PROJECT4:Interactions With Non-Humans

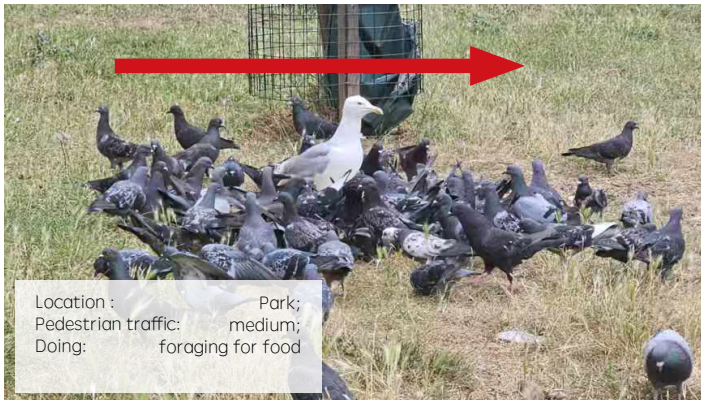
This project treats London street pigeons as non-human “users.” After observing that flocks often gather in busy pedestrian areas, I propose a small edge platform with perches and a water slot to encourage pigeons to rest away from the main walking path and reduce human – pigeon friction.

INSPIRATION

After arriving in the UK, one of the most visible forms of urban wildlife I kept encountering on the street was pigeons. They often appear in groups on sidewalks, squares, and near shop entrances, and they seem remarkably unafraid of people—sometimes walking right next to our feet. This made me curious: as birds that share the city with us, how do pigeons live with and navigate London? What attracts them, where do they choose to stay, and how do they find a sense of safety among traffic and crowds?

PROCESS

Through on-site observation, photography, and simple location marking, I found that pigeons can easily gather in large numbers at certain locations in the city, and these locations are often located in the main passage areas of sidewalks. Especially when there are food scraps on the ground, the pigeons gather faster, in larger numbers, and stay for longer.

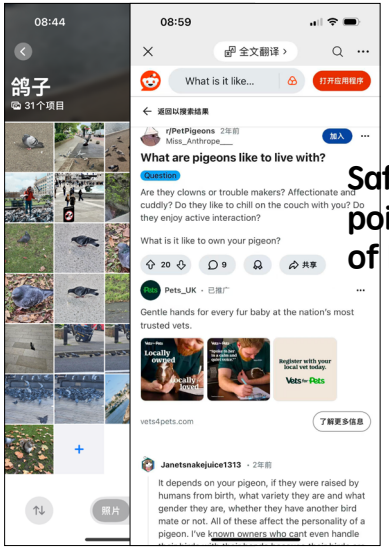


To further confirm, I recorded the location of the pigeon flock, the surrounding pedestrian traffic, and what the pigeons were doing and mark the travel route of the pedestrians.

My observations revealed that pigeons frequently gather and linger in high-traffic areas, causing pedestrians to detour, cross the street, or even shoo them away. This problem isn't simply about "too many pigeons," but rather the overlap between human traffic paths and the pigeons' need to rest in the same space.

Therefore, I tried to design a more suitable edge roosting node for pigeons to rest, drink and move around, so that pigeons have a clearer "resting area" in the city, thereby reducing conflict and improving coexistence.

PROCESS

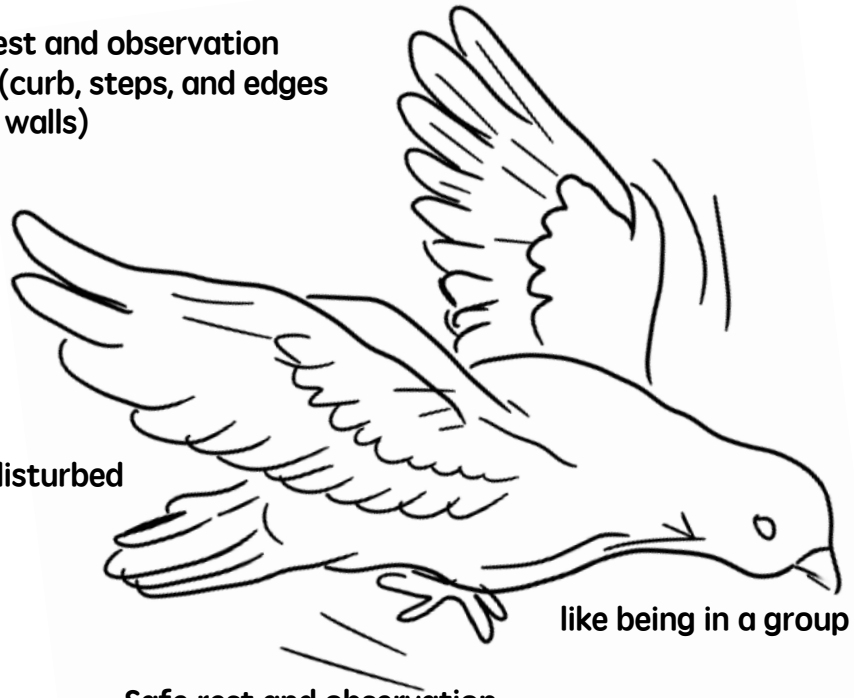


By searching online for experiences from pigeon enthusiasts and observing and recording photos of pigeon behavior, one can guess the pigeons' preferences.

