



## Doves and Pigeons of Alice Springs Identification Sheet

### Invasive



### Spotted Turtle-Dove, *Streptopelia chinensis*

**Key ID features:** Black neck band, with white spots. No crest. Red-brown eye. No distinct eye-ring. Large (30 – 33 cm). Head grey, tinged pink. Underparts pinkish-fawn. Outer tail feathers tipped white. Pink legs.

**Voice:** cooing, 'curoo, curoo'.

**Nest:** Poor, feeble, disorganised scrape of sticks. Often nests in palms, on ledges, and tree branches.

**Information:** Feral Spotted Turtle Doves first became established in Alice Springs in the early 1990s when approximately 10 birds were liberated from a backyard aviary and the population has steadily grown since then. Spotted Turtle Doves are domesticated birds that are highly suited to life in urban areas. They are able to breed all year round and compete with native species for shelter and nesting sites. Keep dense plants well-trimmed and maintained, inspect your property regularly for nesting activity, destroy their nests and eggs (seek a second opinion on identification if you are unsure). Spotted Turtle-doves will eat a wide variety of items including seeds, pet food and household scraps. Native birds in Alice Springs now have to compete with this highly adapted and aggressive species for food. Feral doves can be a nuisance around aviaries, fowl yards and pet feeding areas, where they scrounge for scraps and other food items. High concentrations of droppings deposited around these sites not only increase cleaning chores, but may pose a health hazard. You can help to manage this species by preventing access by feral birds to pet food, covering chicken pens to prevent access to Spotted Turtle-doves.

## Native



**Crested Pigeon, *Ocyphaps lophotes***

**Key ID Features:** Long black upright crest. (Note: crest is held down flat along neck in flight). Red eye-ring. Yellow-orange eye. Grey body. Black bars on wings and a metallic green to purple patch. Tail tip white. Pink legs. Similar size to Spotted Turtle-dove (size: 31 – 36 cm). No neck bar.

**Voice:** 'whoop' or low 'coo'. Wings sound in flight.

**Nest:** Delicate nest twigs placed in a tree or dense bush.



**Peaceful Dove, *Geopelia placida***

**Key ID Features:** Blue eye & eye-ring. Crown grey-brown with fine black streaks. Forehead & throat blue-grey. Breast, back & wings all barred black. Back, wings grey-brown/buff-toned. Belly blue-grey. Legs light pink & barred. Smaller in size than a Turtle-dove (20 – 24 cm), with a 'dumpy' body shape.

**Voice:** 3 note 'woodle-oo', descending 'woorr'

**Nest:** Flimsy platform of thin sticks, roots and coarse grass placed in trees or shrubs.

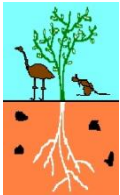


**Diamond Dove, *Geopelia cuneata***

**Key ID Features:** Red eye & eye-ring. Smoky-brown back & wings. Fine white wing spots. Blue-grey head & breast. White/pale belly. Smallest of the Alice Springs doves/pigeons (size 19 – 24 cm). Slender, thin body shape. Long thin tail. No obvious wing-barring. Pale pink legs.

**Voice:** Flute-like slow 'coo-ah' 'coo-coo-ah'.

**Nest:** Flimsy platform of grass stems and fine twigs, placed in a low shrub or scrubby tree.



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