

Woodpigeon

As our climate changes, gardens are becoming even more vital to wildlife and people. They can provide shade, absorb carbon, soak up flood water and help to cool buildings. A well managed network of gardens stretching across the Sussex would also help wildlife to move more freely and adapt to climate change enabling us to create a living landscape

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Nest-site necessities

Most nests are in trees or large bushes usually three to five metres (10-17 feet) above the ground.

Building materials

Twigs are all that is required, though nests have been found constructed from discarded pieces of



Woodpigeon / Dave Kilbey

electric flex – computer-age twigs. Though there are always lots of twigs available, the birds create a really flimsy platform through which the eggs are often visible. Nests are often re-used and become a little more substantial.

Chick care

The chicks are fed on milk. But don't order them an extra pint, as they drink crop-milk secreted by both parents and, after the first week, this is supplemented by seeds and grain. By the time they fledge, milk is less than a fifth of the food they get.

Special dietary requirements

They will take most seed and grains, including large items used to provide bulk in cheap wild-bird foods, and also acorns. The seeds are used for the production of crop-milk and as direct food for the chicks. Garden feeding helps suburban and urban Woodpigeons breed quite a bit earlier than rural ones. In spring, they also graze green crops and love Ivy berries.



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Night shelter

Woodpigeons tend to roost in flocks in the tops of trees or, at least, high up. Early in the breeding cycle the pair usually uses the nest tree, and the female will be on the nest until the young are a fortnight old.

The ideal territory

Has a couple of trees in it – otherwise Woodpigeons are not fussy, provided there is good feeding opportunities somewhere nearby.

When it's all happening

If the food is available, eggs may be laid in February, and there may be young still in the nest in November.



Woodpigeon / Arthur Hoare

Breeding Starts: March

Number of Clutches: 3

Number of Eggs: 2

Incubation Days: 17

Fledge Days: 29-35

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