# Millions to None.

## An Inquiry Lesson of the Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction



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## Overview

The once most numerous species of bird the world has ever known, who's migrations during the springtime would blacken the midday sky. The Passenger Pigeon was rapidly driven into extinction during the late nineteenth century. How could this have happened and what were the main factors in the Passenger Pigeon's demise and eventual extinction?

### Rationale

This inquiry lesson will engage the students to learn the historical attitudes of humans towards the wildlife and environment of the late nineteenth century. The lesson will help students understand how environmental polices evolved to what they are today. Also, this lesson should spark debate on what can be done to improve current environmental policies and ensure a balance between environmental interests and economic necessities.



Destruction of agriculture made them an easy target for kill, practically and justifiably.



"Then the authors of all this devastation began to move among the dead, the dying, and mangled, picking up the pigeons and piling them in heaps. When each man had as many as he could possibly dispose of, the hogs were let loose to feed on the remainder."

- John James Audubon



The Passenger Pigeon's natural characteristics met head on in conflict with America's population and expansion growth, leading to loss of habitat.

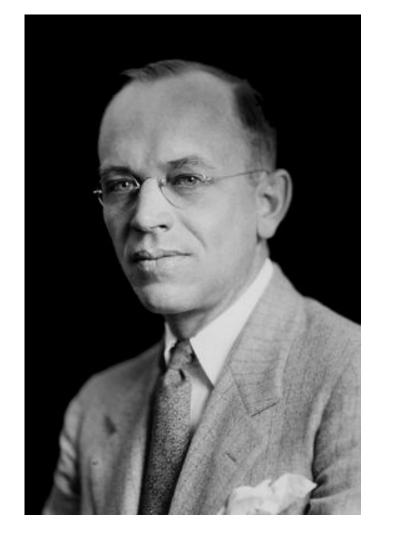


SHOOTING MATCH

Will take place at Sheppard's Inn, as above, on WEDNESDAY, 26th of instant. Upwards of Three Hundred Pidgeons are provided for he occasion, and it is purposed to give Three Prizes as follows :

37 Shooting to commence at 11 o'Clock, before which Hour the Geutlemen wishing to articipate in the Sport, will be required to enter their names, and to comply with such Re-ulations for the government of the Sport, as may be arranged amongst themselves after Binner will be on the Table at 4 o'Clock.

YORK, 16th Sept. 1833. (G. P. Bell, Printer, - Dessier Office, Market-News, Talk



"We meet here to commemorate the death of a species. This monument symbolize4s our sorrow. We grieve because no living man will see again the onrushing phalanx of victorious birds, sweeping a path for spring across the March skies, chasing the defeated winter from all the wood and prairies of Wisconsin."

- Aldo Leopold

#### ON A MONUMENT TO THE PIGEON

"The monument, perched like a duckhawk on this cliff, will scan the wide valley, watching through the days and years. But no pigeons will pass, for there are no pigeons, save only this flightless one, grave in bronze on this rock."

Aldo Leopold was present at the dedication of the Passenger Pigeon Monument on May 11, 1947 and felt compelled to write about it in A Sand County Almanac. He mourned the loss of the passenger pigeon and eloquently expressed his thoughts.

"There will always be pigeons in books and museums, but these are effigies and images, dead to all hardships and all delights. They know no urge of the seasons; they feel no kiss of sun, no lash of wind and weather."

#### Standards

B.12.2 - Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to reasoned conclusion.

**B.12.4** - Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events.

B.12.9 - Select significant changes caused by technology, industrialization, urbanization, and population growth, and analyze the effects of these changes in the United States and the world.

CCSS-RH 2 - Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; providing an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships

