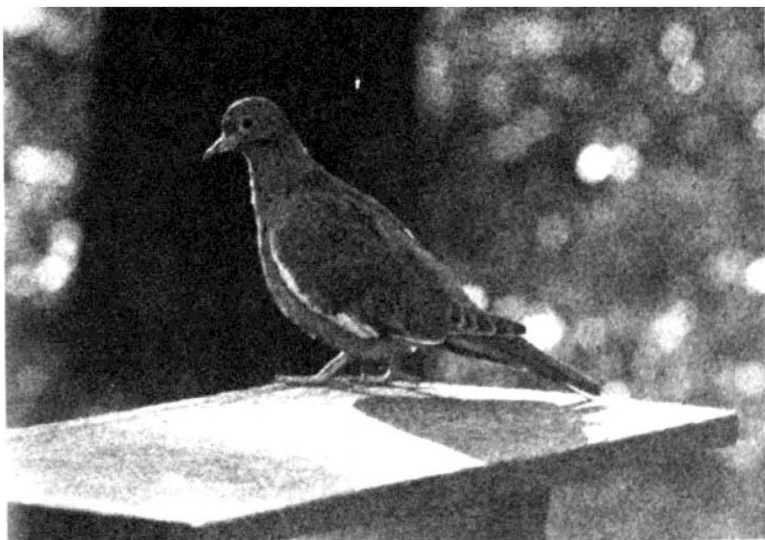


WHITE-WINGED DOVE: A NEW BIRD FOR OKLAHOMA

BY MIKE BREWER

My home within the city limits of Pauls Valley, in Garvin County, Oklahoma, lies less than a half mile from the tree-lined Washita River bottoms in one direction and Rush Creek in another. Uplands in this part of south-central Oklahoma support open postoak (*Quercus stellata*)—blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*) woodlands interspersed with bluestem prairie. My backyard borders on these undisturbed savannas. For several years, I have maintained at least one wooden, glassed-in bird feeder in the yard as well as a small pond edged with flat rocks. Numerous species visit the feeder, particularly during fall and winter.

One day in mid or late November 1986, I noticed a brownish-gray bird on the ground near the feeder that I took to be a Mourning Dove (*Zenaida mac-*



WHITE-WINGED DOVE

*Note the white edging of the forward edge of the wing, the white tail-corners, and the black spot below and behind the eye. Photo taken by Mike Brewer in December 1986 at Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.*

*roura*). Upon looking more closely, though, I noticed that a conspicuous white border skirted the leading edge of its wing. Too, the tail was shorter than a Mourning Dove's, more "squared-off," and showed white at the corners, a trait particularly evident in flight. From as close as 20 feet, my 7 × 42 binoculars revealed still other differences. I could detect no iridescence on the bird's head, but did see a small black spot below and slightly behind its eye. Its dorsal plumage and upper wing surfaces were browner and darker than the underparts, which were grayer and more "clay-colored." Only evident when the bird was flying directly away was a distinct rust color that permeated the upperparts. The legs were pinkish-red, the bill light blue with darker overtones. This bird's most striking feature, however, was displayed only when it was airborne: the entire proximal half of each wing showed clear white. Not once did I hear the bird make a sound of any sort.

At least every other day until late December, the strange dove returned to my yard, usually about mid-morning, sometimes in the afternoon. It frequently perched atop the sunflower seed feeder, but never did I see it feed there. Instead, it searched for food on the ground nearby and frequently drank at the little pool. At various times during the day, I could find it perched quietly among the open branches of some tree within sight of the yard. Although weather conditions varied considerably during this period, it was generally cool. I did, however, record a minimum temperature of 28°F (-2°C) and a maximum of 60°F (16°C). In addition, up to five inches (130 mm) of precipitation were received in the area while the dove remained.

Two friends, Brian Gardner and Oscar Pack, also observed this unusual bird and independently concurred with my identification. I took several photographs of it that are on file at the Cameron University Museum of Zoology (CUMZ 1000), one of which is reproduced here as the cover photo. It was a White-winged Dove, *Zenaida asiatica*. This species is common in the Rio Grande River Valley and the plains of south Texas, north at least to Bexar County; there are a few sight records for the Texas Panhandle (Texas Ornithological Society, 1984, The T.O.S. checklist of the birds of Texas, 2nd ed., Austin), and a specimen from north-central Texas (Stangl, F.B., and W. Pulich, 1987, Texas J. Sci. 39:288-9).

Although the possibility that this dove was an escape cannot be unequivocally ruled out, there are three prior sightings in Oklahoma: on 3 July 1969, Jerry Sturdy and Roy Frye saw a single bird near Willow in Greer County, southwestern Oklahoma (Sturdy and Frye, 1970, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc. 3:31-32). On 27 September 1970, Don Turvey observed one flying with Mourning Doves 4 miles south and 5 west of Blackwell in Kay County, north-central Oklahoma (The Scissortail, 20(4):61, 1970). Another was sighted by Jimmy W. Tinsley on 13 June 1973, 3 miles east of Eldorado in Jackson County, southwestern Oklahoma (Sutton, G. M. [1982], Species summaries of Oklahoma bird records, Oklahoma Mus. Nat. Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman). However, the present paper, with accompanying photograph, represents the first documented record for the state, and elevates *Zenaida asiatica* from hypothetical status to a place on the official list of Oklahoma birds.