

# Barbary Doves

by Jack Clinton-Eitniew  
San Antonio, Texas

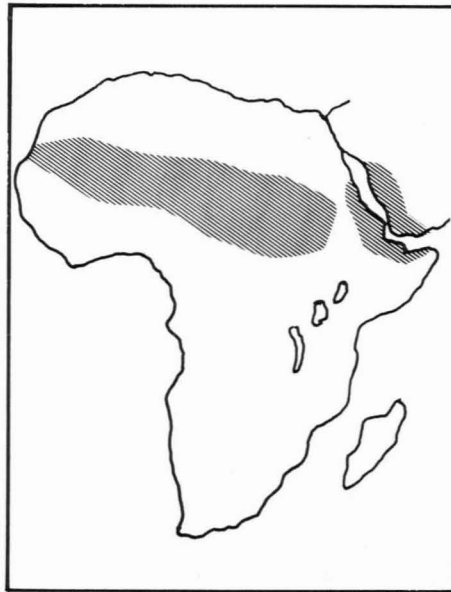
Seldom does an individual remain active in aviculture without having at least one pair of what is frequently incorrectly called "Ringnecked" Doves. While the Barbary Dove is actually a domesticated form of the African Collared Dove (*Streptopelia roseogrisea*), lack of agreement exists regarding whether the species should be treated as *S. risoria* or a race of *S. roseogrisea*.

The African Collared Dove inhabits arid thorn scrub of north Africa. Feeding upon grass seeds, it consumes large quantities of berries if water is not present. Nesting, voice and display is similar to that of the domesticated form.

About half the size of the common feral pigeon, the Barbary Dove has been propagated, through selective breeding, in numerous mutations. A creamy buff color originated from selectively breeding the recessive mutation from the wild form. A white variety is also commonly encountered as are a variety of other

## Range of African Collared Dove (*Streptopelia roseogrisea*)

From "Pigeons and Doves of the World"  
Derek Goodwin, editor  
Cornell University Press, 1983, 3rd edition



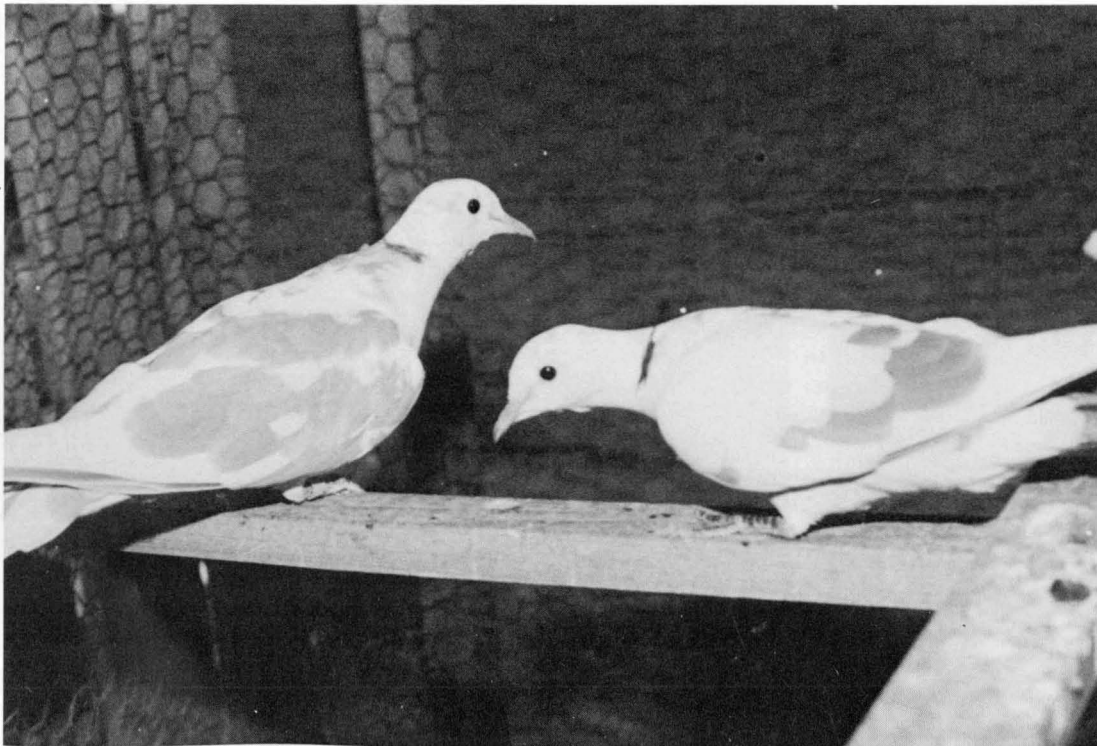
colors including what is referred to as "rosy" and "peach." Back-crossing the domesticated form with the wild form has allowed the wild color to also become available.

