the development of the railroad system it was possible to send pigeons farther and farther for races. During the last half of the 1800's homing pigeons were imported into the United States, and by the 1890's clubs in New York and New Jersey were having pigeons return from 500-mile races on the day of release.

The first large-scale use of pigeons as messengers occurred during the siege of Paris in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War. Homing Pigeons were sent out of the city by balloon to various cities and were released to return to Paris with messages. The siege lasted four months, and during that time, 150,000 official and 1 million private messages were carried into Paris in this manner. Citizens of London learned of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo as the result of a message delivered by homing pigeon.

Homing Pigeons were also used extensively during both World Wars and are credited with saving thousands of lives during those wars. One of the most famous pigeon war heroes was a British-bred bird named Cher Ami, who was credited with rescuing "The Lost Battalion" near the end of World War I. Cher Ami was attached to the New York Battalion of the 77th Division, commanded by Major Charles S. Whittlesey. The Lost Battalion advanced farther into enemy lines than expected and found itself surrounded by German soldiers. All wires were down and they were being fired upon not only by the Germans, but also by friendly fire from American artillery. Several pigeons had already been released with messages to stop the firing, but each had been shot down by the Germans. Cher Ami was their last hope. Major Whittlesey scribbled the following message: "We're along the road parallel 276.4. Our artillery is dropping a barrage directly on us. For heaven sakes, stop it!" As Cher Ami rose into the sky, she was shot by the Germans, but still managed to cover thirty-two miles and deliver her message, despite a chest wound and a leg that was dangling by a thread. Cher Ami had saved the 196 men of the Lost Battalion.

In 1943 the Dickin Medal was inaugurated in England to honor the valor of animal war heroes. Since its inception, it has been awarded to eighteen dogs, three horses, one cat, and thirty-two homing pigeons.

The pigeons were all British with the exception of G. I. Joe, an American bird.

Though the military has disbanded the Pigeon Corps, pigeons are still used for an amazing variety of tasks. Among the more interesting jobs that pigeons have performed are delivering blood samples across large cities, delivering film from the bottom of the Grand Canyon to the rim, and being fitted with equipment to measure the air quality in Los Angeles.

Today homing pigeons are flown primarily by fanciers throughout the world in competitive racing. In these races, it is not uncommon for a pigeon released early in the morning to travel 500 to 600 miles and reach home before dark.

While homing pigeons are the only pigeons capable of returning home from long distances, hundreds of other breeds of pigeons exist. Giant Runts, Carneaus and White Kings were developed for their meat. Some breeds were developed for the unique way in which they fly, such as rollers, which actually tumble in the air. Still others, such as fantails and croppers, were bred for their unusual appearance. Shows are held throughout the country each year where these types of pigeons compete based on certain show standards.

SELECTING A BREED: RACING OR FANCY?

It is estimated that there are over 400 different breeds of pigeons. Before you determine the type of pigeon you would like to obtain for your 4-H project, you should learn a little bit about the different types of pigeons available. They can be categorized into three different groups: **Fancy, Sporting, or Utility.**

Fancy breeds come in many different shapes, sizes, and colors. They are bred mainly for their distinctive feathers and include Fantails, Modenas, Jacobins, Trumpeters, Pouters, and Tumblers.

Sporting breeds are used for racing, homing, endurance flying, and performing. Rollers, Highflyers, and Racing Homers fall into this category.

Utility breeds are raised for meat production and include Kings, Runts, Mondains, and Carneau. These birds are much larger than birds found in the other two groups.

If you enjoy watching your birds fly or you enjoy competing against other flyers in pigeon races up to 500 or more miles, then racing homers may be for you. However, as with any athlete, if you do plan to race your homing pigeons, it takes a commitment of more time than with the other two types of pigeons. You must teach them to trap and take them for training tosses in order to prepare them for the races sponsored by your local racing pigeon club. Normally, this would also mean that your parents would have to be more involved.

Fancy pigeons require much less time and work, and for younger fanciers this might be your choice. Many fancy breeds don't fly very well and thus can be more easily tamed and may be harder to lose. Utility pigeons would have many of the same advantages as fancy pigeons, but their large size might make it difficult for younger fanciers to handle them.

Photo source http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fancy_pigeons
An Indian Fantail

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET STARTED?

LOFTS: DESIGN, LOCATION AND SECURITY

Pigeons are housed in buildings called "lofts." Lofts come in various shapes and sizes, but good lofts must contain several essential elements. A pigeon loft should be dry and well-ventilated but free from drafts. The roof of your loft should have substantial eaves that prevent rain from blowing inside. A wet loft will cause harmful bacteria to spread, and you will have unhealthy pigeons. A loft without good ventilation is not healthy for either the pigeons or the fancier. There should be no smell and no dust from the droppings. Just like humans, pigeons breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. Without a plentiful supply of oxygen, the pigeons will not perform at their best.

The loft should also be secure from predators, such as cats, raccoons, minks and weasels, snakes and hawks. It only takes a small opening for some of these predators to gain entrance to a loft of pigeons. You should also discourage rats and mice. They will urinate on your pigeon feed if it is left unprotected, and this will spread disease. Wire netting or mesh with no larger than 1" openings should be used to cover windows, aviaries or other openings.

The ceiling of the loft should be low enough to make it easy for you to catch the birds. If you have to chase them too much, or catch them with a net, they will become wild. You may want to add an aviary to your loft. Aviaries are usually made of wire and allow the pigeons to get a good view of the surrounding area. The pigeons also enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, and the aviaries allow you to bathe them outside the loft within the protective confines of the enclosure. You may also want to add a window and a sunroof for additional sunlight.

The floor of most lofts is constructed of wood; however, many fanciers use grated metal for flooring. The grated metal allows more fresh air to enter the loft and makes it easier to clean. Regardless of the type of flooring you use, the loft should be raised up above the ground in order to keep it dry and to prevent animals from burrowing underneath. This can be accomplished by using treated 4 x 4's or concrete blocks.

A large landing board in front of the traps should also be part of the loft design. This is where the pigeons land and take off as they enter and leave the loft. The landing board should be large enough for your birds to sit and observe their surroundings.

It is important to keep your loft clean, painted, and repaired. You need to be a good ambassador for the sport so that we can all continue to enjoy our hobby. If your loft is an eye sore, you will not have the support of your neighbors.

Beginner Loft designed by
Steve and Linda Joneli.
Find more detail at
http://www.redroselofts.com/starter_loft.htm

Northwest Junior Flyers
Loaner Loft

TYPES OF TRAPS

Traps are devises that allow the birds to enter the loft but prevent them from getting back out again unless the fancier lets them out. It is important to make sure that the trap can be closed at night so that predators can't enter the loft. There are many different types of traps, the simplest being a drop down or "drop hole" trap. A drop down trap is simply a hole, approximately 3" by 5", cut into the wall at such an angle that the pigeons can enter into the loft but can't get back out. The most common type of trap is a "bob" trap. This trap is made using metal or plastic rods that can swing in, but cannot swing out. Several other types of traps are also available, all of which can be purchased from pigeon supply houses.

Bob Trap

NEST BOXES AND PERCHES

There are several different types of perches that can be used in a pigeon loft. The most important thing about perches, however, is that there are an adequate number of them available for the birds to use. Some people recommend that you have as many as two perches per bird. Pigeons will establish a perch as its own and will fight to retain it. If there are not enough perches for the birds, they will be unhappy, will not have a strong desire to return home, and may search out another place to live.

"V" perches are cheap and easy to build. It is also easy to keep them clean. However, if they are too short, the birds perched below may become soiled. The pigeons may also be a little harder to catch.

Box perches are probably more common. While they are a little more expensive and harder to build, it is easier to catch the birds because they can't fly from perch to perch. Each section of the box perch might be 9" x 9".

