



Photo by John N. Felsher

Angie Cogland shows off a dove she shot near Faunsdale.

DOVES: Hunters getting bonus with collared doves

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Alabama including Mobile and Baldwin counties. White-winged doves resemble mourning doves, but exhibit bold white wing patches that make very distinctive identification marks in flight. Sportsmen can shoot white-wings during the regular dove season, but they must include them in their daily limit of 15 birds in any combination.

However, sportsmen get a bonus species. Native to south Asia, Eurasian collared doves arrived in Florida during the 1980s and spread out from there. Larger than mourning doves, collared doves grow nearly as large as park pigeons. The distinctive black collars around their necks and squared tails provide the best identifying features on these lighter-colored birds.

Collared doves tend to stay near places with human habitation, such as barns, grain silos, parks and even urban areas. In Alabama, sportsmen can shoot Eurasian collared doves all year long without limit. During dove season, collared doves do not count in the 15-bird daily bag.

Mourning doves generally like open fields, croplands and brushy pastures with scattered tall trees, fence-rows, high wires or other places that create perching areas where they can watch for predators. Agricultural lands provide excellent food sources for doves. The diminutive birds primarily eat small seeds including sunflower, millet, sesame seeds, wheat and many native grass seeds. Doves may

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