

Species: WHITE-WINGED DOVE

Zenaida asiatica

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): September 6, 1974 & Sept. 2, 1974 Time Bird Seen: See below to

Locality: 22 miles due east of Eaton, Colorado

Nearest Town: Eaton, Colorado

County: Weld County

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Dr. Ronald R. Ryder	Dept. of Natural Resources, Colo. St. Univ. Ft. Collins, CO	
Dr. Clait Braun	Colo. Division of Wildlife, Regional Office Ft. Collins, CO	
Dr. Robt. Stabler & Dr. James Enderson	Dept. of Zoology, Colo. College	

Optical Equipment: B&L Bal-scope Sr. 30x

If photographed, type of equipment used: Photographed in captivity by Drs. Ryder & Braun.

Light Conditions: Braun.

Distance from bird (how measured):

Number of Birds Seen: Two Sex: Male (bird collected) Plume: Adult (bird collected)

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

The white-winged doves were first seen on 2 Sept. '74 while hunting mourning doves 22 miles due east of Eaton, Colorado. The place I found to hunt consisted of an abandoned farmhouse surrounded by several elm trees and out-buildings. There was also a windmill that still provided water ~~the~~ for the cattle in the pasture in which the old farm was situated. The overflow from the stock tank provided an attraction for mourning doves, the several rock doves and at least two white-winged doves. The out-buildings were utilized as nesting and roosting areas by the feral pigeons. One (and possibly two) of the white-winged doves flushed from the elm trees along with numerous (8-10) mourning doves on several occasions during the course of the hunting

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

None heard.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Open grassland except for small stand of elm trees in immediate vicinity of abandoned farm buildings. Also, water in this area was provided by a windmill serving an overflowing stock tank.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

Rock doves or feral pigeons: larger size, ~~more~~ wider tail, less tendency to sit on wires (sat on buildings in preference) no white wing patches although several had white primaries.

Mourning doves: Smaller, more buff color (not as reddish as white-winged doves), no wing patches, pointed tail with white towards base of tail rather than tip of tail

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

I have hunted mourning doves (and pigeons or rock doves to a lesser extent) for 16 years. I have also observed, although only briefly and at quite a distance) white-winged doves in their more normal range in southern New Mexico and west Texas.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

Consulted "Birds of North America" by Robbins, et al and the advice of Drs. Ron Ryder and Clait Braun in the positive identification of this bird and its occurrence in Colorado.

This report was written from notes made during _____ after _____ observation; from memory ☒

PRINT NAME: Thomas A. Ray SIGNATURE: Thomas A. Ray DATE: 3 Jan 75

Street Address: P.O. Box 1742 Town and State: Fl. Collins, CO ZIP: 80522

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

For an hour or so between the trees and the waterhole where mourning doves were coming in for their evening watering. On at least a couple of occasions I became aware that at least one of the doves flushing from the elm trees had white wing patches. Finally, late in the afternoon I was able to approach ^{white-winged} a dove in the elm tree. I got within 10 or 12 feet of this dove and although I got a clear look at him for at least two or three minutes before he flushed, I couldn't convince myself that it wasn't a young feral pigeon that had been raised in one of the nearby farm buildings. This dove was noticeably tame. Several of the pigeons at this location were black and white. This was the last sighting I made of one of these unknown birds that day.

Obviously, the thought occurred to me that the birds were white-winged doves but because of the distance from their normal range and because of the presence of the rock doves or feral pigeons, I tried to find an alternative answer in my mind. By coincidence, I had occasion to speak with Non-Game Biologist John Torres of the Colorado Division of Wildlife the next day and after asking him about the occurrence of white-winged doves in Colorado, I became more convinced that what I had seen was a young brown and white feral pigeon which by chance happened to be similar in appearance to a white winged dove. At this point I pretty much put the sighting out of my mind.

On Friday, 6 September 1974 I returned to this same farm house to hunt mourning doves and as I approached the elm trees I again flushed a fair number (6-12) of mourning doves as well as a white-winged dove. By chance, one of the doves I shot as it came out of the tree was a white-winged dove, a fact I did

was only slightly wounded and flew nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ mile before settling into a wheat field. By carefully marking its put-in point and with the aid of my dog, I was able to carefully capture this wounded bird. Because it appeared to be hit by only one BB, I decided to try to save it and I put it in my vehicle on the way back to the farmhouse. Because it was still relatively early (≈ 3 p.m.) I continued to hunt. As I waited in cover by the water hole, I became aware of another odd-looking dove among the mourning doves waiting on the telephone wires prior to coming into the water. The larger size, reddish and more blocky appearance, long-rounded tail and white wing patches clearly separated it from the mourning doves. Its smaller size, color, and general shape and more snappy wing-beat separated it from the rock doves occasionally flying in and out of the abandoned buildings. I was able to watch this second bird, sporadically, for over an hour. On the way out of the area to a more productive hunting area, I was able to observe this dove with a 30X Balscope Sr. as it sat on the wires not more than 15 yards away in perfect light conditions. As I edged closer in the vehicle, this dove flew across the road and landed in a wheat field providing me with an additional close look at his appearance in flight. This bird was clearly a white-winged dove also. It is possible that there were additional white-winged doves in this immediate area but I was not able to confirm this.

Because the dove I shot was identified by several professional biologists, I have purposely eliminated much of the detailed description of these birds. My "collection" of one of these doves should provide a more accurate and positive identification of these birds or at

least one of them, than an identification based strictly on field observations. However, I would rather have relied on observations gained with the naked eye and the aid of my spotting scope as it was not my intention to shoot this unfortunate and obviously mis-placed dove.

I nursed the bird for a month during which time it regained much of its health and became very tame. Because of a partial-unilateral paralysis in one of its legs, I decided against turning it loose and instead gave it to Dr. Robt. Stabler, Dept. of Zoology & Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, who was interested in examining this specimen for possible blood and G-I-tract parasites.

The occurrence of these doves in north-eastern Colorado provides an interesting observation especially when viewed in context with occurrence of two other dove species. It still impresses me that these doves were observed in close proximity to mourning doves and feral pigeons and in fact it may well be that these two wanderers (and perhaps a few others of this same species) were attracted to the refuge of the abandoned farm yard by the mourning doves and rock doves. To be sure they soon learned to utilize the same cover as the mourning doves and also the same water source. In many respects, their behavior closely paralleled that of the mourning doves but yet it was, in retrospect, clearly different. The white-winged doves were much tamer and more solitary.