Nest boxes are not needed for young birds, but are a must if you plan to breed babies from your older birds. Old birds establish a nest box as their home and will fight to keep it until they are bloody. Nest boxes usually measure 12" to 15" high, 12" to 24" wide and 12" to 18" deep. It is a good idea to have a front on the nest box to give the birds privacy and make it easier to defend against intruders, which will minimize fighting in the loft. The front should be easy to remove so that the nest box can be cleaned after each round of youngsters. It also makes it possible to close off the boxes after breeding season to discourage your pigeons from trying to raise another round of babies, or from "expanding their territory."

FEED AND FEEDERS

Pigeons are grain eaters, and like humans they need a balanced diet to remain healthy. Pigeon feed should contain a good mixture of grains, such as corn, Canadian peas, maple peas, kafir, millet milo, safflower and red wheat. Some grains are high in fats, some are high in protein, some are high in carbohydrates, and some are high in fiber. The grain should be dust free and should not contain broken or cracked kernels. Your feed should always be stored in clean, dry containers which can be sealed tightly to prevent spoilage from moisture, and to keep out rodents. Plastic garbage cans fit the bill nicely.

Commercially prepared pellets can also be purchased, which contain all the necessary nutrients your pigeons need. However, they may cause loose droppings. Some fanciers mix pellets and grain together, but if this is done you should feed the pellets first, because pigeons prefer grain over pellets and will leave the pellets.

A pigeon's nutrition requirements will vary throughout the year. During the winter in cold weather climates, they will burn more calories to keep warm, and they will crave fats and carbohydrates. Young pigeons, or squabs, will desire fats and proteins, and when racing pigeons will eat more carbohydrates and fats.

As a general rule, pigeons should not be fed on the floor. Most fanciers feed their birds in some kind of feeder or "hopper." Hoppers should be covered so that the feed cannot be soiled by pigeon droppings. Furthermore, the pigeons should

not be given any more feed than they will consume within a short period of time. Feed left in the trays will be contaminated by mice, which can cause diseases in your loft. If overfed, your pigeons will also throw grain out of the hopper onto the floor. Overfed birds will become fat and lazy and will be difficult to train and trap on call. Some fanciers will even feed their birds by hand. While time-consuming, your pigeons will become much tamer as a result of hand-feeding.

Feeder

WATER AND WATERERS

Pigeons can survive for several days without food but can live only a short time without clean, fresh water. As temperatures rise, they will drink more water, and exercise also increases water consumption. Water should be changed at least once a day. Some people will add a teaspoon of bleach to each gallon of water as a means of controlling bacteria.

It is a good idea to keep waterers a few feet off the floor if possible. This will help keep droppings and dust from polluting the water. In addition to keeping the waterers off the floor, they should always be covered. An uncovered waterer is an invitation for a pigeon to take a bath. You may even want to place the waterers in the aviaries for easy changing and to eliminate the possibility of spills in the loft. Waterers can be purchased from pigeon supply companies, or you can make your own from plastic jugs of various types by cutting a hole 1 ½" by 2 ½" at least 2 ½" from the bottom. It is a good idea to wash out your waterers at least once a week with soap and water or a weak bleach solution.

GRIT

Because pigeons don't have teeth, they need a different method to grind their food. The gizzard is a muscle that uses small stones and pebbles to grind hard seeds, so that the seeds can be digested in the small intestine. Grit is inexpensive and can be purchased at most feed stores. Commercial grit may also contain minerals and salt. Many different types of grit exist. One popular type is a red grit with charcoal bits added. You might want to mix several different types of grit together to give the birds more variety. Many people will also add oyster shells to the grit mixture, especially during breeding season. The pigeons use the calcium from the shells to make strong bones and strong-shelled eggs. The pigeons will especially crave grit when they are forming eggs and feeding young.

Grit should be placed in a container that is covered so that it cannot be soiled, and it should not be left for long periods of time as it will attract moisture and dust. Once grit has become wet or damp, it should be discarded.

KEEPING YOUR PIGEONS HEALTHY

SANITATION

Sanitation in your loft is important to prevent the spread of disease. Dirty drinking water, poor feed, overcrowding, dampness, and poor ventilation are not conducive to healthy pigeons. Your loft should be cleaned at least once a week, and many fanciers clean their lofts daily.

PIGEONS AND AVIAN RELATED DISEASES
(Not what you may think!)

SHOULD I BE WORRIED ABOUT DISEASES?

Because the physiology of pigeons is so different from that of humans, there are very few diseases that can be passed between the species. Pigeons have a body temperature in excess of 107 degrees, which is too high for most viruses to survive. From time to time, however, a disease epidemic will occur which is associated with birds. People then become concerned about the possibility of pigeons being carriers of that particular disease.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

The strains of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) that are present in North American birds do not and cannot infect pigeons. This has been proven repeatedly through experiments at several laboratories. In addition to this, two federal agencies (USDA; USF & WS) are actively monitoring both domestic poultry and wild birds for possible invasion of new strains.

WEST NILE VIRUS

Pigeons are very poor hosts for West Nile virus. They do not generally show any signs of disease, only remain infected at a low level for a few days, and are unable to transmit the virus to a mosquito, another bird or to a person. This has been confirmed by officials at the Centers for Disease Control, who tested flocks of pigeons extensively.

NEWCASTLE DISEASE

Newcastle Disease is caused by a Paramyxovirus, and can be a threat to the poultry industry. There are two general categories of Newcastle Disease: Exotic Newcastle, which is highly pathogenic, and the less pathogenic Newcastle. Highly pathogenic Exotic Newcastle is a significant threat to the poultry industry, and is eradicated rapidly and decisively by the USDA and state veterinary officials; hence it is quite rare, and its occurrence is an exceptional event. This type of Newcastle can cause disease in unvaccinated pigeons. The less pathogenic strains of Newcastle are generally not hosted well by pigeons. Pigeons vaccinated for Pigeon Paramyxovirus, under the American Racing Pigeon Union (AU) recommended biosecurity protocols, are generally resistant to these strains which occur in the poultry industry and wild birds. In any event, it should be noted that this disease cannot be contracted by humans.

BLASTOMYCES, HISTOPLASMA
(the dimorphic fungi)

These fungi grow in nitrogen rich decaying organic matter, and have been associated with various settings, including wild bird roosts. Pigeons themselves cannot host, carry or shed these diseases, and neither can well maintained pigeon lofts.

It is important to note that proper loft management is essential to good health. Fanciers that are heavily involved with their flocks on a daily basis should always exercise care in hygiene.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, birds do not carry histoplasmosis and it is not "caught" from another person. Infants, young children, and older persons, with chronic lung disease may be at increased risk for severe disease. Disseminated disease is more frequently seen in people with cancer, AIDS or other forms of immunosuppression.

As is true when you handle any animal or pet, it is important to practice good hygiene. The AU has developed a set of biosecurity protocols which were reviewed and approved by the USDA. Below are some of those basic protocols:

1. Wash your hands before and after handling pigeons or pigeon equipment.
2. After visiting a pigeon loft or pigeon event, change and launder your clothes, or wear coveralls to visit a loft or show, and launder them afterwards.
3. Pigeons are ideal for introducing children to the animal world; however such encounters should be closely supervised by their parents.

From the AU Scientific Advisory Taskforce (A committee of the American RacingPigeon Union, Inc. Commissioned January 2004

Veterinary Position Statement Regarding the Health Aspects of Pigeon Keeping approved as a resolution of the American Racing Pigeon Union on July 18, 2004

"The keeping and recreational use of pigeons, under currently accepted standards of pigeon husbandry and hygiene, is a safe activity, and poses no particular hazards to public health or safety or to the personal health or hygiene of pigeon caretakers beyond the risk posed by the keeping of any other animal. There are no zoonoctic diseases specific to pigeons. For a healthy, immune-competent person, pigeon keeping in accord with current avicultural standards is a very safe activity.

Pigeons are extremely easy to keep, with very simple nutritional and husbandry requirements. They can comfortably tolerate a wide variety of environmental conditions, and adapt very readily and comfortably to a wide variety of avicultural situations and uses. Although relatively rare, the few diseases pigeons do get are easily treated with readily available medications or prevented with vaccines. Within the field of Veterinary Medicine, there is a specialty of Avian Medicine to support pigeon fanciers in keeping their birds healthy and comfortable.