In the wild, the African Collared Dove nests in trees and bushes often quite low to the ground. In captivity, Barbary Doves will lay in any tray, bowl, open box or even the floor of their cage! Two white eggs, the first usually laid in the evening and the second in the morning, completes the clutch. The incubation period is 14 days. In the Sudan, breeding occurs from January to June. In captivity, breeding continues throughout the year. Barbary Doves are frequently used to cross-foster even the larger pigeons such as Pink Pigeons and Fruit Doves.

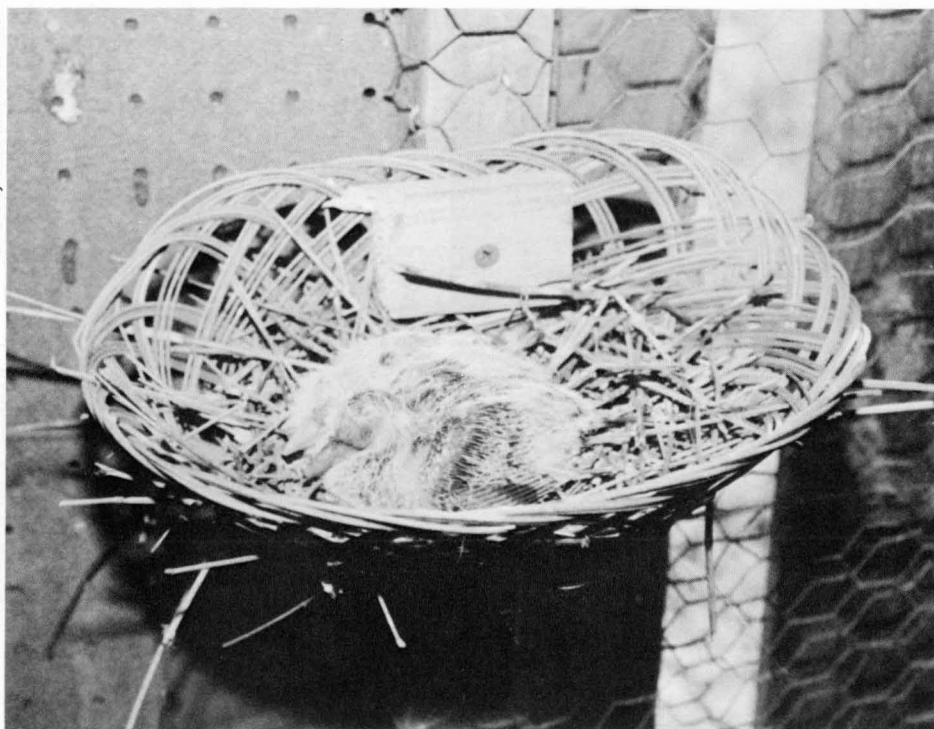
John Pire, a noted Texas dove breeder, recommends maintaining them in at least a 2' x 2' cage and provide a diet including a good pigeon mix, fresh vegetables, black-eyed peas and dog food. John mentioned recently that some inbreeding has occurred and has resulted in some birds having misformed toes.

Individuals with an interest in doves or wanting to add a soothing cooing to their aviary "ambiance" should consider purchasing a pair of Barbary Doves. Often considered a good beginner's bird, after over 20 years of maintaining birds, it is one with which I have not yet been able to part.

Photo by Jack Clinton-Eitniew



Male (right) Barbary Dove exhibiting a "bowing display" to the nearby female (left). The completed display consists of the male bowing deeply so that the bill is at right angles to the ground at the lowest point of the bow.



Young "squab" Barbary Doves in their loose stick nest. The domesticated Barbary will nest throughout the year. Its ancestor, the African Collared Dove, nests only in the spring or when food and water is available.

#### Recommended Reading

*Pigeons and Doves of the World.* Derek Goodwin, Cornell University Press, 1983.  
A discussion of Ringneck Dove genetics. *Amer-*

*ican Pigeon Journal*, July 1971, page 348.  
Observations on Barbary Doves kept at semi-liberty. Derek Goodwin, *Avicultural Magazine*, 1952, Vol. 58, pages 205-219. ●



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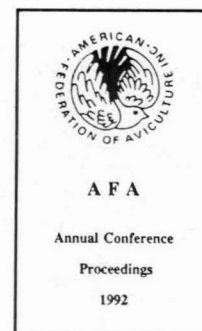
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