

# Bird Droppings - More than just a mess!

## Birds: Two points of view.

Most people regard birds as a necessary and pleasant member of the wildlife community. But there are those that consider these very same birds to be an environmental hazard. These people have dealt with the less attractive side of birds, their droppings.

## Not just an eyesore.

Bird droppings are hazardous to your property. They are highly corrosive and can damage, dissolve or deteriorate nearly any building material. Wood, stone, concrete, marble, steel, copper, aluminum, and shingles are all susceptible. If allowed to accumulate, bird droppings can damage roofs, clog gutters, discolor paint, weaken I-beams

and structural steel, ruin cloth awnings, and short electrical equipment.

## Hazardous to your health.

The most disturbing problem is the dangerous disease causing micro-organisms and parasites that are often found in bird droppings. Entomologist research has identified at least 60 transmittable diseases found in bird droppings, bird nests and on birds themselves. Ironically, it is often the behavior of the bird that contributes to the problem. Pest birds deposit huge quantities of droppings in one year. When combined with their habit of returning to the same roosts year after year, you can end up with conditions that are ideal for disease causing micro-organisms.

## Inhalation and ingestion.

Diseases found in bird droppings are most often transmitted to humans by inhalation and ingestion. When bird droppings dry out, they turn into a powder like substance that, when disturbed, create small clouds of fine dust. When inhaled or ingested, the dust carries the contaminants in the droppings into the body.

## Three common species.

The following tables provide a comprehensive list of transmittable diseases associated with the three most common pest bird species, pigeons, starlings and sparrows. These birds are widespread and are often the source for most pest bird problems.

Bacterial Diseases	Pigeons	Starlings	Sparrows
Erysipeloid	X	X	X
Fowl Typhoid	X		
Infectious Coryza	X		
Listeriosis	X		X
Paratyphoid	X	X	X
Pasteurellosis	X	X	
Pullorum Disease	X		X
Salmonellosis	X	X	X
Spirochetosis	X	X	X
Streptococcosis	X		
Tuberculosis	X		X
Ulcerative Enteritis	X		
Virbriosis			X
Yersinosis	X		X

Mycotic Diseases	Pigeons	Starlings	Sparrows
Aspergillosis	X		
Blastomycosis	X	X	
Candidiasis	X		
Cryptococcosis	X		
Histoplasmosis	X	X	
Sarcosporidiosis			X

Protozoal Diseases	Pigeons	Starlings	Sparrows
American Trypanosomiasis	X		
Coccidiosis	X	X	X
Haemoproteus	X		
Leucocytozoonosis	X		
Toxoplasmosis	X	X	X
Trichomoniasis	X		X

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<b>Reckettsial &amp; Chlamydial Diseases</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Clamydiosis	X	X	X
Piroplasmosis	X		
Q Fever	X	X	

<b>Viral Diseases</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Encephalitis	X	X	X
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	X	X	X
Fort Morgan Encephalitis			X
St. Louis Encephalitis	X	X	X
Venezuelan Encephalitis			X
West Nile Encephalitis	X		
Western Equine Encephalitis	X		X
Meningitis	X		
Newcastle Disease	X	X	X
Pox	X	X	X
Transmissible Gastroenteritis		X	X

<b>Parasitic Cestodes</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Davaubea proglottina	X		
Railletina tetragona	X		
Taeniasis	X	X	X

<b>Parasitic Nematodes</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Capillariasis (3 spp.)	X	X	
Dispharyxiasis	X	X	X
Eyeworm	X		
Gapeworm		X	
Tetramariasis (2 spp.)	X	X	X

<b>Parasitic Trematodes</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Schistosomiasis	X	X	X
Brachylaemus commutatus	X		
Brachylaemus fuscatus	X		
Collyriculum faba		X	X
Cotylurus cornutus	X		
Cryptocoyle convacum	X		
Echinoparyphium paraulum	X		
Echinoparyphium recurvatum	X		
Echinostoma revoltum	X		
Haplorchis pumilio	X		
Hypoderaeum conoideym	X		
Plagiorchis murus	X		
Postharmostomum gallinium	X		
Riberiola ondatrae	X		
Tamerlania bragai	X	X	X

<b>Dermatosis</b>	<b>Pigeons</b>	<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Sparrows</b>
Acariasis	X	X	X

Table data compiled from: *Health Hazards from Pigeons, Starlings and English Sparrows* by Walter H. Weber. Copyright 1979, Thompson Publications. Information reprinted by Nixalite -07/08/05.



**Nixalite® of America Inc.**  
 1025 16th Avenue East Moline, IL. 61244  
 Experts In Architectural Bird Control Since 1950

**Phone:** 800.624.1189 or 309.755.8771  
**Fax:** 800.624.1196 or 309.755.0077  
**Email:** birdcontrol@nixalite.com  
**Web:** www.nixalite.com



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