

EST.  2015

WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE®

QUARTERLY UPDATE

•
JUNE 2020



*We are delighted to
welcome the Alaska
Department of Fish and
Game to the Wild
Harvest Initiative®
Partnership Alliance!*

Mourning Doves fare very well in human-altered habitats. Numbers are thought to have increased greatly with increasing settlement of North America.

Harvest Profile – Pigeons and Doves

Harvest in the United States and Canada

The Wild Harvest Initiative® Database reports seven distinct species of pigeons and doves that are harvested in the US and Canada: Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*), Barred Dove (*Geopelia maugei*), Eurasian Collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Spotted Dove (*Spilopelia chinensis*), White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) and White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*).

Pigeons and doves are widely harvested in the US, with 41 states reporting harvest figures. Conversely, in Canada, these species are only

harvested in one province: British Columbia.

Between 2014 and 2016, a total of 35,098,446 pigeons and doves were harvested in the US and Canada. This includes 18,081,177 in 2014/15 and 17,017,269 in 2015/16. This represents a live weight of 9,751,479 pounds harvested from 2014 to 2016, or a dressed weight of 6,509,671 pounds.

In terms of what this means for food, this harvest represents 4,960,663 pounds of consumable pigeon and dove meat harvested in this two-year period, or an average of 2,480,331 pounds per year. Overall, this translates to a total of 13,228,433 meals (based on a 6-oz serving) or 6,614,217 meals annually.

Conservation Status

Of the seven harvested species of pigeons and doves reported in the WHI database, four are native to North America: the Mourning Dove, Band-tailed Pigeon, White-winged Dove and White-tipped Dove; while three were introduced: the Eurasian Collared-dove, the Barred Dove and the Spotted Dove.

Of these birds, the Mourning Dove is probably the most recognized and is one of the most abundant and wide-ranging bird species in North America. This is largely owing to its ability to effectively adapt and thrive in human-altered environments. Indeed, it is estimated that their numbers have in fact increased as human settlements on the continent have grown.



Species Profile: Mourning Dove

- Scientific name: *Zenaida macroura*
- The Mourning Dove is one of the most plentiful bird species in North America. The US population is estimated at 350 million.
- Mourning Doves are found in a variety of ecosystems across the US. They are often spotted on the bare ground, in fields or on overhead branches and telephone wires.
- The birds get their name from the tell-tale ‘mourning’ call they make by puffing up their throat.

Mourning Doves are also prolific breeders, hatching up to six nests a year, enabling them to achieve substantial population growth year-on-year. It is estimated that the population of Mourning Doves in the US alone totals 350 million.

Remembering the Passenger Pigeon

When considering the conservation status of North American pigeons and doves, it is important that we recall the now extinct passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*). This species was once thought to be the most abundant bird species in North America and possibly the world, with

a population numbering in the billions. It would travel in large flocks, resembling clouds of thunderous wing beats, which would blot out the sky as they flew overhead. As a blossoming commercial industry for passenger pigeons emerged, however, this species began a downward spiral towards extinction and by the late 1890s their populations were estimated to have plummeted to just a few thousand. The last known passenger pigeon died in 1914.

It has been widely acknowledged that over-hunting, driven by the belief that such an abundant species could never

be overexploited, ultimately led to the extinction of this bird. While the loss of the passenger pigeon represents a true tragedy, its demise has been recognized as a spark that ignited contemporary conservation efforts in North America, spurring the first wildlife-protection law in the US, which prohibited interstate shipping of unlawfully harvested game.

The history of the passenger pigeon should be a strong reminder of the importance of well-regulated hunting and a sustainable conservation model that is built on science-based policy decisions and a respect for all wildlife.

Pigeon and Dove Harvests in the United States and Canada <small>(2014/15-2015/16)</small>			
	Live Weight of Harvest	Consumable Weight of Harvest	Number of Meals (based on 6-oz serving)
	9,751,479 lbs	4,960,663 lbs	13,228,433

Figure 1: Pigeon and Dove Harvests in the US and Canada by Weight and Number of Meals (2014-16)