In consideration of data from the United States Communicable Disease Center and of research conducted pertaining to registered, pedigreed Homing Pigeons, we affirm that to our knowledge, the above Statement is true.

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On Behalf of the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc., we would like to express sincere appreciation to Paul Miller, DVM (PA). Dr. Miller is an avian expert and is actively involved in avian research. His resources and assistance are invaluable.

Additionally, Warren Shetrone, DVM (HI) has been instrumental is assisting the AU Scientific Taskforce. He has work diligently to ensure that solid science and data were fairly considered.

SIGNS OF COMMON AILMENTS AND THEIR TREATMENTS

CANKER (TRICHOMONIASIS)

Canker is a serious disease in pigeons caused by protozoa, organisms that can only be seen with a microscope. Cheesy growths in the mouth and throat and trouble swallowing grain may be an indication that Canker is present. However, in many pigeons, the Canker only shows up internally. For those birds, the best evidence of the presence of Canker is a condition termed "going light." Pigeons lose weight, have no appetite, and usually die within a few days. Unfortunately, many other diseases will also result in pigeons going light, so if these are the only symptoms, it will be difficult to diagnose the disease. Pigeons that have had Canker, whether detected or not, often become carriers.

Medication is available from pigeon supply companies in pill form for the individual treatment of pigeons, as well as medications that can be added to the water for flock treatment. It is believed by some fanciers that adding bleach or apple cider vinegar in small amounts to the drinking water may be of some benefit in preventing the spread of Canker.

PIGEON POX

Pigeon Pox is a disease which is spread by mosquitoes which are infested with the disease organisms. Hard, crusty, dark-colored lesions usually appear around the mouth and eyes and may interfere with eating and seeing. Pigeon Pox is not normally fatal and will eventually run its course with no permanent damage to the pigeon. Pigeon Pox can be prevented by vaccinating the birds when they are young.

PARATYPHOID

Paratyphoid is caused by the bacteria Salmonella. Symptoms include watery droppings and swollen joints, and the disease may be fatal. It is more common in young pigeons, whose immune systems are not fully developed. It is also more likely to strike during warm weather than during cold weather, and unsanitary conditions may contribute to its spread as well. Young pigeons can be vaccinated to prevent the onset of Paratyphoid. A booster shot is recommended a few weeks after the initial inoculation.

PARAMYXOVIRUS

Paramyxovirus is commonly referred to as PMV-1. Symptoms include a twisted neck, a cough, and a puffed up appearance. PMV-1 is highly contagious and often fatal. You cannot "cure" a disease caused by a virus, so it is very important that you vaccinate your pigeons for PMV-1 at three or four weeks of age.

PARASITES AND CONTROL

PIGEON LICE

Pigeon lice are a pigeon's most common parasite. They live their life on the body of the pigeon and obtain nourishment from its feathers and skin. They can easily been seen with the naked eye by spreading the wing and holding it up to the light. Although you might see lice on your shirt or blouse after holding a pigeon infested with lice, they cannot survive on a human. They can be controlled by dusting each bird with four percent Malathion or a five percent Sevin dust. You might also want to dust around nest areas, cracks and crevices.

RED MITES

Red mites are normally only found on pigeons when they have had contact with poultry or where pigeons are housed in buildings formerly occupied by poultry. They are only about one-third the size of the head of a pin. They are gray when unfed and turn bright red after feeding on a pigeon's blood. Though more difficult to exterminate, they too can be controlled by using Malathion or Sevin dust.

WORMS

Pigeons are susceptible to several types of worms, such as roundworms, flukes and tapeworms. The roundworm is by far the most common and lives in the gastrointestinal tract of the pigeon. Worms cause weight loss and poor racing performance. Heavy infestations can even prove fatal. Pigeons pick up worms by ingesting eggs from the droppings of other pigeons. The cycle continues as the infested pigeon sheds eggs through their droppings, which are in turn picked up by other pigeons. To break the cycle, pigeons must be treated with a wormer such as Ivomectin, and then retreated again about 10 days later. For a small fee, a veterinarian can check a fecal sample for the presence of worms. By keeping your loft floor and waterers free of droppings, you will have very few problems with worms.

STRESS AND THE MOLT

Stress is a major cause of illness in pigeons. Several factors can cause stress in pigeons. One of the leading factors that can cause stress in pigeons is a wet or damp loft. It is important that the loft be kept as dry as possible. Overcrowding is also a major source of stress. If a loft is overcrowded it will result in poor production, fighting, and disease. Furthermore, the birds will not be happy, and if they are being raced, will have less incentive to come home.

Just like humans, pigeons need fresh air to thrive. It is important that pigeon lofts have good ventilation without being subject to dampness and drafts. To look and feel their best, pigeons also need a good, balanced diet. They should have a variety of good, clean grains, as well as vitamins, minerals and grit. Pigeons are also stressed when racing or rearing youngsters, so it is important that they are well provided for during these periods.

All pigeons will "molt," which means they replace their old feathers with new ones. This occurs during the summer and fall months, and while it is also a source of stress, it is perfectly normal. During this period, they may not want to fly as much, and will not look their best. Once they have finished their molt, however, they look their most beautiful and are ready to show.

RAISING YOUNGSTERS

MATING YOUR PIGEONS

Unlike many birds, you can't determine the sex of pigeons by the difference in the color of their plumage. There is no foolproof way of determining the gender of a pigeon until it has mated and has raised squabs. When a male pigeon chooses a female pigeon to mate with, it will strut around her, cooing and puffing out his chest. Often he will also drag his tail feathers on the loft floor.

If the female accepts the male, they will begin to "bill" or kiss each other. When they begin to make their nest, they will begin to place straw, pine needles, tobacco stems, grass, feathers, or anything else they find to line the nest. Next the cock will begin to "drive" the hen toward the nest by gently pecking her. Approximately ten days after mating, the hen will lay her first egg. Two days later she will lay her second egg.

To mate your birds, place them next to each other where they can see each other, but can't get together. After two or three days, they will normally mate. If they are placed together in a small area without first allowing them to see each other, the cock may "scalp" the hen. He does this to protect his territory from the invading hen, and may peck her so hard that he draws blood.

HATCHING AND REARING

The hen will incubate the eggs during the night and early morning, with the cock taking his turn during the late morning and afternoon. After about a week you can "candle" the eggs. To candle an egg, hold the egg in front of a flashlight at night. If the egg is fertile, you will see blood veins and a small dark circle, which is the heart. Eggs that are not fertile will be clear. Eggs will hatch about 18 days after the first egg is laid. After about 21 or 22 days, if the eggs have not hatched, the babies may have died in the shell. The parents will abandon them at this time and try again.

After the babies hatch, the parents will regurgitate "pigeon milk" to feed the youngsters. Pigeon milk is not like cow milk. Pigeon milk is a thick substance that is high in fat and protein and enables the babies to grow very quickly. They will nearly double in size each day for the first week. The baby, or squab, will insert its beak inside the parent's beak to receive the pigeon milk. At about one week of age, they are old enough to band. The band helps identify the pigeon and helps with record keeping. If you plan to race your birds, they must be banded with a permanent band from the American Racing Pigeon Union or the International Federation of Pigeon Fanciers. Place the band over the top three toes, slide the band back and pull the back toe through. Within a couple of days of banding, the pigeon will have grown so much that the band can't be removed. Usually, when the squabs are two or three weeks old, the hen will lay a second set of eggs. It is best to supply her with a second nest bowl before she does, otherwise she will lay the eggs in the same nest bowl and the babies will foul the eggs with droppings.

