

# ATTENTION PIGEON FANCIERS

## Thousands of Pigeons Dying **Why?**

**T**he title of this article is a bit misleading, yes thousands of birds have died, that is a fact, but as to WHY?, I do not know. I am writing this at the end of December, so hopefully by the time this article gets to you, the answer is in hand, but don't bet on it. This mystery disease has been hitting pigeons in North America for a number of months, and is still going strong. The reports from the hundreds of pigeon fanciers, that I have received, have **no general symptoms**, one day they either look fine, or a little fluffed up, and the next day they are dead. There are a lot of rumors, speculation, guesses from fanciers and answers from vets and so on. I have been working with a leading institutions for the last few months, and no institution has solved the problem, at least that I know of. Some of the suggestions as to what it is are all over the board. Wild birds somehow infecting the pigeons, it's PMV, its paratyphoid, a brand new disease, a new strain of PMV, a new strain of Paratyphoid or a new strain of Adeno virus. Some have reported that it is only killing hens, it is only killing young birds, it happened when I came home from a show, could it be caused by a dirty loft, the droppings are very loose, the droppings are green the dropping are brown. Well I guess that this point, **there is no commonality, the symptoms are all over the place.**

What to do?, what to do? That is the question, and the answer is that I do not know. Pigeons that have never been shown are getting it, lofts that have had no new birds added are getting it, pigeons returning to a show are getting it, pigeons that were in a race or pigeons that have never been flown are getting it. I clean the loft every day, why did I get it? This disease, in my humble opinion, is a virus, but I could be wrong. I had it a couple of months ago but now it has run its course and everything is back to normal. As the owner of Foy's. I have just about every medication, and believe me, I tried a bunch, and so have others, but none ever worked. I have talked to many people and on at least three

occasions, the pigeons were opened up and they were full of round worms! I worm my birds, what the heck happened? **Many fanciers have vaccinated their pigeons, but that did not stop it.**

I can offer a few suggestions, but they are not cures, in my mind, it must run its course, like any virus. Heck a common cold is a virus, and

after spending billions of dollars trying to find something that will cure it, they still have not been able to come up with a cure, the only thing science can offer is different medications to treat the symptoms. The meds treat the head aches, stuffy noses, fevers, coughs and chills can be addressed, but the actual virus must run its course.

**WHAT TO DO!** Here is what I suggest. Always use the same drinkers in each section. All of my drinkers are numbered so that I do not accidentally mix them up. Keep your loft clean. Keep the pigeons in semi darkness, if possible, and reduce stress such as showing and racing until your birds are normal. **Vaccinate** all your birds with a PMV shot, this will drastically increases the immune system, and it may prevent some birds from getting this horrible disease. **Clean** your whole loft, including the aviary with common bleach, 1 cup to a gallon. Better yet, use Oxine which is much better. Don't forget to clean the feeders and drinkers. Clean all the perches with Oxine or bleach and also spray all the cracks and crevices, including the floor. There is a brand new product on the market that I know will help as a preventative, and I would use it every day or at least three times a week. The product, Dr. Pigeons Health Show Water, fights the viruses and is not an antibiotic so you can use it as often as you like, but in all cases, **change the water every day.** If you are going to put your birds in a show or a race, use it 2-3 days before you basket them to take them to the event, during the show and after the show or race. It may be mixed with vitamins and probiotics, in fact, I suggest you do combine it with something like UltraPro or another product that combines vitamins and probiotics. You may also want to include electrolytes that will make the droppings more normal. Another product is Adeno Zap. Again it is not an antibiotic, but treats symptoms.

As I write this article, I got a call from a friend and is also an avian vet. We had a long conversation about the problem and he wanted me to add a few suggestions. **Worm all of your pigeons with a product that treats roundworms, clean the loft the next day after treating.** The drugs are not meant to kill roundworms, but to paralyze them so that they release in the pigeons. They are then passed out in the birds droppings. **If you do not clean the floor after the medication, your birds may pick them up again.**



**Jerry Gagne**

Owner Foy's Pigeon Supplies

Ph: (724) 843-6889 • [jerrygagne@foyspetsupplies.com](mailto:jerrygagne@foyspetsupplies.com)

[www.foyspetsupplies.com](http://www.foyspetsupplies.com)