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EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE

The following account details 25 July 1999 observations of three Eurasian collared-doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) in the City of Rocky Ford, northern Otero County, Colorado.

From information provided on COBIRDS, I drove around the west side of Rocky Ford and observed three different Eurasian collared-doves between approximately 0730 and 0815 with 8x40 binoculars at ranges varying between roughly 50 and 100 feet. One of the doves represented a fresh road-killed specimen which I had hoped to donate to an ornithological collection though was unable to find or purchase a cooler to preserve it. The living birds were observed perched on telephone lines and also in flight.

In comparison to the more common and nearby mourning doves, the subject birds were only slightly longer but noticeable larger (chunkier). Though the tail of the subject birds were white-tipped on the outer edges (as in mourning dove) they were noticeably shorter and fan-shaped in contrast to the long-tapered tail of a mourning dove. The overall color of the subject birds was a warm, light buffy-gray, unlike the earth brown coloration of mourning doves. Along the nape of the Eurasian collared-doves, observations of the namesake thin, dark band forming a half-collar around the neck was evident. Though eye color of Eurasian collared-dove should appear red at close range, I did not observe (or look for) this subtle identification point.

In flight, the primaries of the subject birds appeared dark (very dark gray or charcoal), contrasting with lighter coverts and secondaries. The wing should have a three-toned look in flight, displaying dark primaries, gray outer coverts and secondaries, and tan inner coverts and tertials. I must admit that I did not take that much notice to that trait since I had observed Eurasian collared-doves numerous times before in Texas, Louisiana, and Florida.

In contrast to white-winged dove, the only other large dove (except rock dove) possible to occur in the general area (but also rare), the subject birds lacked the white wing patches, larger extent of dark (black) on the remiges, black lower-cheek slash and blueish eye patch characteristic of white-winged doves.