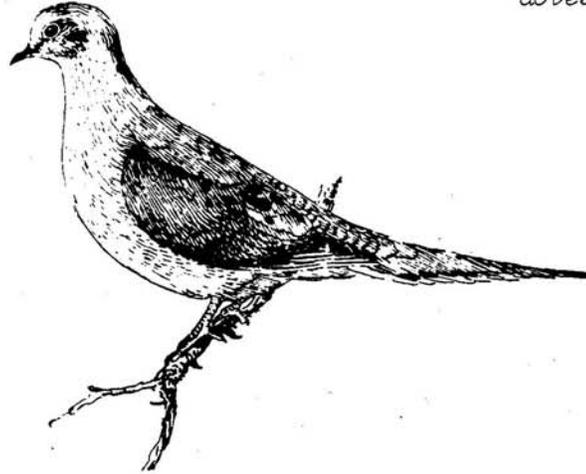


DOVES



In the State of Oregon

The mourning dove (Zenaidura macroura) is present seasonally throughout Oregon. It is the most abundant and has the widest distribution of any game bird in the United States as well as in Oregon. Doves are migratory and most of them have flown south for the winter by mid-September. A very few remain over winter. Doves prefer open agricultural land, desert lands, and range lands.

LIFE HISTORY

Mourning doves begin nesting in May and June in trees, shrubs or on the ground. Orchards are favorite nesting spots. Each pair of nesting doves raises from two to three broods per year, averaging about one young per year per nesting. The usual number of eggs laid per nest is two. Nestlings begin to fly when ten to twelve days old. When the young are three and one-half to four weeks old, they leave the vicinity of the nest to feed and flock with other doves.

HABITAT NEEDS

Food. Doves are primarily seed eaters and prefer to feed in open areas where food is picked up from the ground. One or more of the following choice foods should be available where it is desirable to attract and feed doves during the nesting and hunting seasons. Choice foods include:

Barnyardgrass	Hardinggrass	Rape
Bristlegrass	Millet (foxtail,	Ricegrass
Canarygrass (reed)	Japanese & proso)	Sorghum (grain)
Corn	Pigweed	Sunflower
Fiddleneck	Ragweed	Wheat

Fair foods which are not eaten as readily as choice foods include barley, oats, rye and vetch.

Cover. Little or no cover is required by doves other than for nesting.

Water. Doves will travel four or five miles to obtain water. Good dove shooting often occurs around watering places and long gravel bars of larger streams such as the Willamette River.

MANAGEMENT

In Oregon the hunting season for doves is normally the month of September. Doves are migratory and most of them leave the state during the first two weeks of September. This migration includes doves raised within the state as well as those migrating through from other areas.

In eastern Oregon some of the best hunting is around water. An unharvested strip of wheat left near water can be effective in attracting numbers of doves for hunting.

In western Oregon good hunting is available along gravel bars of large streams such as the Willamette River. Choice foods in fields of 1/4 acre or more will attract doves for hunting. Unharvested wheat left near water could provide excellent dove shooting.

Since doves are migrating through the state and the birds are available for hunting for a relatively short time, shooting can occur as frequently as desired.