



Male Cape dove

What is a Dove Club?

by John Pire, Vice President
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The idea or theme behind this article is to introduce and to pique your curiosity into the "dove fancy" through a "dove club."

In today's world of aviculture there are numerous bird clubs. Look at the bird club listings in the back of the major bird magazines. You will find local bird clubs, national bird clubs and international bird clubs.

There are clubs for every kind of bird you can think of. Some clubs are all-bird clubs, devoted to numerous species of birds. Some are specialty clubs, devoted to a particular bird species.

"International Dove Society" is one such club. We are a specialty club, devoted to promoting doves. We are also an all bird club, devoted to promoting all species of doves and wild exotic pigeons. I.D.S. is a very active and rapidly growing dove club devoted exclusively to the breeding, exhibiting and preservation of the various species of doves and wild exotic pigeons.

This club was formed in 1984 by a group of dove fanciers from the Houston, Texas metropolitan area. The name "Doves of Texas" was chosen. Soon after, we began setting up an exotic dove display at area bird shows. We also entered our doves into competition. Many people at these shows were amazed at all the different types of doves. The only drawback was in our name. The first question asked was: Are these doves native to Texas? It didn't

take our club officers very long to figure out that something was needed to help define our club name. "A National Dove Club" was added to our existing club name. Even with the added words, it was still apparent that the people were still being confused.

With the continued interest and growth of the club, both nationally and internationally, a new and less restrictive name was needed for the club. The officers and board of directors discussed and approved a name change for the betterment of the club. They chose "International Dove Society" as the new name. They also secured non-profit incorporation status and copyright status for the name and club logo.

I.D.S. publishes a very informative monthly newsletter. The newsletter will keep you abreast of the latest in aviary construction for doves, nesting requirements of the different species of doves, nutritional information and the latest developments regarding cage bred doves and their color mutations. There is an ad section in each issue of the newsletter for members to assist them in selling or purchasing doves. A Breeders Directory is published yearly for the benefit of its members. The club also exchanges newsletters with many other dove, pigeon and bird clubs throughout the country, Canada and overseas.

A short message about the dove fancy; the different species of doves range in size from the diamond dove (smallest) to the Victorian crowned

pigeon (largest). Next time you are at the local zoo check to see what types of doves and exotic pigeons they have in their bird collection.

Most of the doves are a somber color, but if you ever see the various species of fruit pigeons you will be amazed at their colors. Look at our own mourning dove; in the sunlight you will see just how beautiful its colors really are. The band-tailed pigeon, native to the U.S., is perhaps the most colorful of our native U.S. doves and wild pigeons.

Have you ever seen a pair of masked (Cape) doves building their nest? It is amazing to watch the male hover like a hummingbird, before landing lightly on his mate's back to hand her the piece of nesting material. Have you ever seen the excellent care the parent doves show to their newly hatched young? The way in which the young doves chase their parents when they are hungry, reminds me of my own children pestering me for money to go to the store.

Many people have a pair of doves in their mixed aviaries, but soon tire of them. This could be due to the fact that this pair of doves never raise any young. Could this pair be a true pair? Doves can even fool the best of the dove experts, two females can act just like a true male and female. If you foster eggs to these birds, they will and usually hatch and raise the young just as a true pair.

Some species of doves and exotic pigeons are sexually dimorphic. That is, males and females can be determined at first glance. It is the doves and exotic pigeons which show no dimorphism that tend to be a challenge to the fancier.

There is no extra work, special care or special cage requirements needed to keep and raise doves. Not any more than is required for any other species of bird. I sometimes find keeping the doves easier than the other birds. I don't have to prepare color food for the different colors in diamond doves. I don't have to mix up special soft food formulas for the parents to feed to their young. Just in case you don't have a security entrance on your flights, if a dove does happen to fly past your head, ninety-eight times out of a hundred the dove will be back trying to get in the flight within the hour.

Even if you only own a single white ringneck dove as a pet, contact the dove club which will help you find out how exciting and beneficial it can be to keep and raise doves and wild exotic pigeons.

Please contact: International Dove Society, c/o Secretary of Membership, Department WB, 2507 3rd Avenue North, Texas City, Texas 77590. ●