

Pigeon Problems Prompt Prohibition

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A Kodiak pigeon photographed near Oscar's Dock. Jay Barrett/KMXT photo

Jay Barrett/KMXT

If it seems like there are a lot more pigeons flying over downtown Kodiak this year, it's not your imagination. The population exploded this summer, and unless an especially harsh winter thins the flock, officials are concerned their numbers will continue to increase. Jay Barrett has more on new state regulations designed to reduce Kodiak's pigeon population.

As recently as a couple years ago there were only a few dozen pigeons roosting on rooftops on the edges of down town, scrapping out a living on scraps here and there. This summer though, super flocks of nearly 300 could be seen circling the spit and the mall. Fish and Game Biologist Larry Van Daele says the population explosion is the result of intentional feeding by misguided bird-lovers:

-- (Pigeons 1 19 sec "The main problem ... intentional feeding of these birds.")

The new regulations prohibit feeding of pigeons and starlings, another outside species taking hold in Kodiak:

-- (Pigeons 2 28 sec "It's illegal to feed certain ... foxes, wolves, etc.")

A lot of the complaints against pigeons are that they could carry disease, and their droppings are marring the beauty of the town:

-- (Pigeons 3 55 sec "Well, as far as the beauty ... gulls ever could. Or the crows.")

Right now, Van Daele says all he wants to do is get the word out, but stronger action could be taken:

-- (Pigeons 4 15 sec "Then if people continue ... more than just their back yard.")

Van Daele says pigeons, surprisingly, have been in Kodiak for the better part of a century:

-- (Pigeons 5 48 sec "The pigeons have been around ... we're getting to now.")

Pigeons are listed in the Fish and Game hunting guide as "Rock Doves." There is NO closed season and NO bag limit on them. Unfortunately, they congregate in the center of downtown, where discharging firearms is officially frowned on.

I'm Jay Barrett.

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