

# Managing Pigeons

Clifton Boren McReynolds, Admin Associate-Extension

Dr. Dawn Gouge- Medical Entomology Professor & Public Health IPM Specialist- Extension

Dr. Ethan Orr, Associate Specialist, Economic Revitalization and Development – Extension

Anne LeSenne- Assistant Agent, Horticulture Pinal County Office-Extension

## Can Pigeons be Managed without Spikes and Nets?

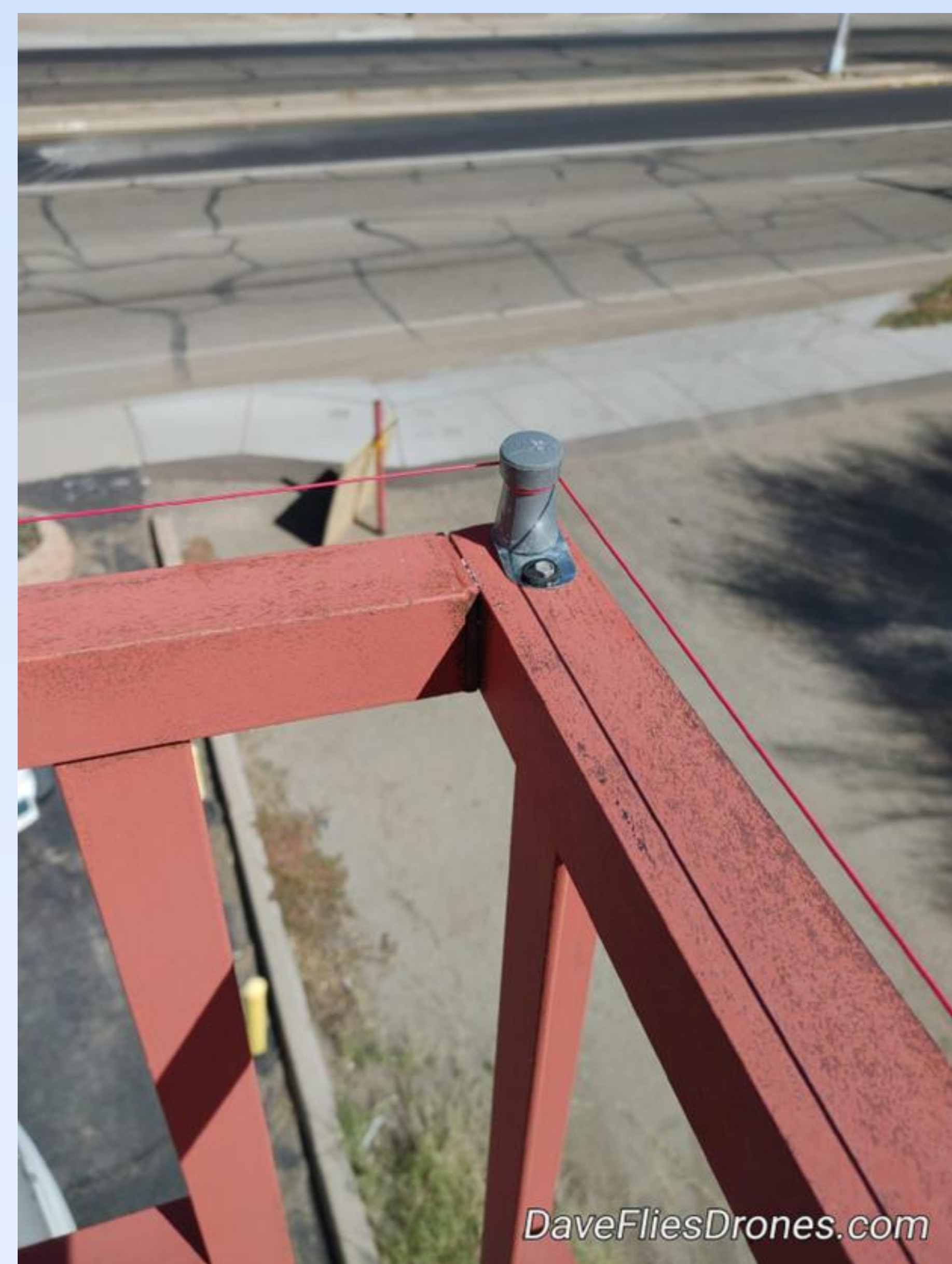
High densities of many species can lead to a public nuisance and increased public health risk. One such example is the pigeon.

The built environment increases defensive space opportunities for small birds to avoid predators and our food waste and irrigation water removes their most important naturally limiting resources. Pigeons are associated with over 60 diseases and cause an estimate \$1.1 billion in damage every year. Numerous tactics to exclude pigeons from an area have been used including spikes, nets, sticky substances, scaring devices, and lasers. All in an attempt to drive pigeons away from public areas.

Birds travel using the magnetic fields of the planet. We observed pigeons approaching commercially deployed electromagnetic exclusion fields to see if reversing the magnetic polarity in a limited area would deter the birds. Our experiment concluded that birds avoid pulsing magnetic fields.

## Spikes and Nets

There are many methods to try and deter pigeons. Methods such as spikes, nets, and lasers have been used with mixed success. They have been very effective in a lot of cases, but can also cause harm to the animals. For every success enjoyed with these methods, there comes along a tenacious bird who will learn to roost among the deterrents.



## Pigeon out and EMPS

An electromagnetic pulse device, provided by "Pigeon Out", that emits a 120 hertz pulse was installed to the perimeter of a building. This created an area where the inside and immediate surrounding area had a rapidly reversing magnetic field. A City of Tucson building where the pigeons had been accumulating for decades was interested in installing the device due to the abundance of food provided by neighbors and increasing number of birds congregating. While the device was active almost all of the birds were deterred from the building. They even avoided the sections of neighboring roofs that were closest to the building housing the installation.

## EMP is Effective

Using the electric magnetic pulse to deter pigeons proved to be highly effective. It did not appear that the birds were harmed. The trends seemed to show that when the pulse stops the birds will reinhabit the area relatively quickly. Controlled experiments are planned to evaluate device effects on honeybees as there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that bees also avoid this kind of constantly reversing electromagnetic field.