



American Racing Pigeon Union

PIGEON TRACKS

It's That Time!

A LOOK AT THE 2023 AU NATIONAL YOUTH RACE

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Spring 2023

THE RACE IS ON!

Karen Clifton, AU Executive Director

The Gulf Coast Homing Pigeon Association is busy planning for a great convention and race. The 2023 youth race will be held on Saturday, November 4. Bim Crowder is the handler this year and has enjoyed receiving and caring for birds from the junior members that have entered.

Each participant will receive a certificate. The first place winner will receive a plaque and a trophy as well. We wish all the participants the very best of luck!

Our appreciation goes to Bim and the entire Gulf Coast Homing Pigeon Association!

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Flying Clovers Are On A Promotion Roll and Growing the Sport!

One of the newest members of the 4H club ~ Lily uses the whistle every night and has been hand feeding the birds! Mike Netzký was done a wonderful job working to promote the sport and mentoring the kids..



Emme receiving a pigeon from Al Christeleit (Grand Jct. RPC). What a wonderful thing Al is doing to keeping the sport going.



Heart of the Hills RPC Sharing the Sport!

Harvey Young (Heart of the Hills Racing Pigeon Club) introducing his pigeons to the children here in Medina TX. at the Baptist Church block party and he had a great turnout. Thanks to the AU for the pigeon gliders and the "I pet a pigeon" stickers. The kids loved them



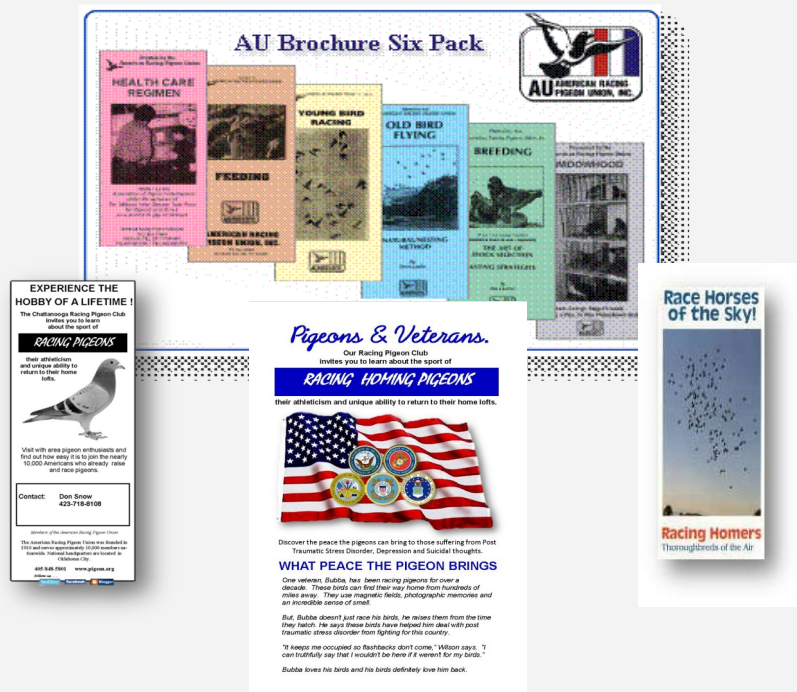
5 Amazing Pigeon Facts!

- Some colorful species of these birds are bred in captivity, many with a wide variety of plumage.
- In scientific nomenclature, "pigeon" and "dove" are interchangeable. Some species, such as rock pigeons, are also known as rock doves.
- These birds get their names from the Latin word for "peeping chick," pipio.
- If displaced, these birds can fly up to 1300 miles to return home.
- Pigeons are considered one of the world's smartest animals! In addition, they have unique "infrasound's" adaptations that make them an animal with the best hearing in the world.

**Need to promote your hobby?
We've got you covered!**

Give us a call or email today.

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Pigeon Terms You May Know

Drag: Term applied to where the majority of the lofts are located for a given race.

Dropper: A fancy type pigeon that is released in the fancier's yard and flies straight to the landing board to bring the Racing Homer out of the sky and onto the landing board.

Flagging: Encouraging the birds to fly (exercise around the loft) for a certain length of time.

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

Flying to Perch: A racing system in which the Racing Homers fly only to their perch; usually used in young-bird racing.