When the squabs are about four weeks old, the parents will kick them out of the nest. You may wish to place them on the floor yourself before this occurs. This is an important period for the youngsters, because they will need to learn to eat and drink on their own. You may want to dunk their head in the water to help them learn where it is located. The parents will continue to feed them, but do so less and less as time goes on. Some of the older birds may peck the youngsters, so it is a good practice to place a board about four inches above the floor that the youngsters can hide under if they are being pecked. By the time they are about six weeks old, they are nearly fully grown.

BANDING AND RECORD KEEPING

As was mentioned earlier, your pigeons should be banded with a permanent band. An example of a permanent band might be one that says, "AU 10 LFO 1079." The first two letters indicate that this band comes from the American Racing Pigeon Union, the "10" indicates the year the pigeon was hatched, the letters that follow the year indicate the local club, and the numbers that follow

identify the individual bird.

(Photos by Randy Enburg)

Place band over front three toes

Pull band over back toe.

Pull back toe through with feather, pencil, or toothpick.

Check band for two or three days to make sure it hasn't slipped off.

The band is required for racing or showing your pigeon. It also helps someone locate you if the bird is lost or stolen. Whether you are racing your birds or simply showing them, it is important to keep good breeding records.

Below is a sample of the type of record chart you might consider using:

BREEDING RECORD CHART

Date of First Egg	When Hatched	Band Nos. of Pigeons	Color	Remarks

SHOWING YOUR PIGEONS

SPORTSMANSHIP

Everyone who enters a pigeon show does so with the hope of winning a prize. In most cases they have invested a lot of time and effort. Unfortunately, not everyone can win. Whether you are showing your pigeons or racing them, it is important that you compete honestly and if you don't win a prize, congratulate those who do. Try to learn from your experiences so that you can improve your performance in the future.

USING A SHOW STICK

A show stick is simply a narrow rod, such as a quarter-inch dowel about 18 inches in length. The show stick is used to help your pigeon look its best in the show cage. Before the show, place your pigeon in a cage, so that it gets used to a confined area and will remain calm when the judge is observing it. If your bird needs to stand more erect, gently touch it with your show stick under the breast. If its tail is too low and should be held higher, tap the bird at the base of the tail.

Show standards for fancy and utility pigeons are defined by the National Pigeon Association and by the American Racing Pigeon Union for homing pigeons. Homing pigeon show standards can be found on the ARPU website at http://www.pigeon.org/pdf/showstandard.pdf.

BATHS AND GROOMING

Pigeons enjoy taking baths, and it is a good idea to allow them that opportunity on a weekly basis. A plastic or galvanized pan about 5" deep will make a good bath pan. Some fanciers like to add bath salts, which can be purchased at pigeon supply companies. The water should not be too hot, and baths should be skipped during winter months. Don't leave the water in the pan after the birds have had their bath, or they will drink the dirty water. After the bath, the birds will lie on

their side and spread one of their wings to relax and dry out. A weekly bath will also help keep pigeons free of external parasites.

In addition to a bath, it is a good idea to clean and groom your bird before the show. Clean your bird's feet with a damp cloth. After you have cleaned the feet, you might want to rub the bird's feet with a little petroleum jelly to help keep them clean until the show and make them shine. The band should also be cleaned. If the beak is uneven, gently file it, so that the upper and lower beaks are the same length. Check the toenails to see if they have grown abnormally long or crooked. You can trim them with a nail clipper if need be, but be careful not to trim them too much, or they may bleed.

It is important that you handle your pigeons frequently in the weeks before the show. The pigeons should be used to you picking them up and handling them. A pigeon that is afraid of you will be difficult to handle and will hurt your chances of a top performance. A wild pigeon is also more likely to damage or break flight feathers. When moving your pigeon to or from the cage, move slowly so as not to frighten it. Grasp the bird with one hand on the back and put it into or take it from the cage head first.

When the pigeon is out of the cage, hold one hand under the bird with the legs clamped between the first two fingers and the thumb on top to keep the wings in place. The other hand should be used to support the pigeon by placing it under the pigeon's breast, palm up. The pigeon should be facing you and tucked into your chest.

TRANSPORTING YOUR PIGEONS

Pigeons can be transported in any container that has good ventilation and will keep the pigeons clean. Straw, wood shavings, or pine needles are often used on the floor of the container to keep the pigeons clean. Wire or plastic grated bottoms, where droppings will pass through, are even better. It should be emphasized, however, that cedar shavings should never be used as they emit toxic fumes.

Example of wooden crate.

Something as simple as a cardboard box can be used, but most fanciers will make or purchase a crate for transporting them. Although your pigeons can thrive in very cold weather, they should never be left for long periods of time in the sun without water. They should never be left inside a hot car without the windows down, or locked in a trunk.

PRESENTING YOUR PIGEON TO THE JUDGE

In some shows, you may be asked to remove your pigeon from the cage and present it to the judge. If this is the case, the judge will ask the handler to present his or her pigeon in such a way as to display the various body parts. It is important for the handler to know the terms for the various body parts of the pigeon, including the feathers.

When approaching the judge, the handler should present the pigeon in profile, by turning the pigeon to the side. If asked to display the wing, the handler should hold the pigeon's head toward him or herself, and while gripping the feet and wings with one hand, should spread the wing with the other hand.

To display the keel or underside of the bird, hold the pigeon in the normal position and tilt the bird's head in a downward position.

AU Lakes Zone Director, Ron Pairan, demonstrates handling the bird for show.

SHOWMANSHIP

In a 4-H showmanship contest, the focus is on the ability of the handler, and the characteristics of the pigeon are second. You will be judged on how well you present your pigeon and your knowledge of the breed, anatomy, and how your pigeon meets the show standards for its breed. The way your pigeon reacts to you as a handler will indicate to the judge how well you have prepared for the show.

Handlers should be neat, clean, and courteous to the judge. Look the judge in the eye and let him or her know that you are confident in your abilities. You might want to practice in front of your parents, friends, or 4-H leader in advance, so that you are not nervous. Finally, accept the judge's decision gracefully, and try to learn from the experience, so that you perform even better in the future.

RACING YOUR HOMING PIGEONS

One of the unique aspects of selecting homing pigeons for your 4-H project is that not only can you show them at the fair, but you can also race them through your local pigeon club. Pigeon racing is normally divided into an old bird season and a young bird season. Old birds are any birds banded in the previous year or earlier. Young birds are birds that are raced in the year in which they are banded.

Most clubs sponsor old bird races during the spring with races ranging from 100 to 500 or even 600 miles. Young bird races are normally in the fall with races ranging from 100 to 300 miles. If you plan to race your 4-H birds, you should probably consider participating in a young bird series. When racing your young birds, you should always keep a few in reserve, as losses may occur during races. While you would normally get good returns with a well-trained young bird team, pigeons are susceptible to hawk attacks and accidents involving wires. If you intend to race your young birds, a team of 10 to 15 birds minimum is recommended.

In order to race your young birds, it will be necessary to join a club affiliated with either the American Racing Pigeon Union or the International Federation of Pigeon Fanciers. In many cases, the club will supply new members with young pigeons to help get them started. Often a club will discount dues and offer loaner clocks to junior members. The national organizations can help you locate a club near you.

SETTLING YOUR YOUNGSTERS

Many fanciers like to place their youngsters outside in a "settling cage" at about four or five weeks of age. A settling cage is a wire cage, placed

on the landing board, in which the young pigeons can become familiar with the neighborhood. They are locked out of the loft for two or three hours at about the same time each day. The youngsters should not be fed before placing them in the settling cage. Before opening the trap, place feed in the hoppers and call the young birds in by calling, whistling and or shaking a feed can. After a week or two, the settling cage can be removed. Let the youngsters exit the loft, lock them out for a couple of hours, and then call them in.

Make sure the young birds are not frightened off the landing board before they learn their surroundings, or they may fly off and become lost forever. At first your young birds may not leave the landing board, but gradually a few at a time will experiment with taking off and landing. You may find that you have birds landing in trees, wires, roofs, and fences. It is important not to chase them off these places for the first few days, or until you know for sure that they know how to get back to the loft. After they learn this lesson they should not be allowed to land anywhere except on the loft. Eventually, you may have to chase a few birds off the landing board if they have not yet begun to fly.

