

call-note of the Eurasian Collared-Dove for the first time. Within two days, a second Ringed Turtle-Dove appeared, and successfully wooed the first Ringed Turtle-Dove away. Ringed Turtle-Doves now appear infrequently in my backyard, while the Eurasian Collared-Dove is a regular visitor to the backyard feeders. The maximum count for Eurasian Collared-Doves in my yard is four, seen 8 November 2002. Two birds overwintered in 2002-03, and began courtship displays and calls in spring 2003.

In early April 2003, the birds were seen singly, then resumed paired-feeding in late April. A third Eurasian Collared-Dove arrived in early May 2003, but was repeatedly chased from the yard by one of the paired birds. I intermittently saw one, two or three adult Eurasian Collared-Doves throughout this time.

On 29 June 2003, I observed an adult Eurasian Collared-Dove with a juvenile bird. The juvenile bird had bluish feet (not pink) a barely discernible collar, and overall pale coloring. The primaries were not noticeably darker than the rest of the wing. A review of juvenile Eurasian Collared-Dove descriptions in "Birds of Europe" (Mullarney et al. 1999) and a drawing in "Birds of Britain and Europe" (Heinzel et al. 1995) suggested these identifying marks were consistent with a juvenile Eurasian Collared-Dove. The juvenile was observed in the presence of one adult for three days, during which time its feet took on a dark pinkish cast. The juvenile was never observed in the presence of two adult Eurasian Collared-Doves, and was observed feeding alone after three days. On 6 July 2003, a Ringed Turtle-Dove appeared in the yard, seemingly paired with a Eurasian Collared-Dove. Although only paired Eurasian Collared-Doves were seen prior to the juvenile's arrival, the fact that the juvenile was not seen with both parents, and hybridization between the two species often occurs (Romagosa and McEneaney 1999), the

possibility of a hybrid bird cannot be eliminated. According to Romagosa and McEneaney (1997), hybrids exhibit a frustrating combination of field marks, and are best distinguished by undertail pattern and voice. On Ringed Turtle-Doves and hybrids, the black does not extend to the outer web of the outer rectrix, and does not extend distally on the outer tail feathers, as is seen in the Eurasian Collared-Dove (Romagosa and McEneaney 1999). Additionally, even if a hybrid is able to create the three-syllable call, which most cannot, it cannot sustain the call more than once, and will revert back to a combination of the



Adult Eurasian Collared-Dove. 6 July 2003. River Forest, Cook County. Photo by Jill Anderson.

two calls on its second attempt (Romagosa and McEneaney 1999).

The juvenile bird has not been seen since 9 July 2003. Considering that Eurasian Collared-Doves are capable of raising multiple broods per year when food sources are predictable (Romagosa and McEneaney, 1999), the likelihood of witnessing additional nesting successes at this location, as well as hybridization, is high.

The Eurasian Collared-Doves are frequently observed feeding with Mourning Doves, although no trans-species courtship behavior was noted in 2003. There has been concern that Mourning Dove populations will decrease as Eurasian Collared-Doves become established. This trend has not yet been observed in my backyard. The year 2003, in fact, was a banner year for Mourning Doves, with 33 adults observed in early spring and more than 15 juveniles observed in June.

The habitat in my suburban neighborhood consists of mature trees, phone/electrical lines, and a railway embankment bordering the back of residential properties. The Eurasian Collared-Doves favored power lines, an oak tree and a large pendulous spruce tree as frequent perching spots. A nest was never located although the birds entered the yard from the north, in the vicinity of the spruce.

Eurasian Collared-Doves were noted to successfully breed within two years of establishing new sites in Europe (Smith 1987). This time frame is consistent with my backyard observations. I only hope that Smith (1987) is wrong when he refers to the Eurasian-Collared Dove as "the new grey starling", as I expect to study more juveniles, as well as hybrid *Streptopelia*, in the near future.

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