

WILDLIFE TRENDS

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Eurasian Collared-Dove — New Invader of the U.S.

by Dr. Ralph E. Mirarchi



**Eurasian
Collared-Dove**
Streptopelia decaocto

The Eurasian Collared-Dove is showing up at many more locations each year. They are lighter in color and a bit larger than our native Mourning Dove.

Notice an unusual looking dove in your neighborhood or on your dove fields lately? Many Southeastern wildlife enthusiasts have, and they have been calling their state conservation departments and university wildlife programs wanting to find out what they are seeing and what the potential impacts may be on the native dove populations.

Comparisons With Other Doves/Pigeons

This latest invader of Southeastern habitats is the Eurasian collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), a native of the Eurasian subcontinent that includes Pakistan and India. This species is often confused with the ringed turtle dove (*Streptopelia risoria*), or ring-necked dove as most people refer to them, which is a domesticated form of the African collared-dove (*Streptopelia roseogrisea*). The ring-necked dove is also occasionally found living in the wild in the warmer climates of the United States, but its distribution is more spotty and is almost always associated with captive releases in cities and towns where they depend primarily on bird feeders for survival. The ring-necked dove is normally a buff to fawn color with a distinctive white-fringed half collar on the neck, but has often been bred in captivity in the albino (*all white with pink eyes*) form for use in research and the pet trade. It is about half the size of the feral pigeon (*Columba livia*) and slightly larger than the mourning dove (*Zenaid macroura*).

The Eurasian collared-dove on the other hand is larger and grayer than the ring-necked dove, also has a white-fringed half collar on the neck, but is now found much more consistently and frequently throughout the Southeast. Because the Eurasian collared-dove and ring-necked dove are very similar in appearance, it generally takes an ex-

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