Make a note of the time you began to call the birds in. Fifteen minutes after you began to call them in, take all the food away. Some of your birds will hesitate to come in, and may miss their meal that day, but they will soon learn to trap quickly if they want to eat.

TRAINING

After they have learned to trap, you can begin to leave them out for longer periods of time. They will begin to experiment with flying and landing and will gradually stay in the air for longer and longer periods. If your schedule permits, you may want to allow your birds to loft fly in the morning and afternoon.

After your birds have started to loft fly for 30 minutes to an hour for two or three weeks, they are ready to begin training. It is best to train in the morning if possible, but if this doesn't fit your schedule, training in the afternoon is perfectly acceptable. However, if you do have to train in the afternoon, it is important not to train in extreme heat. It is also important that you never train in the rain, on very windy days, or too close to sundown.

Pigeon flyers differ on their method of training, with some choosing to train in different directions and some training in line with the race stations. Most start off with short tosses and gradually increase the distance. A typical training regimen might be two tosses at 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, 20, and 25 miles. At this point, you might increase the distance by 10 to 20 miles at a time.

Before your first toss, loft fly your birds, call them in, and give them a handful of grain. This will reinforce to the birds that when they come home from their training they will be rewarded with feed. Young birds are full of energy and by loft flying your young birds before their first few training tosses, they will come home from those tosses more quickly. They will not be tempted to go exploring beyond the area they are familiar with and become lost.

Once the birds have been trained 25 miles, it is no longer necessary to loft fly them before training tosses. Now you might want to train only every other day as you increase the training to 30, 40, 60, and 80 miles. The birds are now ready for their first 100 mile race. If the birds take much longer to come home than normal, or if you have a "smash," you may wish to let them rest for a few days and drop the mileage back to where they last homed in good time. A smash is when several birds are lost and a lot of the birds are out overnight. Even experienced flyers will sometimes have a bad training toss, so don't be discouraged.

Once the race series begins, training tosses through the week from 30 to 40 miles should keep your birds conditioned and sharp. Two or three tosses per week should be adequate.

It is important to observe your birds during the week. Only birds in good health and free of injury should be sent to a race. If you observe a bird that doesn't want to fly during the week, or comes home much later than the other birds on a training toss, it may be an indication that it is injured or ill. When you crate your birds for the race, look for missing feathers, scrapes, or bruises on the chest. This may indicate that the pigeon has hit a wire. Watery eyes, listlessness, or a red throat may be a symptom of illness.

If your birds are healthy, well-trained, free of injury, and released in good weather, you should have excellent returns from your first race.

APPENDIX 1

PUBLICATIONS AND CATALOGS

Racing Pigeon Digest
P.O. Box 3088
Lake Charles, LA 70602
pigeondigest@aol.com
www.racingpigeondigest.com
337-476-1289

Charles Siegel & Son, Inc.
1711 Main Street
Jeanerette, LA 70544
www.siegelpigeons.com
800-437-4436

Foy's Pigeon Supplies
3185 Bennett's Run Road
Beaver Falls, PA 15010
www.foyspigeonsupplies.com
877-355-7727

Global Pigeon Supplies
2301 Rowland Ave.
Savannah, GA 31404
www.globalpigeon.com
800-562-2295

Jedd's
1165 North Red Gum
Anaheim, CA 92806
www.jedds.com
800-659-5928

APPENDIX 2

Examples of Different Breeds of Pigeons

"Thunder"
AU 94 LFO1078

"Lightning"
AU 94 LFO 1079

Racing Homers
(Pictures of Fancy Breeds are found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fancy_pigeons)

African Owl

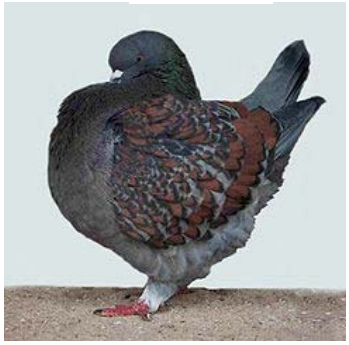
Red Carneau

Pigmy Pouter

Jacobin

Oriental Frill

English Carrier



Modena

Ice Pigeon

Frillback

APPENDIX 3

Glossary

Common Pigeon Related Terms

AU: Abbreviation for the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.; the largest national racing Homing Pigeon organization in the United States.

Aviary: A wire enclosure attached to the loft in which the pigeons can sun and/or bathe themselves.

Bars: Color bands across the back part of the top surface of a pigeon's wing.

BB: Abbreviation for a blue bar pigeon.

BC: Abbreviation for a blue check pigeon.

Billing: Pigeon kissing.

Blue Bar: A light bluish gray colored pigeon with two black bars across the back part of the top surface of its wing. Sometimes simply called a Blue.

Blue Check: A pigeon of a light bluish gray color with black checked patterns on the top surface of its wing.

Bobs: That part of the trap usually made of lightweight aluminum rods that the pigeon pushes against to get into the loft.

Breast: Crop region of the body; also includes the pectoral muscles.

Canker or Trichomonas: Yellowish cheesy deposit usually in the pigeon's mouth or throat caused by protozoa.

Carrying Crate: A crate usually made of aluminum, wood or plastic, used to transport and release pigeons.

Cere: Bare skin around the eye.

Checker: A pigeon with colored checked patterns on the top surface of its wings.

Clock: A special timing device used to record the arrival times of racing homers on a paper tape or electronically to the nearest second.

Cock: A male pigeon.

Countermark: A rubber or stretchable plastic band with a number on it that is placed on a racing pigeon's leg before it is placed in the shipping crate.

Down: Yellowish fuzzy type covering on newly hatched pigeons.

Droppings: Pigeon excrement.

Fancier: A person who raises, shows, or races pigeons.

Fancy Pigeon: Any of the many breeds of pigeons used for show purposes rather than for racing or meat. Usually refers to those breeds that have some special kind of feather arrangement, unique shape and size, or color pattern.

Flights: The 20 larger feathers in the pigeon's wing. The outer 10 flights are called the Primaries.

Fret Marks: Any horizontal mark or deformity on the feathers. Fret marks result from stress or a lack of proper nutrients to the growing feathers or stress.

Frill: Line of reversed feathers on the neck or crop.

Grit: A mixture of crushed quartz, granite, oyster shell and charcoal, salt, and trace elements. Grit is necessary for birds to grind up their food.

Hen: A female pigeon.

IF: Abbreviation for the International Federation of Homing Pigeon Fanciers; the second-largest national racing Homing Pigeon organization in the United States.

Inbreeding: The mating together of closely related pigeons.

Keel: The bone running down the middle of the breast to which the pectoral muscles are attached.

Landing Board: A large flat surface on which the birds land before entering the trap and the loft.

Late Hatch: Name given to pigeons hatched too late to race during young bird season.

Liberation: The act of releasing racing pigeons.

Liberator: A person who releases racing pigeons on a race.

Loft: A structure usually of wood in which pigeons are housed.

Molt: The yearly process of losing all feathers and growing new ones in a systematic manner. The heaviest part of the molt occurs during the late summer and early fall.

NPA: This is the abbreviation for the National Pigeon Association. It is an all-breeds pigeon club, encompassing all varieties of domesticated pigeons.

Natural System: A racing system in which the pigeons are kept paired, sitting on eggs or rearing youngsters.

Old Bird: Any pigeon more than one year old.

Outcross: Mating together of unrelated pigeons.

Overfly: A loft located farther from the release point than another loft is said to have "overfly" on the shorter loft by the difference in distance.

Pectorals: The large muscles lying on both sides of the keel.

Pied: A pigeon with white feathers on its neck or head.

Pin Feather: A growing feather of the young pigeon that has not yet broken through the shaft.

Pipping: The process of the young pigeon chipping out of the egg shell during hatching.

Pot Eggs: Artificial eggs made of wood or plastic used to replace real eggs when hatching is undesirable.