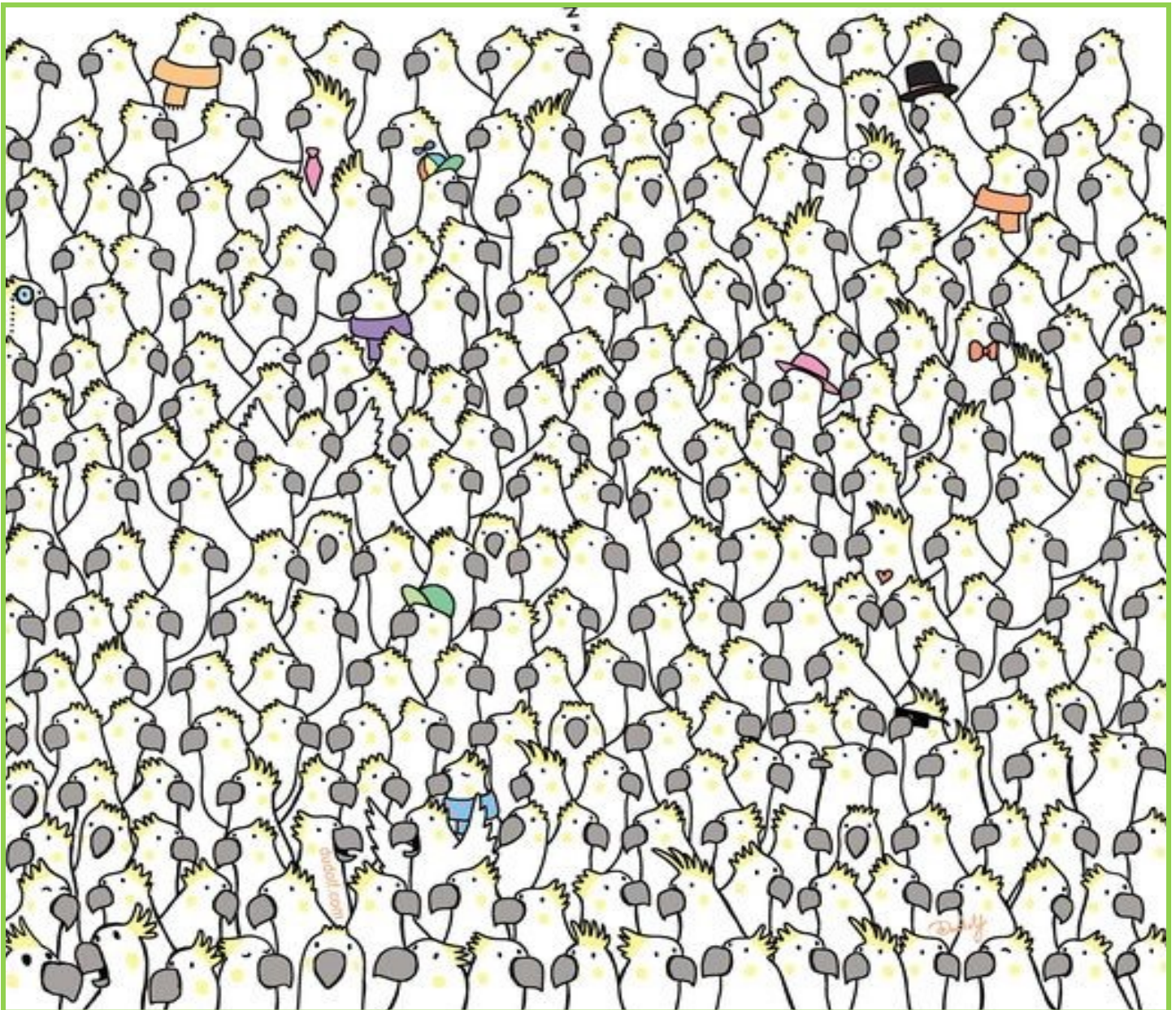
Fret Marks: Any horizontal mark or deformity on the feathers. Results from lack of proper nutrients to the growing feathers or stress.

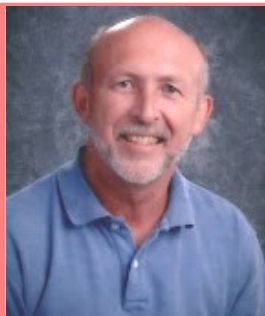
Frill: Line of reversed feathers on the neck or crop.

Contest!

Here is a brain teaser for our Junior Club members. The first three members to find the 4 doves will win a AU Ball Cap. Please circle the doves and send the picture to aupromo@aol.com.

Can you quickly find all four doves hidden in plain sight in this pic?





A BIRD IN THE HAND

Ronnie Shumaker, AU SE Zone Director & Youth/School Coordinator

I am pleased to let you know the AU has a race clocking procedure ideal for youth and youth groups that does not require the purchase of any type of clock. This new system takes us back in time to the use of the countermark machine and physically removing the countermark off the leg of our feathered athlete when it returns from the release point.

The cost of clocks has prohibited many children or youth groups from participating in our sport. This new system helps eliminate that cost. This system is ideal for youth groups, such as 4-H, schools, or home school groups.

Regrettably many pigeon flyers today have never experienced the thrill of removing a countermark from the pigeon's leg and with trembling fingers placing the small countermark in a capsule to drop in the clock. The clank noise of the old clocks being hand turned has been replaced by the multiple beeping of birds rushing across the pad and being clocked automatically. Now, a pigeon owner can be on the lake fishing and get a text or email that his or her bird has safely made it home from miles away. With today's technology no one has to be there to witness this remarkable feat of possibly flying hundreds of miles overcoming many obstacles.

As a former teacher that has had lofts at many different schools, I know the importance of the interaction of children and our remarkable birds. This clocking system ensures this interaction because the junior member must remove the countermark and by using an electronic device enter the countermark number on the AU National Data Base. The bird will then immediately be clocked in the race.

If your club has countermark machines you can donate to this program, the AU will be happy to forward them to groups that will use them. I would like to thank Southwest Zone Director, Bud Williams, for starting the work on this project and Joyce Stierlin for her efforts working with the programmer to make this tool available for our youth members. Contact me for details to help any juniors or youth groups in your area utilize this clocking system.

Ronnie Shumaker-
Youth/School Coordinator-
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If you have not yet become acquainted with the AU's Youth and School Coordinator on the AU Board of Directors, Ronnie Shumaker, AU's SE Zone Director. As the Youth/School Coordinator, he will seek ways to improve and increase youth participation on the racing hobby through whatever methods are deemed feasible for the organization. His teaching background in public schools has well equipped him to understand some of the challenges facing youth today.

Training

(excerpt from "The Sport and Hobby of Racing Pigeons")

Training of young birds starts from the day they leave the nest. The first thing you need to know is how to properly hold a Racing Homer so that it will trust you. Figure 4 shows the proper method of holding a bird in the palm of either hand with both of its legs held firmly but gently between your index and middle fingers. In this position the bird will not struggle and possibly hurt itself or damage its feathers. You should be able to enter the loft at any time and to pick up any bird without frightening it.

As a general rule, when a young bird is fully feathered under its wing it is ready to be placed in the young bird loft, normally 24 to 32 days after hatching. For the first 2 to 3 days the young birds may not eat or drink. If a young bird shows signs of dehydration, such as "sleepy eyes" half closed, you should take it and gently place its bill in the water container. If after 3 days it has not eaten, a few grains tossed near it on the floor will usually start it to eating. As stated before, feeding of all

birds should be at set times, usually in the morning and evening after the birds have been exercised or tossed.

The next thing young birds learn is the outside surroundings of the loft and how to enter the loft. This is usually accomplished by placing them in a "settling cage" on the landing board. A settling cage made of wire mesh is placed in such a position to keep the young birds from flying off and to allow them to see the surroundings and to trap back into the loft. After a week or two of being placed in the settling cage, the cage is removed and the birds are allowed to come out of the loft unrestricted. The birds should not be chased out of the loft or they may take immediately to the air and possibly be lost. Also one should not let them out the first time with older and more experienced birds for the same reason. The best time to loft break birds is in the evening, approxi-

mately 1.5 to 2 hours before sunset on a sunny day when the wind is blowing less than 10 mph. Also on the morning of the day the birds are to be loft broken they should be fed one half ration so that they will be eager to return to the loft for food.



AU JUNIOR MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The AU recognizes that junior member are the future of our sport. We haven't had a junior member of the year since 2020.

The AU Junior Member of the Year Award serves to recognize those junior member that have provided great service to the sport and the national and local organizations.

The award nomination form is found in the annual AU Yearbook.