

## Family life

Domestic pigeons like to nest in niches or corners under the roofs of buildings. The female pigeon lays two white eggs. Both parents share the task of brooding: they sit on the eggs to keep them warm. *The eggs hatch* after about 18 days. For the first five days, the chicks are fed on "pigeon milk". The parents produce this "milk" in their *crop*, a part of the throat which they can also use for storing food. Pigeons are the only birds that produce food for their young in their body, just as mammals do. Later the chicks get seeds, which the parents soften in their crop.

After 25 to 30 days, the young pigeons *fledge*. Their father accompanies the fledglings to help them search for food. Meanwhile the mother is often already brooding new eggs. A pigeon couple can have 10 to 12 young per year.



<i>the eggs hatch</i>	die Jungen schlüpfen aus
<i>crop</i>	Kropf
<i>fledge</i>	flügge werden