Primaries: Last 10 large flight feathers in a pigeon's wing.

Prisoner: A pigeon that is never allowed out of the loft in which it is housed. The term usually refers to a pigeon bred by someone else.

Racing Homer: A pigeon whose ability to quickly return home has been selectively bred over hundreds of generations.

RC: Abbreviation for a red check pigeon.

Red Check: A pigeon of a light reddish color with dark red-brown checked patterns on the top surface of its wing.

Road Training: Birds crated, driven to an open area that is free of obstructions, and released to fly home.

Runt: A youngster that did not develop properly.

Secondaries: The 10 smaller flight feathers in the pigeon's wing next to its body.

Settling: The act of acclimating young pigeons to the loft and letting the birds go outside of the loft for the first time.

Settling Cage: A wire cage that sits on the landing board and encloses the front of the trap; used to loft break young birds or prisoners.

Shipping: The procedures in which the members of a racing pigeon club gather to enter their birds into racing competitions.

Shipping Crate: A crate used to carry the Racing Homers to the race release point.

Spl: Abbreviation for a splash pigeon.

Splash: Irregular arrangement of white and colored feathers on a pigeon's body.

Spraddle Legged: A young bird with its legs horizontal to its body so that it cannot stand up. This condition results from insufficient amount of nesting material.

Squeaker: A young pigeon from 2 to 8 weeks old.

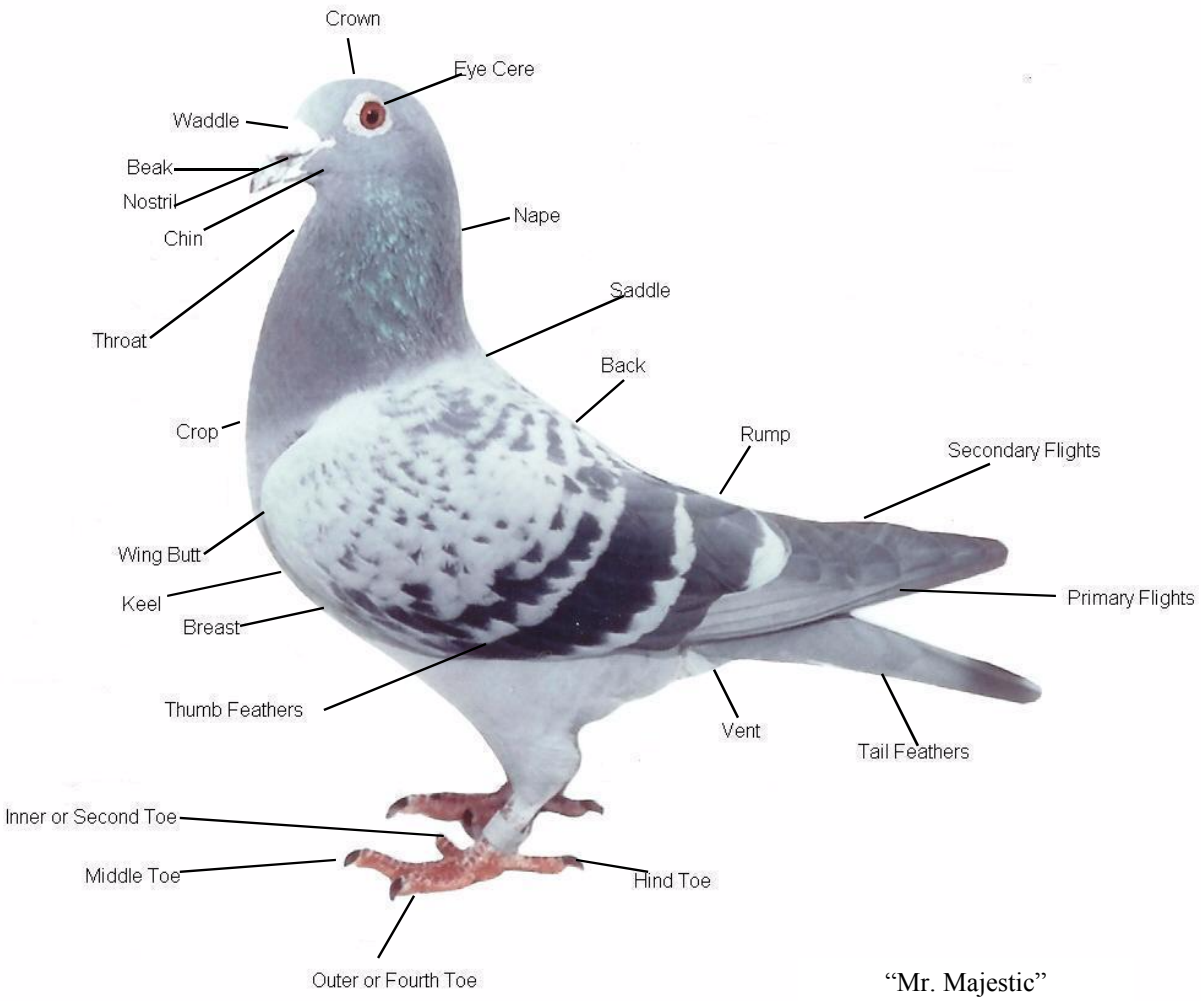
Stall Trap: A type of trap designed with several partitions so that only one Racing Homer may enter a stall at a time. It has a locking device that keeps the bird in the stall until the countermark is removed. Only after the fancier unlocks the trap can the Racing Homer enter the loft.

Tick: One or two white feathers located behind the pigeon's eye.

Tossing: The act of taking a Racing Homer away from its loft and releasing it so that it has to fly home.

APPENDIX 4

DIAGRAM OF PIGEON



"Mr. Majestic"
AU 97 ATB 0501

APPENDIX 5

MATERIALS NEEDED
4' X 8' LOFT

Floor-
- 2 - 2x6's - 96"
- 5 - 2x6's - 45"
- 1 sheet ¾ plywood or ¾ expanded metal

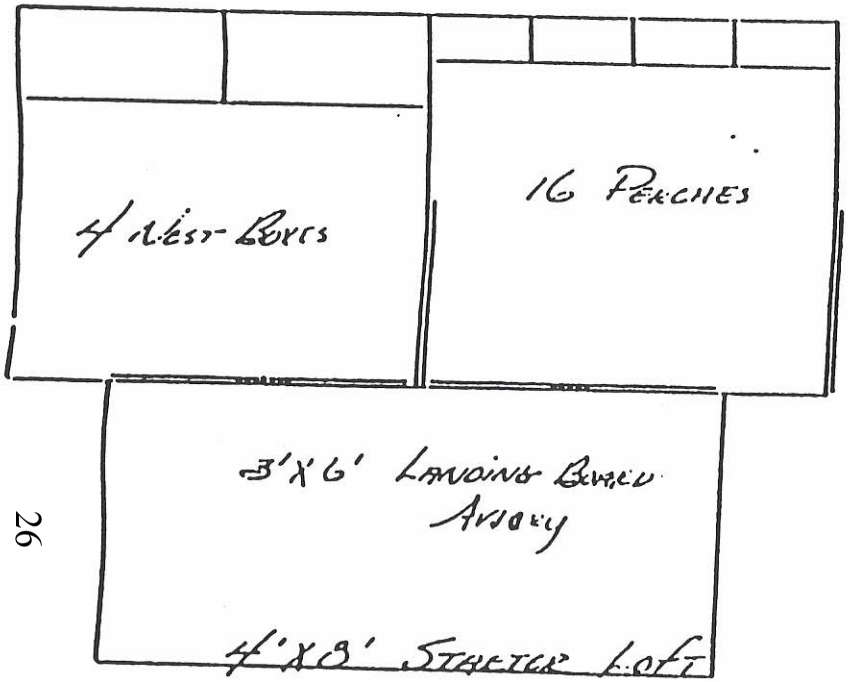
Walls-
- 4 - 2x4's - 96"
- 4 - 2x4's - 45"
- 16 - 2x4's - 72" studs
- 5 - sheets masonite siding 4x8

