

## **.177 v .22 FOR VERMIN CONTROL**

Following on from Steve's very able article on the merits of the 2 calibres, I would like to put forward my own opinion as to their relative use in vermin control.

As Steve so rightly said the best solution is to have one of each calibre.

.177 because of its much flatter trajectory must be the first choice for all competition work, but it is in the realm of vermin control that I would disagree with its use. There is no argument that the .22 has much more shock effect than the much smaller and lighter .177 pellet. Now the purists will say that you should only take head shots and as such the .177 is just effective. I would have to agree if head shots were always possible. I would defy anyone who has done any amount of vermin control, mainly feral pigeons in a barn at night using lamps, to say that they were always able to take head shots.

A pigeon that has been settled down and roosting for any length of time has its head pulled right down into its body, it is not sitting with its head extended as is described in the shooting magazines, I refer to the recent article in the Air Gunner where a comparison was made using Air Wolf's in both calibres which shows the drawing of the pigeon as I have described. If you have ever shot in barns you will be aware that the roof construction is usually a warren of beams and struts, with the cross over spars being the preferred roosting areas for the feral pigeons. Their heads are not visible and chest shots are the only option, in these instances the .177 is of no use at all. The pellet simply passes straight through the pigeon, but does not drop it. It can and will fly away to be lost in the dark.

### **NO ONE WANTS TO CAUSE INJURY NOT EVEN TO VERMIN**

A .22 especially a hollow point will drop the bird cleanly and prevent it being lost.

Farmers want rid of the feral pigeons as they spread all kinds of diseases to their cattle feed, not to mention the mess they make to their machinery, but they do not want to find dead, or worst still, injured birds all over their barn floor the following morning. For that reason I advocate the use of .22 for this type of vermin control.

Using .177 out on the open fields for rabbit control is an entirely different argument. Here if shooting from ambush, you have more time and are more likely to be able to take head shots so .177 can be just as deadly. For my own point of view as I try not to take shots beyond 35yds I still prefer .22, call me old fashion if you like but that is my preference.

This argument will rage, I think, for as long as people shoot air rifles, but these are my observations for use out in the field.

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