Safe rest and observation points(curb, steps, and edges of low walls)

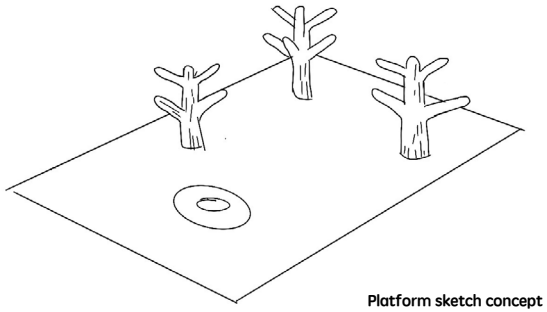
Safe rest and observation points(curb, steps, and edges of low walls)

Will not be disturbed



like being in a group

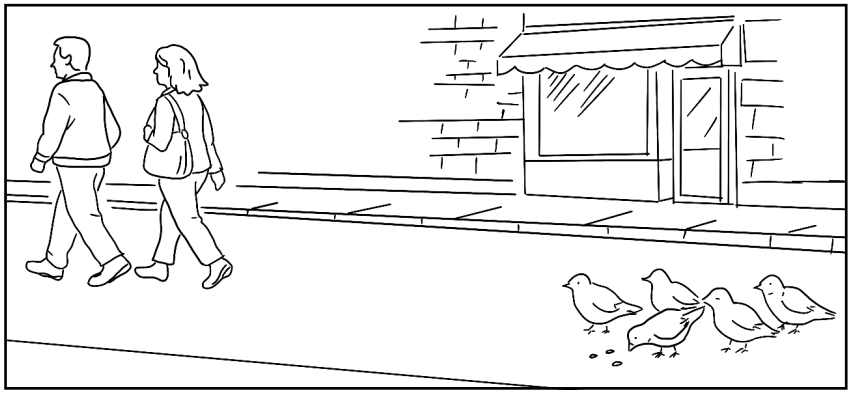
Safe rest and observation points(curb, steps, and edges of low walls)