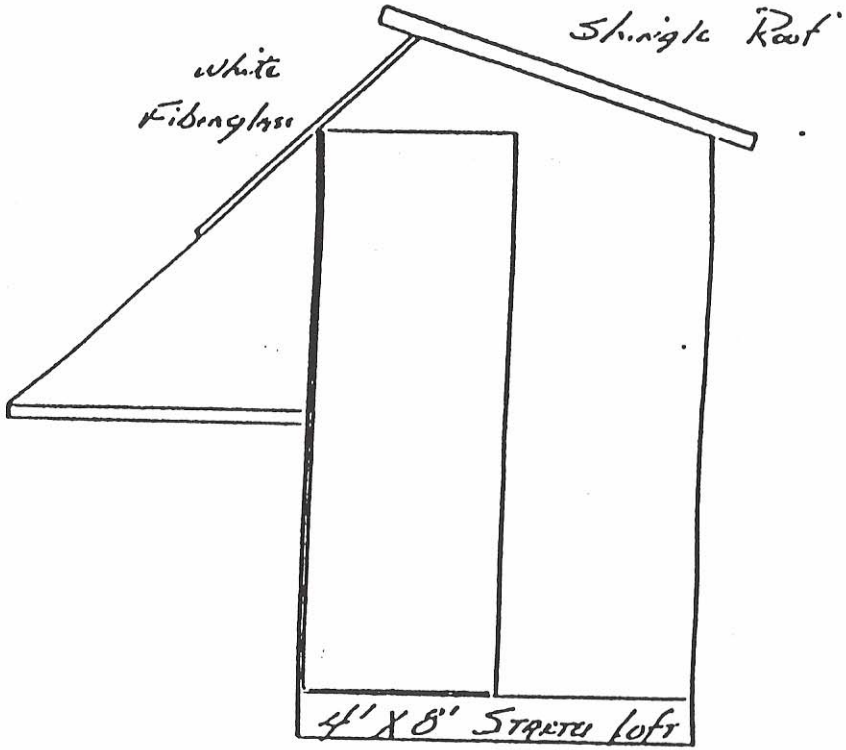
Roof-
- 2 - 2x4's - 96"
- 5 - 2x4's - 45"
- 1 sheet ½ " plywood
- 1 bundle shingles
- 4 PCS white fiberglass 36"

Aviary and Landing Board-
- 2 - 2x4's - 72"
- 4 - 2x4's - 33"
- 9 - 1x4's - 72"
- 2 - PCS masonite siding - triangle 36" x 36" x 48" approximately

Estimated Cost = under $500 (as of 2010) in central Ohio.

4'X8' Stretch Loft





3/4 plywood or equivalent metal floor
2X4 wall construction
2X6 floor joists
masonite siding

Scale
1/4" = 1'

APPENDIX 6

Shafer Style 'Lean-In' loft.

Designed to hold up to 10 Young birds, be easy to maintain and clean and require a minimum amount of space and materials to build. (Remember to always build with extra perches.) The perches are attached to the wall and are designed for easy scraping, as most droppings will drop through the wire to the ground. Rake once a week.

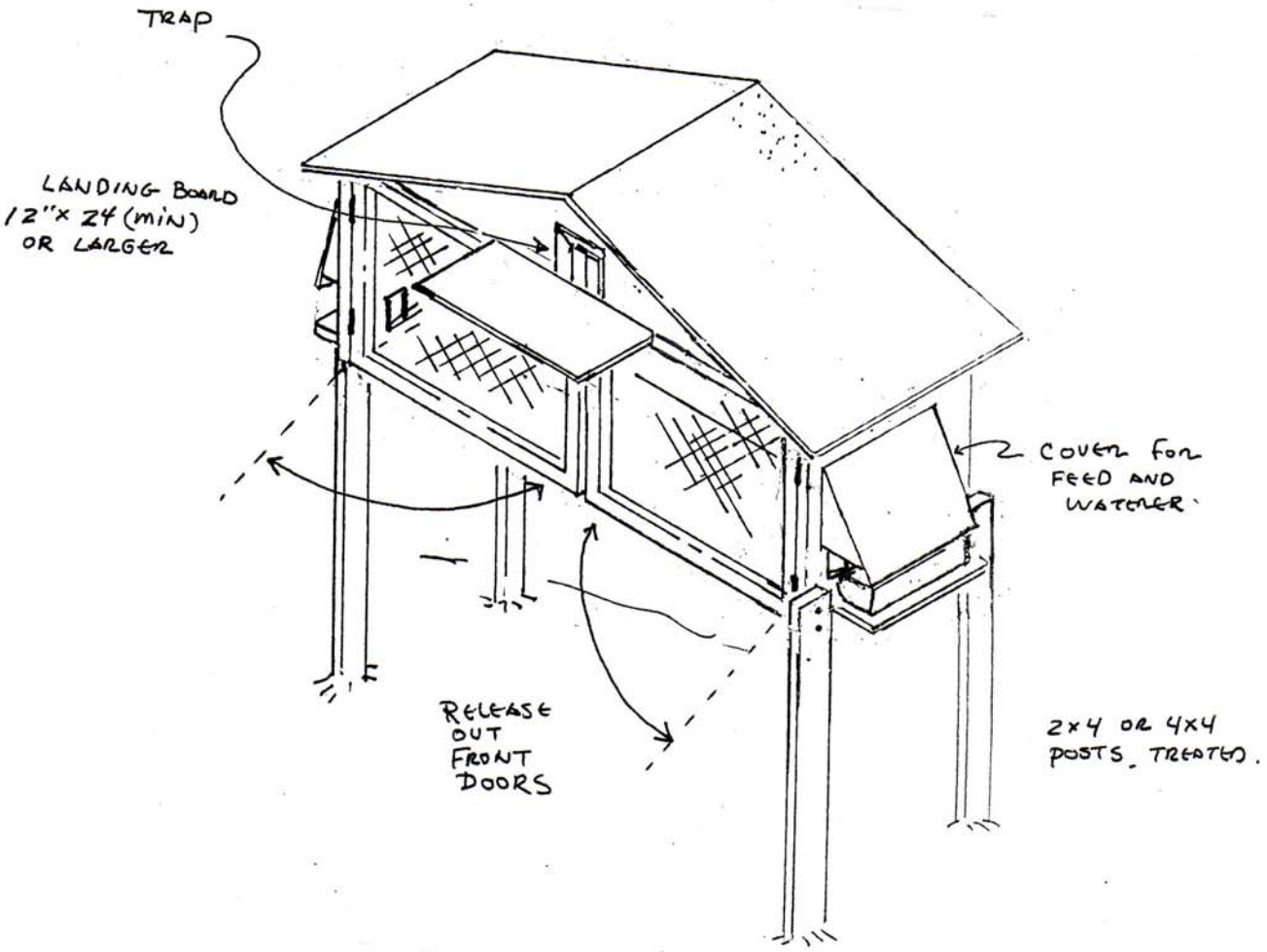
Loft is mounted on 4- posts that can be adjusted to the height of young flyer with the floor of loft at waist level.

Use no larger then 1" welded wire or mesh, no smaller then ½"

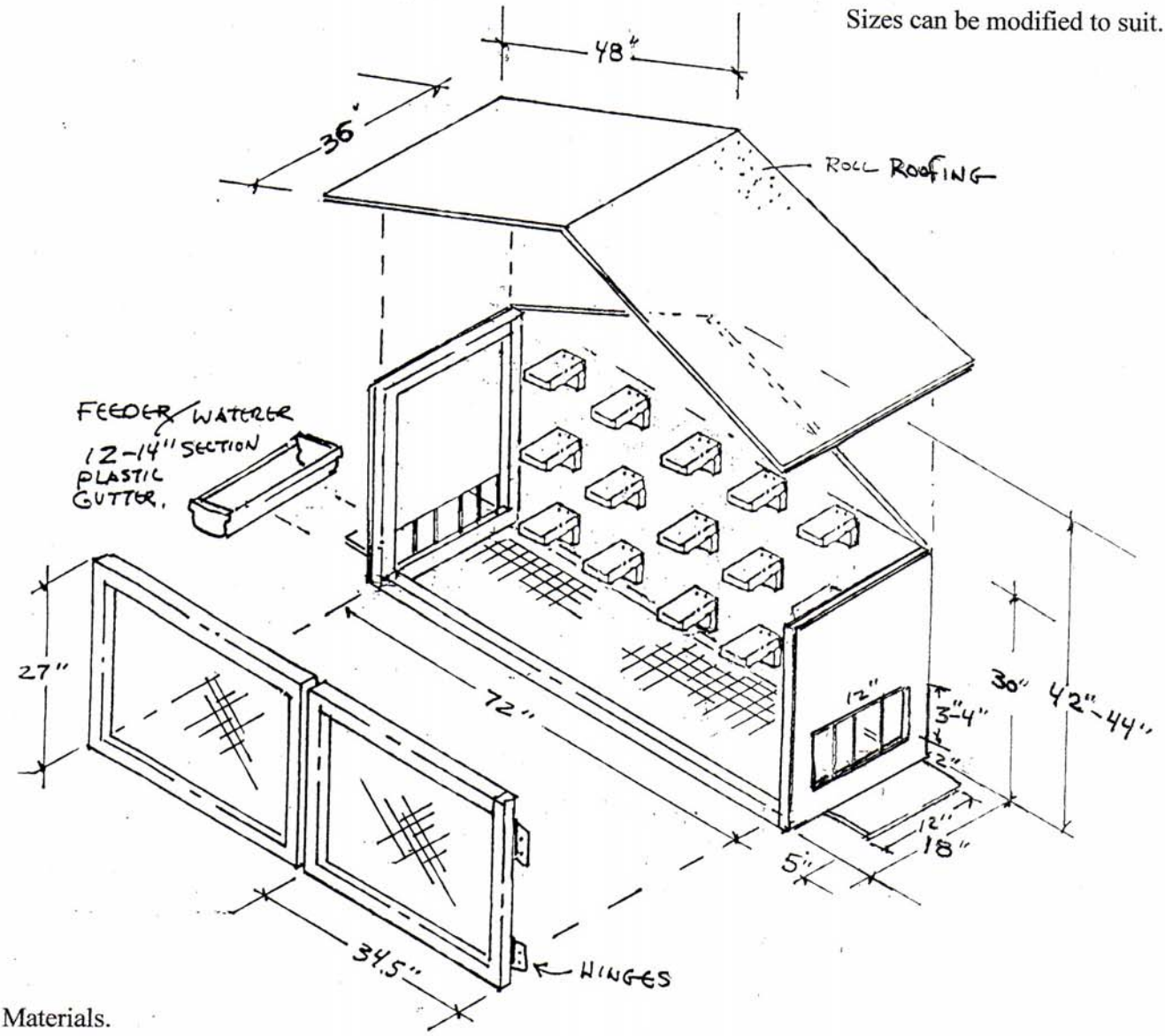
Doweling for end feeders and water is ¼"-1/2" dowels on 1-1/2" centers.

Attach shelf to bottom of loft if using plastic gutter material or plastic trays. Position shelf so top of tray is approximately 2-3" above floor. This makes it easier for birds to drink.

The Trap should be a minimum of 4"W x 7" tall, with two Aluminum Bobs that are spaced 1.5 -2" apart. (Use pigeon bands or washers for spacers as needed.). It is recommended that a "weather door" be attached so traps can be shut at night to keep out predators.

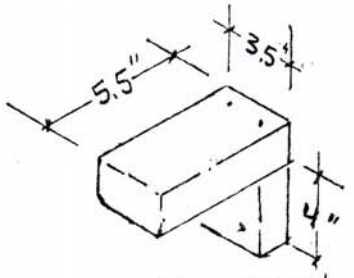


Sizes can be modified to suit.



Materials.

10x2x 8 ft. lumber for framing.
2- 8ft, 1x4 or 2x4 lumber for perches.
2-8ft. 2x4 or 4x4, cut to 48" for posts. Bury 12-18" in ground.
3- Sheets of ¼" or 3/8" Plywood (CDX, or better, outdoor grade)
1-36" Dowel, ½" dia.
8 ft.of roll roofing.
12 ft. of 36"x 1" x 1" welded wire or wire mesh
4 1x2" hinges, and Hasp.
Staples
Nails



TYPICAL PERCH.
SPACE 12" CENTERS
11" ABOVE LOWER PERCH
(FROM 15)

APPENDIX 7

4-H PIGEON PROJECT

NOVICE LEVEL

AGES 9-11

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____
Street, R.R. #, Box, Apt. Town Zip

Answer the following questions on the front and back. After you have answered the questions, please give the sheet to your 4-H leader.

1. List the three types of pigeons.

2. What breed of pigeon did you choose for your pigeon project?

3. Please list the expenses you incurred as a result of your pigeon project.

Cost of housing	$ _____
Cost of feed	$ _____
Cost of equipment	$ _____
Cost of birds	$ _____
Other costs	$ _____
Total	$ _____

3. What did you enjoy most about your pigeon project?

4. Please list the grains that are found in your pigeon feed.

5. Name two features of a good pigeon loft.

6. Name two types of traps.

7. Explain the purpose of the gizzard in a pigeon.

8. How often should you change the water in your pigeon loft?

9. What information can be found on a pigeon's band?

10. Name one common pigeon disease and one external parasite.

_____

Signature of 4-H Leader Date

APPENDIX 8

4-H PIGEON PROJECT

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

AGES 12-14

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____
Street, R.R. #, Box, Apt. Town Zip

Answer the following questions on the front and back. After you have answered the questions, please give the sheet to your 4-H leader.

1. How have you improved as a pigeon fancier since last year?

2. List your expenses from your pigeon project.

3. Explain why it is important to keep your pigeon's water clean.

4. At what age should you band your pigeons?

5. After mating your pigeons, what is the minimum amount of time before you can expect the hen to lay eggs?

6. How many days after the first egg is laid can you expect it to hatch?

7. Name a product that can be used to control lice in pigeons.

8. Define the term “molt.”

9. List two things that make good nesting material.

10. What is the purpose of a “settling cage”?

11. How do you “candle” an egg?

12. Give two reasons why your loft should be raised off the ground.

13. Explain why it is important for young pigeons to have a place on the floor to hide.

14. What is the purpose of a pigeon “trap”?

15. Explain how you would prepare your pigeon for a show.

_____

Signature of 4-H Leader Date

APPENDIX 9

4-H PIGEON PROJECT

ADVANCED LEVEL

AGES 15-19

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____
Street, R.R. #, Box, Apt. Town Zip

Answer the following questions on the front and back. After you have answered the questions, please give the sheet to your 4-H leader.

1. How have you improved as a pigeon fancier as you have gained experience?

2. Explain how to prepare a pigeon for a show.

3. Name two pigeon "war heroes."

4. What advice would you give to a beginning pigeon fancier?

5. Name the two national pigeon racing organizations.

6. What is "pigeon milk"?

7. Explain how to mate your birds.

8. Why is it important not to overmedicate your pigeons?

9. Medicating your pigeons for less than the necessary number of days can result in what negative consequence?

10. Why is it necessary when treating pigeons for worms to repeat the medication 10 days later?

11. Name at least three sources of stress in pigeons.

12. Why is it important to have a second nest bowl in the nestbox?

13. Why did you choose the breed of pigeon you selected for your 4-H project?

14. What changes would you make in your pigeon loft if you were to begin again?

15. Is it possible to "cure" a disease caused by a virus? If not, what can you do to prevent those types of diseases?

_____

Signature of 4-H Leader Date

Would you like more ideas for other youth group projects?
Request the free
School Information Packet
1-800-755-2778
or
aupromo@aol.com

AU AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.™

www.pigeon.org