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has led to a large number of Pigeon breeds. Survey of Columba livia in the proposed study area started from July2023 to January 2024 in morning from 7:30 AM to 10:30 AM, point count method was used for the survey at systematic interval of 30 meters.

Columba livia is one of the most widely distributed bird species in the world. They are highly adaptable and can thrive in a wide range of environments and Feral pigeons are often considered pests in urban areas but

they also play an important role in ecosystem as seed dispersers and nutrient vectors.

Keywords: Columba livia, urban city, Feral pigeons, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh.

Dr. Karunesh Singh

Columba livia (Feral Pigeons) population and their

relationship with humans in Azamgarh City,

Uttar Pradesh, India

Assistant Professor Email: drkaruneshsinghmaniyarpur@gmail.com

Department of Zoology, D.A.V.P.G. College, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

Columba livia also known as urban Pigeons among the most successful avian settlers in our Azamgarh City. The average Columba livia population in the world approximately between 155 million to 295 million. These Columba livia live everywhere where people do. Columba livia is a wild birds whose domestication

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Research Article



Introduction

The Feral pigeon is a member of the bird family- Columbidae consisting of doves and pigeons. The Scientific name of Pigeon is Columba livia and there are 12 subspecies (Gibbs et.al.2010). The ancestral rock dove is also commonly known as the rock pigeon. This calls attention to the fact that a dove and a pigeon are biologically the same animal and the difference between both is a social construction. Ornithologists draw no substantive behaviours or physical distinction between the two.

The average length of an adult of the nominate subspecies of the rock dove is about 29 to 37 cm with a wingspan of 62 to 72 cm (Sivajothi and Reddy 2016). Through overfed domestic and semi domestic individuals can exceed normal weight, the weight for wild or feral pigeons ranges from 238 gm to 380 gm (Cornell 2008). Among standard measurements the length of wing chord is around 22.3 cm, tail is around 9.5 to 11 cm long and the bill is around 1.8 cm (Gibbs 2010). The head, neck and chest of the adult rock dove is bluish-grey while its neck and wing feathers show glossy yellowish, greenish and reddish purple iridescence. The species show almost no sexual dimorphism but the iridescence on female's neck is less intense

and more restricted to the rear and sides, whereas the breast is unclear (Gibbs 2010).

The rock pigeon has a naturally gifted ability to home over long distances because it relies on skills other than memorization. This prolific ability of pigeons was accidentally discovered by humans when pigeons released far from home found their way back to where they used to live, abandoned or traded far from home. Thus, the domestication of pigeons and unexpected consequences lead to the discovery of their domestic abilities. This discovery became the basis for the increased domestication of pigeons. The population of pigeons in India is about in the millions.

Location of study area:

Azamgarh is situated between 25°38' and 26° 27' north latitude and 82°40' and 83°52' east of longitude. Azamgarghis bounded by Mau district on the east, Gorakhpur district on the north, Ghazipur district on the southeast,Jaunpur district on south-west, Sultanpur district on the west and Ambedkar Nagar district on the north-west. The total area of Azamgarh district is 4234 sq.km. and situated 267 km from the state capital Lucknow (Map-1).





Materials and Methods

Survey of Columba livia in the proposed study area started from July 2023 to January 2024 in morning from 7:30 AM to 10:30 AM. Point counted method was used for the survey at systematic interval of 30 meters. Observation recording were done using notes book and pen. District Azamgarh is urban city. Ahumid subtropical climate characterizes Azamgarh, with chilly, dry winters lasting from mid-November to February and hot-dry summers lasting from mid-March to mid-May. Azamgarh city selected for study of pigeon population.

Results and Discussion

In district Azamgarh city, the pigeon population is considered to be quite high with a significant presence of feral pigeons due to readily available food sources in city, the high pigeon population in Azamgarh urban area is often seen as a nuisance due to their potential to spread diseases and creates sanitation issues. Batola and Khan (2019) Observed Columba livia population in the three districts of Punjab, Pakistan. Similar study was done by Gompertz (1957), Carle, (1959), Dabert, Johnston (1987), and Janiga (1995), Fins(2003)

Relationship with Humans: Contains following relationship with humans-

1-Cultural significance: Pigeons have cultural and religious significance in Azamgarh, particularly in Hinduism, where they are considered sacred animals.

2-Pet-keeping: Pigeons have been kept as pet in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh and many people still keep them as pets today.

3-Messenger birds: Pigeons have been used as messenger birds in India, particularly during time of war.

4-Food Source: In Azamgarh district (U.P.), Pigeons are considered a food source and their meat is consumed.

5-Conflict- Pigeons can be considered pests in Urban areas and their droppings can be a nuisance.

Conclusion

Ready supply of food, adaptable nesting habits and prolific breeding have led to a huge jump in pigeon numbers across Azamgarh city during our survey.'

Pigeons are more commonly found in urban areas, where they thrive in the absence of natural predators. The density average of feral pigeon population in urban area is around 1 pigeon per 10-20 city inhabitants. In humans, Pigeons can carry diseases such as histoplasmosis and Cryptococcosis, which can be transmitted to humans.

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