

## Hybrid of Turtle Dove and Collared Turtle Dove

by

K. H. VOOUS

(Zoological Museum, University of Amsterdam)

*(Een bastaard van Turkse Tortel en Tortelduif)*

The Zoological Museum of the University of Amsterdam received a specimen of turtle dove which in all plumage characters proved to be intermediate between the Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) and the Collared Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). The specimen is considered a hybrid of the two species. A concise description follows below.

Coll. Nr. 16.836. ♀. 10 April 1963. Huizen, Province North Holland. Found wounded by air-gun bullet. Presented by Mrs. C. Bominaar-Holzen-spies.

Oviduct swollen and twisted; largest follicle in ovary, ca  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm.

Weight 170 grams; thick layer of subcutaneous fat.

Wing 170, tail 109 mm.

Upper parts almost uniform, not scaly as in *turtur*; of a dull reddish brown colour tone, like the broad feather edges in *turtur*. Neck-collar large, as in *decaocto*, but slightly interrupted dorsally, black, with white feather edges, the latter narrower than those in *turtur*, but giving a slightly checkered appearance like in that species. Under parts of a slightly duller vinaceous tone than in *turtur*, not predominantly grey as in *decaocto*; the feathers of the lower abdomen and the under tail coverts pale greyish, being intermediate between the nearly neutral grey tinge found in *decaocto* and the white in *turtur*. Outer tail feathers with outer web mainly white, growing light grey towards the base, thus being slightly darker than in *turtur* and lacking the conspicuous black patch at the basal half of the outer web found in *decaocto*. White at the end of the tail feathers intermediate in extent between *turtur* and *decaocto*; in the second innermost pair the subterminal patch of grey, following the black band, is considerably larger than in *turtur*, but the white top of the feather is narrower than in *decaocto*. In life the iris was light and yellow, as in *turtur*, not dark and reddish as in *decaocto*. Naked orbital skin larger than in *decaocto*, apparently matching both in extent and in the yellowish-red coloration the situation found in *turtur*.

In measurements *turtur* and *decaocto* mainly differ from each other by the tail, which in *decaocto* is longer. In the specimen described above the tail (109 mm) is shorter than in *decaocto* (length of tail not below 128 mm; Dekker 1963).

The general impression of our specimen is that of a bird intermediate between *decaocto* and *turtur*; in life it probably must have looked like a dull brownish, plain-coloured *turtur* (white feather edges of neck ring; white lateral edge of tail; yellow iris; large naked orbital skin), with some characters of *decaocto*.

At the time when the bird was found Collared Turtle Doves were numerous in the gardens and along the roads of the residential part of Huizen. They had stayed there during the whole period of hard winter. The birds were now in full nesting activity. Turtle Doves had not yet arrived from their tropical quarters. They usually do not return before the end of April or the first weeks of May. The hybrid therefore seems to have had the stationary habit of *decaocto*, not the migratory of *turtur*. There is, however, the remarkable fact of a Turtle Dove, which, quite exceptionally, stayed the winter of 1963 in the same garden where the hybrid had appeared and where the birds were regularly and richly fed by Mrs. Bominaar. Although this bird seemed to look like a first-year *turtur* it may have shown, at a closer examination, *decaocto*-characters. This bird was photographed in the snow among Collared Turtle Doves and was not seen after February 14, 1963.

Wild hybrids of Turtle Dove and Collared Turtle Dove have been only rarely recorded. I have found two records in the literature. One refers to a bird observed in the spring (May—July) of 1949 near Ingelheim, Rhineland, West Germany, which is the year when Collared Turtle Doves had been first recorded here west of the river Rhine (Bodenstein 1949). The call of this bird was intermediate between those of the parent-species, being described as a Collared Turtle Dove's call with Turtle Dove's call rhythm („Türkentaubenstimme und Turteltaubentempo" *l.c.* : 58). The other record is a sight observation of a free-living bird in the Augsburg Zoo, South Germany, by the Zoo Director, from 31 July—10 August 1956 (Steinbacher 1957); this bird was considered as „zwar ein ausgefärbter, mindestens vor-jähriger Vogel". It was stated that wild Collared Turtle Doves were breeding in the gardens of the Zoo, but that Turtle Doves did not nest around Augsburg. According to Niethammer (1963) Collared Turtle Doves have been set free by Steinbacher in the Augsburg Zoo! The descriptions of the German hybrid doves suggest more or less intermediate birds like the Netherlands hybrid described above.

In captivity hybrids between the Turtle Dove and the Collared Turtle Dove have been frequently raised. Gray (1958) gives a complete bibliography of the cases so far known and summarizes the results as follows: "The cross has occurred in both directions, but best results were obtained with *S. decaocto* as the ♀ parent. Male hybrids show reduced fertility; ♀♀ lay only clear eggs" (*l.c.*: 138). The present hybrid largely corresponds with a description and detailed pictures of tail feathers and neck ring of hybrids of the two

species raised by Taibell (1930) in the experimental station of Professor Alessandro Ghigi.

#### SAMENVATTING:

##### *Een bastaard van Turkse Tortel en Tortelduif*

Er wordt een duif beschreven die op 10 april 1963 aangeschoten in Huizen, N.H., werd aangetroffen en die in uitwendige kenmerken tussen een Turkse Tortel en een Tortelduif instaat. De vogel wordt in het Zoölogisch Museum van Amsterdam bewaard: ♀, coll. nr. 16.836. Hij bezit o.a. de effen kleuren van een Turkse Tortel, doch de bruine tint van de bovenzijde, het gele oog en de licht geelachtig rood gekleurde naakte ooghuid van de Tortelduif. Halsring en staartpatroon zijn intermediair. De vogel heeft zich klaarblijkelijk niet als trekvogel gedragen en lijkt in dit opzicht op de Turkse Tortel. Uit de literatuur worden twee andere gevallen van bastaarden van deze combinatie beschreven. Beide gevallen stammen uit Duitsland (Ingelheim 1949, Augsburg 1956) en hebben betrekking op waargenomen, niet op verzamelde vogels. Van de eerste vogel wordt beschreven, dat ook de roep tussen die van een Turkse Tortel en een Tortelduif instond. In gevangenschap zijn bastaarden van de genoemde combinatie meermalen verkregen.

#### LITERATURE:

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