
January 1997

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Recommended Citation

Mcnair, Douglas B. (1997) "Early Winter Breeding Record of the Eurasian Collared-dove in Northern Florida," *Florida Field Naturalist*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.

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NOTES

Fla. Field Nat. 25(1):22-23, 1997.

**EARLY WINTER BREEDING RECORD OF THE EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE
IN NORTHERN FLORIDA**

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Eurasian Collared-Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) originated in the Old World where breeding between mid-autumn and mid-winter is occasional in Europe (Cramp 1985, Hengeveld 1993) and irregular in India (Rana 1975). Breeding information on the exotic Eurasian Collared-Dove in the Americas is anecdotal and mainly limited to Florida (Smith 1987, Hengeveld 1993, Stevenson and Anderson 1994). Smith (1987; *in litt.*) speculated that Eurasian Collared-Doves in southern Florida probably extend breeding from early autumn through winter, though he provided no data. Stevenson and Anderson (1994) indicate that breeding has not been documented from early autumn to winter. However, C. Jones recently found a nest with eggs in Citrus County on 28 December 1994 (Pranty 1995), and an occupied nest was observed in a live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) in Leon County from 2-26 November 1995 (G. Menk *in litt.*)

Eurasian Collared-Doves have expanded their range along the Gulf Coast of northwest Florida since 1991 (see Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Stevenson and Anderson 1994). The birds are now locally distributed along the coast, including Franklin County, where breeding has been confirmed in at least four localities (McNair, unpubl.). According to area residents, this species first colonized Carabelle in spring 1993; the time of the first breeding attempt is unknown.

I document herein one nesting record of the Eurasian Collared-Dove in late autumn-early winter of 1994-1995 at Carabelle, where this expanding population had been in existence for about two years.

I located an active nest of the Eurasian Collared-Dove along the waterfront of the Carabelle River between the Carabelle Marina and a residence on 8 January 1995. The bulky, trashy platform-nest was 7.6 m high in a 12.8 m tall sand pine (*Pinus clausa*). The pine diameter at breast height was 30.2 cm. The nest was placed in a fork of two branchlets on one of the lowest horizontal branches, 3 m from the trunk and 2.1 m from the edge of the vegetation. The nest was well exposed. The compass direction from the trunk to the nest was 251 degrees.

Two large squabs were in the nest on 8 January, one a bit larger than its sibling. I watched an adult feed the young from 1730-1800 hr. The male cooed softly several times. The nest was empty on 9 January, when I saw only the adults in adjacent areas.

On 18 January, two juveniles were seen 1400-1420 hr, attended by adults. The juveniles looked similar to the adults but were distinguished by the barely noticeable black smudge without a white border on the hind neck, among other characters.

Both adults and juveniles visited feeders in the yard of the residence near the nest-site. This yard also provided trees used for resting and roosting, especially southern magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and Carolina laurel cherries (*Prunus caroliniana*). These species are favored nocturnal roosting sites for the doves elsewhere in the county (McNair, unpubl. data).

Backdating from 9 January when the young fledged and assuming mean incubation and nestling periods of 15 and 16 days, respectively (Goodwin 1983, Cramp 1985), would place estimated onset of egg-laying to be 7 December. The late autumn and early winter

of 1994-1995 was mild and no freezing temperatures occurred until after 18 January. The young had been fledged for nine days.

Seasonal weather patterns and favorable local resources (suitable nest-site, availability of roosting sites, and feeders provisioned with seeds) probably facilitated this late and successful nesting attempt. The long breeding season of this multiple-brooded species undoubtedly favors continued successful expansion of this species' range.

I thank R. T. Engstrom, F. C. James, P. W. Smith, and R. West for their reviews of this note.

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