

Crow Panic in Tokyo

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The rapid increase of crows is a serious problem in Japanese urban areas, especially Tokyo. The mass media often take up this matter and claim that the number of crows has risen about four times in the last decade. The incessant screams and droppings of crows annoy people and it is not unusual that crows attack pet cats or dogs and sometimes even human beings. Thus, crows now act wildly in the human society. The causes of this phenomenon are primarily three gifts people give to crows: a safe environment, a large quantity of garbage, and intentional feeding.

A big city separated from nature is a heaven for crows to live in because goshawks or owls, the natural enemies of crow, do not exist in urban areas but in secluded places. The excessive development of human land has separated the nature and the industrial society, and urban areas have become nice habitats not only for human beings but also for crows that are very adaptable unlike other wild animals. At present, crows tend to flock to forests in big artificial parks in Tokyo at night because they can sleep without a fear of encountering their enemy. This safe environment gives crows more chances to produce their offspring than in nature.

The garbage produced by people becomes proper food for crows. Because domestic garbage is dropped at dumps at the regular time to be collected by garbage trucks, clever crows can remember the time and go there every day to eat. Moreover, people often drop snacks on the street, which turn out to be sufficient food for crows. This regular food supply speeds the growth of young crows to have offspring and helps old crows to survive in winter and have the next breeding season.

Human intentional feeding is the most serious cause of this problem. The number of the people who feed crows just for fun does not decrease. Feeding crows is exciting for them because crows easily become attached to them by memorizing the people's features. Also, there are cases of indirect feeding. For example, when someone puts cat food outside, crows will gladly accept it even though the person does not want them to do so. Because they know human feeding is the best way for them to get abundant and high-quality food, wild crows have been gathering more and more around cities.

In conclusion, the number of crows is increasing quickly in large Japanese cities and the causes of this phenomenon are closely related to selfish human attitudes. The more human beings develop their society and produce garbage, the better and longer crows live. Moreover, the unnecessary human feeding may destroy crows' original ecosystem. Thus, the number of crows will not decrease unless people seriously reflect what they have done.