

# Mourning Dove

## March 7, 2007

<b>Scientific Name:</b>	Zenaida macroura
<b>Size:</b>	Mourning Doves are between 9 and 13 inches. Their wingspan is 15-18 inches.
<b>Habitat:</b>	Mourning doves like farms, small towns, open woods, scrub, roadsides and grasslands.
<b>Identification:</b>	A Mourning Dove is a long, slim, gray-brown bird with a small head and a long, pointed tail.

### Fascinating Facts:

- The Mourning Dove is well-known for its low, cooing, "mournful" vocalization, primarily repeated by unmated males, but sometimes given more faintly by females.
- During nest-building, the female stays at the nest and the male collects sticks. He stands on her back to give her the nest material. She takes it and weaves it into the nest. Maybe that's why the nests are so poorly built!
- The Mourning Dove almost invariably lays two eggs. Clutches of three or four are the result of more than one female laying in the nest. A dove may have up to five or six clutches in a single year.
- A Mourning Dove pair rarely leaves its eggs unattended. The male usually incubates from midmorning until late afternoon, and the female sits the rest of the day and night.
- The Mourning Dove is the most widespread and abundant game bird in North America. Despite being hunted throughout most of its range, it remains among the 10 most abundant birds in the United States