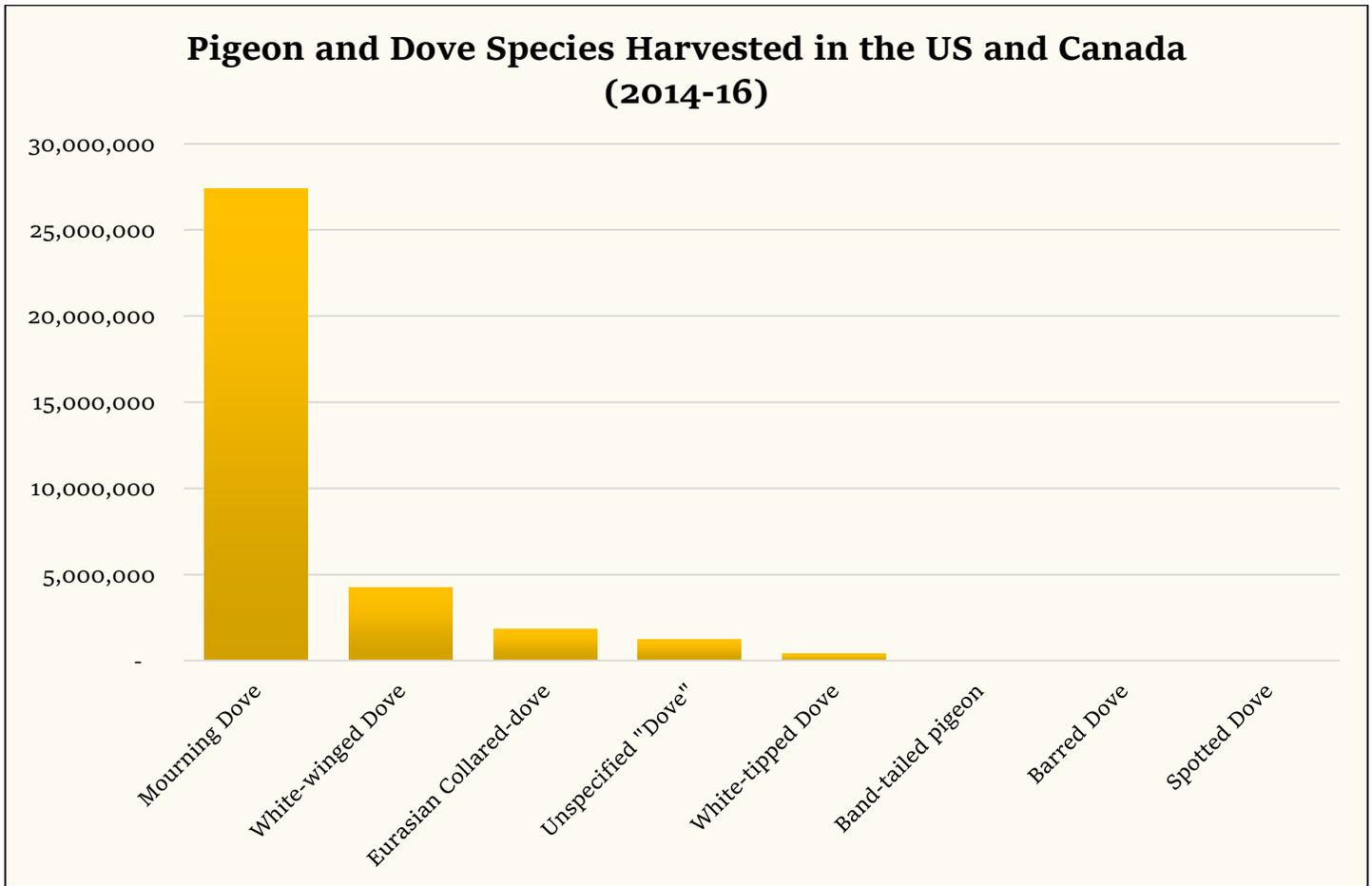


Figure 2: Number of Pigeons and Doves Harvested by Species in the US and Canada (2014-2016)

PROGRESS REPORTING

Wild Harvest Initiative® Database

Hunting and Angling Harvest Data Analyses

Quality Assurance Testing for Species' Weights

Weight data for all freshwater and marine fish species reported by the WHI database are being finalized. References are being cross-checked and compiled in a methodology paper for future use.

Updating harvest records

Outreach efforts to state, provincial, and territorial wildlife agencies to

gather and compile harvest records from the last three years (2016–19) have begun.

Economic Valuation

Economic valuations of wild harvested protein are now being compiled into an economic equivalence framework.

Once the wild meat economic valuations are completed, a full replacement cost analysis will be undertaken.

Database Updates

Once the economic equivalence framework is completed, the WHI database will be expanded to incorporate this additional metric for

each harvested species. This will facilitate the extraction and analysis of data related to replacement costs of wild harvested meat.

Wild Meat Sharing and Consumption Index

A report on the findings from the Texas Wild Meat Sharing and Consumption Index Survey is now being finalized with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This report will be formally released to WHI partners and to the general public next quarter.

Discussions are now underway with Alaska, Arizona and Nevada to undertake similar sharing surveys in those states.

Wild Harvest Initiative® Partnership Alliance

Welcoming New Partners

We are delighted to welcome the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to the Wild Harvest Initiative® Partnership Alliance!

Communications

Covid-19 and social media posts

The WHI team developed social media posts and memes using popular hashtags related to the current Covid-19 pandemic in order to advance key messaging related to the importance of wild harvest during the present global crisis. Examples of these posts can be found below.

These posts were made available to partners to share through their respective social media channels.

Links to WHI Website

A WHI "code block" was shared with partners to be integrated within websites, electronic newsletters, and other relevant communications materials. This code block will present as a link/button to readers, which will encourage traffic to visit and engage with the Wild Harvest Initiative website:

<https://thewildharvestinitiative.com>

Factsheet

A factsheet on white-tailed deer has been drafted and shared with WHI

partners for comment. This factsheet, once finalized, is expected to be the first in a larger series; each sheet will represent a different species or species group and will capture relevant population, harvest and biological data.

Podcasts

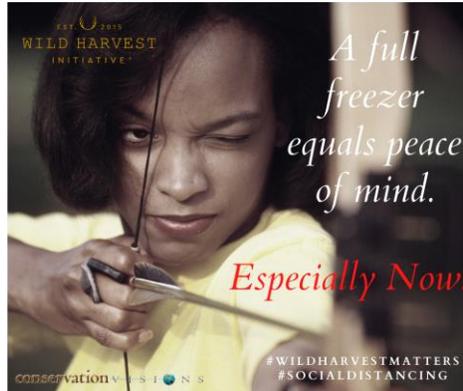
The Wild Harvest Initiative® featured on two podcasts this past quarter – The Hunting Collective and Coast to Coast:

The Hunting Collective:

<https://bit.ly/2ZKbgHj>

Coast to Coast:

<https://bit.ly/36DgMga>



THE WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE® PARTNERSHIP ALLIANCE



Northeast Michigan Chapter

Safari Club International



Mystery Ranch



Not pictured are Sean Olmstead and Richard A. "Dick" Corbett

