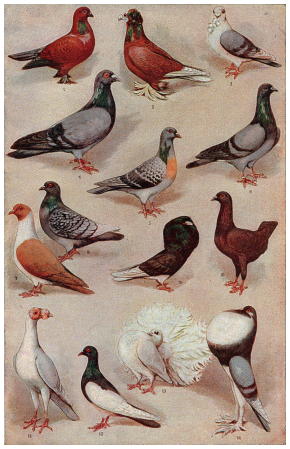
Feral Pigeon

Columba livia domestica

Bird · Resident · here all year



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The pigeon of streets, bridges and station roofs, descended from domesticated rock doves and enormously variable: blue-grey with two black wingbars in the ancestral form, but also chequered, black, rust-red, white and every mixture. Feral pigeons are common in central Dumfries and around farm buildings, and are the main prey of the town's peregrines.

BEHAVIOUR

The wild rock dove nests on sea cliffs and in caves, and feral pigeons simply transferred that behaviour to ledges, bridge girders and window sills. They feed on spilt grain, seed and scraps, and breed in almost every month of the year — a pair can raise several broods, feeding the squabs on crop milk. Flocks navigate the same familiar circuit of feeding and roosting sites daily.

WHEN TO SEE IT

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Pigeons and doves (Columbidae)
SIZE	29–35 cm
UK STATUS	Feral · not assessed

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