



RINGED TURTLE DOVE

COLUMBIFORMES
Family: Columbidae
Genus: *Streptopelia*
Species: *risoria*



Range: Found world wide - possibly originally from Africa or Asia

Habitat: Found nearly world wide, domesticated early.

Niche: Arboreal, diurnal, herbivorous

Wild diet: Seeds, grain, fruit and insects

Zoo diet: Seeds, eggs, mealworms, fruit, greens

Life Span: (Wild) 12 years

(Captivity) max. 20 years

Sexual dimorphism: Females are duller in color than males.

Location in SF Zoo: Children's Zoo - Koret Animal Resource Center

APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

Very pale beige color, the Ringed Turtle Dove is smaller and slimmer than the rock dove or domestic pigeon. It has a small head and short neck with narrow black semi-collar on the hind neck. The tail is moderately long and rounded with white at the comers. The body under-parts are usually creamy and much lighter than upper parts. The eyes are dark with reddish glints. The bill is light brown, dainty and slightly down curved. In flight dark primary feathers show up in marked contrast to light color of the wings when the bird is at rest. The feet are light rose, as with other doves, both legs and toes are short and anisodactyl.

All columbidae can drink by immersing their bill and sucking up liquid; they don't have to raise their head to swallow, as do other birds.

Weight: 4.2 – 4.5 oz

Length: 10 – 12 in

Wingspan: 19.7 in

STATUS & CONSERVATION

This is a domestic bird and has no special status.

COMMUNICATION AND OTHER BEHAVIOR

Low cooing voice. Not so mournful as that of the mourning Dove. The voice is described as a low purring, cooing sound, which rises, then drops in pitch. The coo of the ringneck dove is created by muscles that vibrate air sent up from the dove's lungs. These muscles belong to the fastest known class of vertebrate muscles, contracting as much as ten times faster than muscles vertebrates use for running. This class of muscles is usually found in high-speed tissue such as a rattlesnake's tail. Ringneck doves are the first bird species to have been found to have this class of muscle.

Doves are swift flying and will bob their heads when walking. They are colonial and non-migratory.

COURTSHIP AND YOUNG

This bird builds nests in trees, making a frail stick platform. Their pair and parental relationships are not fundamentally different from those of other doves. The difference is that this dove is exceptionally docile and easy to handle in confined quarters. Usually two white eggs are laid and incubated by both parents for a rather loosely - stated time, two to three weeks. Both the male and the female take turns brooding the hatchlings and feeding "pigeon's milk". This consists of liquid produced in the parent's crop and regurgitated into the chick's beak.

Incubation: 2-3 weeks by both parents	Sexual Maturity: 5 – 7 mos
# of eggs: 2	Fledging: 12 – 14 days

MISCELLANEOUS

Members of the Columbidae family have been known to man since very remote times. The old testament of the Bible contains more than one reference including "The voice of the turtle was heard in the land". It is believed that this line indicates the return of the dove as heralding the coming of spring, with its attendant blossoming of all forms of life. The first five words of the above quoted phrase were used as the title of a stage play written in the mid-twentieth century. There are many other legends relating to doves or pigeons in general. Noah sent one out from the Ark during the Flood, Julius Caesar dispatched one from Gaul with news of his conquest, the news of Napoleon's downfall was brought from Waterloo. In World War I a pigeon named "Cher Ami" (dear friend) brought help for a "lost battalion" in the Argonne Forest. Today, amateur pigeon racing is a popular hobby.

Sources:

Grzimek, 1984;

Nature Trail Handbook, 1998

http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Streptopelia_risoria.html

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