

## 1. BIRD POLICY ISSUES

The main problems with the birds on the University Campuses are the numbers of pigeons roosting in or around buildings. The nesting birds deface buildings with their droppings. This action often leads to the blockage of gutters and downpipes, resulting in overflowing water causing damage, such as timber decay, carpet staining and unpleasant odours, and the birds are also known to be carriers of disease.

Currently, there is a high concentration of pigeons on the Camperdown Campus which is causing damage to buildings.

Accordingly the Office of Facilities Planning believes that an equitable bird control policy should be introduced that deals with both the problems created by birds and the benefits gained from having them on the University Campus.

### 1.2 Impact of Birds

The close association of birds with humans in the Main Quadrangle especially has given rise to the possibility of disease transmission. Bird droppings can carry fungus diseases such as Histoplasmosis, Cryptococcosis and Aspergillosis. These diseases produce symptoms in humans similar to influenza. Pigeons are potential carriers of bacteria causing Salmonellosis (food poisoning). Birds also attract other pests such as cockroaches which feed on bird droppings and feathers, then spread bacteria throughout buildings especially to food areas. Dead birds produce objectionable odours in roof areas bringing an increase in the number of flies and maggots. Birds nests are reservoir of pests such as fleas, mites and bird lice which may invade other areas of the buildings causing scratching, bites and irritation resulting in staff discomfort. Carpet beetles may also be food in bird nests. Other items such as electronics, machinery and open water cooling plants may become contaminated.

### 1.3 Description of Birds

The Wildlife Information and Rescue Services (WIRES) believes that the following fauna would be found or visit the University grounds over a period of a year:

1. Skinks, crickets, beetles, mice, possums and birds.
2. Birds as listed below:

#### Natives

- Currawongs
- Ravens
- Magpies
- Grey Butcherbirds
- Superb Fairy Wrens
- Pee Wees
- Pardalotes
- Red Wattlebirds
- Silvereyes
- Noisy Mynahs
- Willie Wagtails
- Black-faced

Cuckooshrikes  
Swallows  
Rainbow Lorikeets  
Red-rumped Parrots  
Eastern Rosellas  
Galahs  
Silver Crested Cockatoos  
Crimson Rosellas

## **Feral**

Pigeons  
Spotted  
Turtledoves  
Sparrows  
Indian Mynahs  
Starlings

See *Background Information* for a history of the feral birds in Australia.

## **1.4 Bird Control Methods**

In the past, individuals or groups have tried to rid the University of pigeons by the use of poisons. Because these chemicals are not species specific and distress all birds, this practice of bird control is unacceptable.

This has led to a need for an alternative method of controlling the roosting and nesting habitat of birds in buildings. A combination of bird control products, ranging from specialist bird netting, spikes, wires and ultrasonic devices, are to be the methods used to control unwanted species of birds within the University.

## **2 BIRD CONTROL POLICY**

This policy reflects a balance between the benefits to be gained by having birds on the University Campus and the problems created by allowing birds to breed to uncontrolled numbers.

Accordingly, the following action is to be undertaken:

1. No native birds are to be removed or trapped.
2. All birds are to be discouraged from nesting or roosting on or in buildings.
3. All non-native birds are to be discouraged from nesting or roosting within the University Campus.
4. No chemicals are to be used to kill birds.
5. Encourage where possible the nesting of native birds.
6. Where the discouraging of nest or roosting site for birds is required physical barriers, ultrasonic devices or replica predator birds are to be used.
7. Prohibit the hand feeding of pigeons.
8. Encourage where possible the planting of native plants.
9. If in the future species specific chemicals are available for bird control, then these controls could be introduced as part of an integrated control program.

## **3 REPORTING**

Any queries or matters relating to bird nesting or infestations should be reported on Mr Harry Rourke, Grounds Manager, Facilities Management Office on 9351 3270 or email to [harry@facilities.usyd.edu.au](mailto:harry@facilities.usyd.edu.au)