

Environment ministry looks to eliminate feral pigeons and Indian crow populations | Seychelles Nation 26 June 2020



Mr Pothin

Feral pigeons and Indian house crows are known to be invasive species and a hazard to human health and safety and there are efforts to eliminate them.

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MEECC) received several reports regarding disturbance caused by feral pigeons, especially on the main island of Mahé and also the location of some Indian house crows. Together with its partner organisations, the MEECC has and is introducing various measures to control the population of the pigeons.

Ashley Pothin, conservation officer from the biodiversity conservation section within the environment department, met the press yesterday at the Botanical Gardens to talk about the urgency of this problem.

Feral pigeons

“Feral pigeons are considered as an invasive species, a nuisance species and hazard to human health and safety and contribute towards high maintenance costs of infrastructures as a result of accumulated fecal matters. One major concern is the continuous feeding of pigeons at schools and by other members of the public. After recent increase in reports/complaints in regards to feral pigeon infestation and visits/assessments conducted, the biodiversity conservation section would like to advise/discourage members of the public from feeding the feral pigeons especially in public areas. It is also advisable to dispose rubbish containing food scraps properly as the availability of food is a key component in the increase of the pigeon population,” stressed Mr Pothin.

He further noted that feral pigeons have become a major nuisance in recent years due to the high increase in population. Apart from causing damages to buildings and infrastructure feral

pigeons poses health risk especially from the bacteria found in their droppings, mites and lice from their feathers usually cause skin rash and allergies in some cases as well.

“From 2019 until to date we have received 10 complaints of feral pigeon infestation with population of birds ranging from 100 to 200 individuals. The role of the MEECC is to provide advice and the way forward to different departments and/or organisations on how to deter pigeons from buildings. They will have to put it in their budgets as this is a continuous programme,” advised Mr Pothin.

The key spots with highest population of feral pigeons estimate for 2020 are: Victoria (350), Perseverance court (250) and Providence (350).

Indian house crows

After reports of two Indian house crows sighted in the port area early January, the conservation section has worked tirelessly to try and eradicate the birds.

“Unfortunately to date we still have not been able to eradicate the birds. In recent months, we have had an increase in reports of the birds being sighted and it is unsure if it is the same birds as they travel long distances. In only two months we have received almost six reports of confirmed sightings. Another invasive species, the Indian crow had been eradicated from Mahé over the years. As a result of increased port activities, their occurrence in Seychelles has been observed on several occasions recently,” noted Mr Pothin.

The MEECC encourages members of the public to urgently report any sighting of the birds through its GREENLINE 2722111 and assist the ministry in locating and eradicating the birds. The public is advised to keep a look on their whereabouts and report to the MEECC if they spot these Indian crows so as to facilitate the eradication campaign. There is currently a R500 bounty if any person successfully captures one (dead or alive).

Vidya Gappy



[Members of the public are being discouraged to feed feral pigeons especially in public areas](#)



[An Indian house crow](#)