**Trapping Methods of the Feral Pigeon in the Central Business District of Butte, Montana

Cody Richardson*, Montana Tech, Butte
Dr. Stella Capoccia, Montana Tech, Butte
Dr. Julie Hart, Montana Tech, Butte

The purpose of this study is to illustrate innovative trapping methods for the successful capture of feral pigeons (*Columba livia*). Our results highlight unique characteristics of the pigeon's behavior that, when harnessed, increase success in trapping frequency and bird numbers and underscore the importance of understanding a species behavior when conducting biological research. Our results came about when conducting a population study of pigeons throughout the central business district (CBD) of Uptown Butte, MT. Through a succession of trial-and-error trapping efforts, we identified two aspects of trapping our target species: 1) minimal information exists on effective trapping protocol for pigeons, and 2) effective trapping protocol was closely tied to specific adjustments that prove effective in a number of different pigeon colonies. While pigeons differ from truly wild animals, insofar as they are a Eurasian species and feral, free-roaming colonies of pigeons offer excellent ecological models for studies that include population models, behavioral studies, handling protocol, and, of course, trapping. Our methods address conventional trapping and tagging techniques as well as innovative procedures and traditional urban point-count surveys. These innovative procedures would help with re-sighting tagged birds within the survey routes. All these methods will collectively provide insight into dispersal, recruitment, foraging and abundance of pigeons.