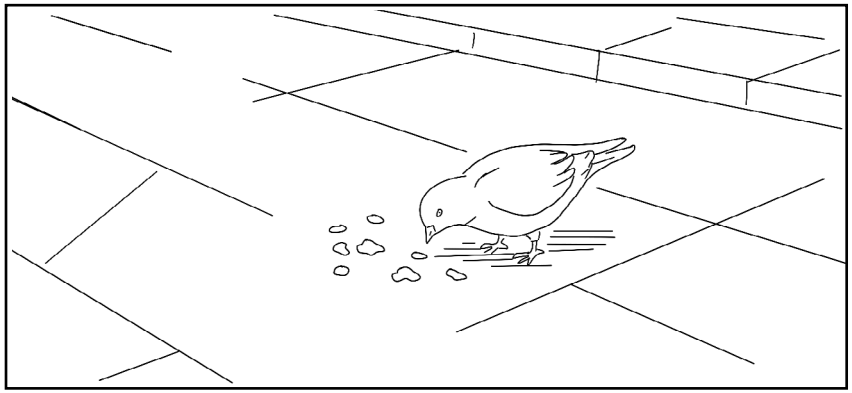


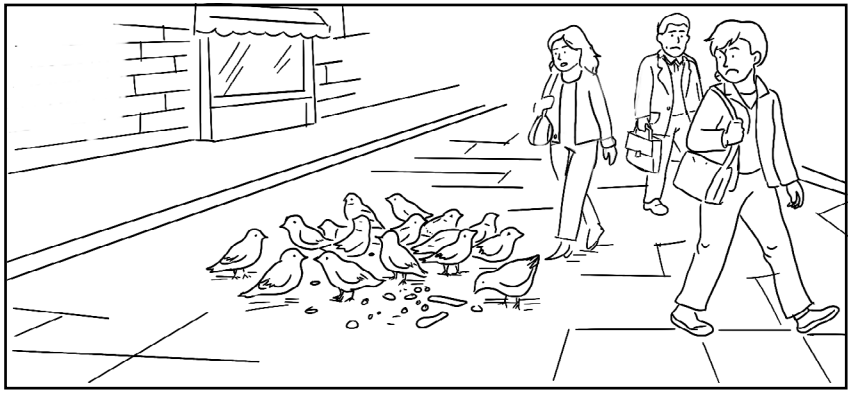
Platform sketch concept

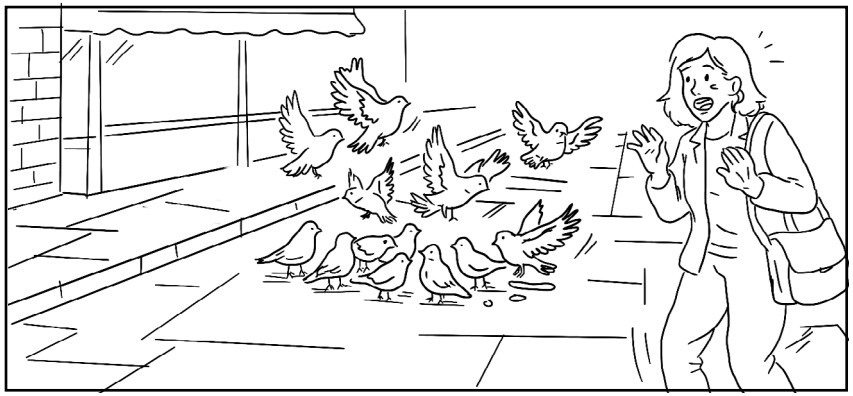
Therefore, I attempted to construct a platform: a raised surface to accommodate the flock, wooden perches to provide observation and standing points, and recessed water sources on the platform to meet their drinking and bathing needs. By making the platform a more comfortable and predictable resting option, the flock can move from the main passage to the edge, thereby reducing detours and chasing cycles.

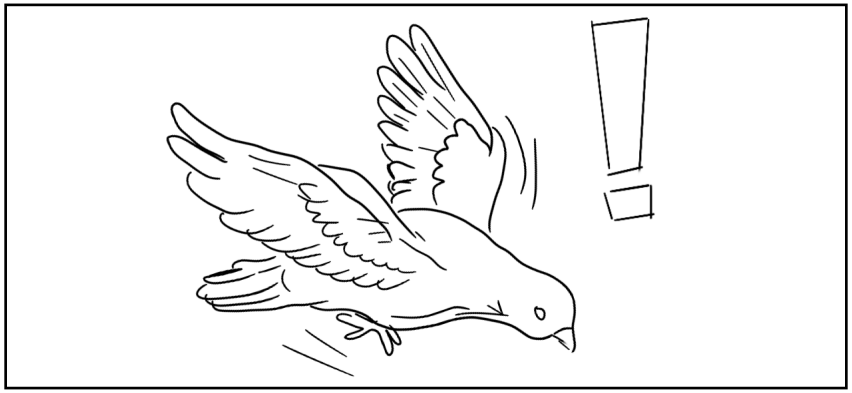
STORYBOARD

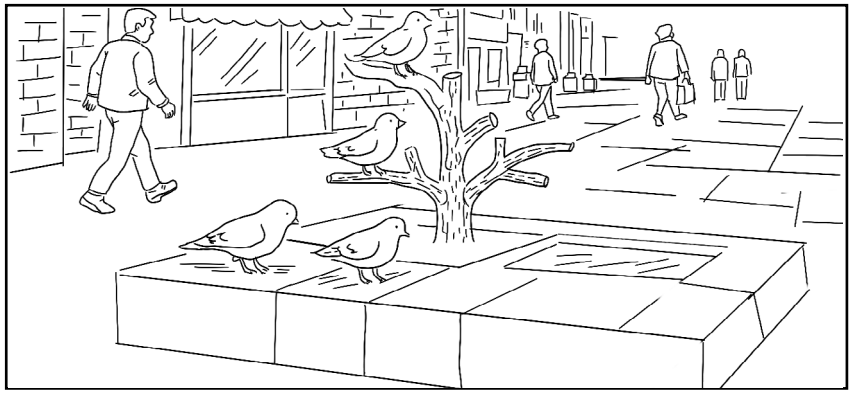












REFLECTION

Looking back on the entire project, my biggest takeaway was realizing that "interactions in the city" don't just happen between people and products, but also between people and non-humans sharing the same space. Initially, I just intuitively felt that the pigeons would obstruct passage, but as I recorded where the pigeons appeared, pedestrian traffic, and the pigeons' current behavior, I began to shift the problem from "too many pigeons" to "interaction friction caused by spatial overlap." This shift made me understand more clearly that the pigeons weren't "causing trouble"; they were looking for resources, resting places, and a sense of security in the city, and the human need for passage happened to conflict with their logic of staying at certain points.