



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Dove Population Status - 2025



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BACKGROUND

On average, Texas accounts for 32% of the total mourning dove harvest and 87% of the total white-winged dove harvest in the United States each year. Approximately 300,000 hunters take the field in Texas annually, resulting in a yearly economic impact of \$316 million (\$514 million when adjusted for inflation) (Southwick and Allen 2007).

Regular monitoring of dove populations is essential to effectively managing and conserving such an important recreational and biological resource. Since 2008, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has conducted rural and urban dove surveys using distance sampling (Buckland et al. 1993) each May-June to estimate annual spring breeding abundance except in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report provides updated results on the status of breeding dove populations in Texas for 2025. Estimates are calculated and reported by Bird Conservation Region (BCR) (Bird Studies Canada 2014, US NABCI Committee 2000) in Texas (Figure 1). A comprehensive report that includes survey results from 2008-21 and detailed descriptions of survey and analyses methodologies was released in 2021 (Fitzsimmons et al. 2021).

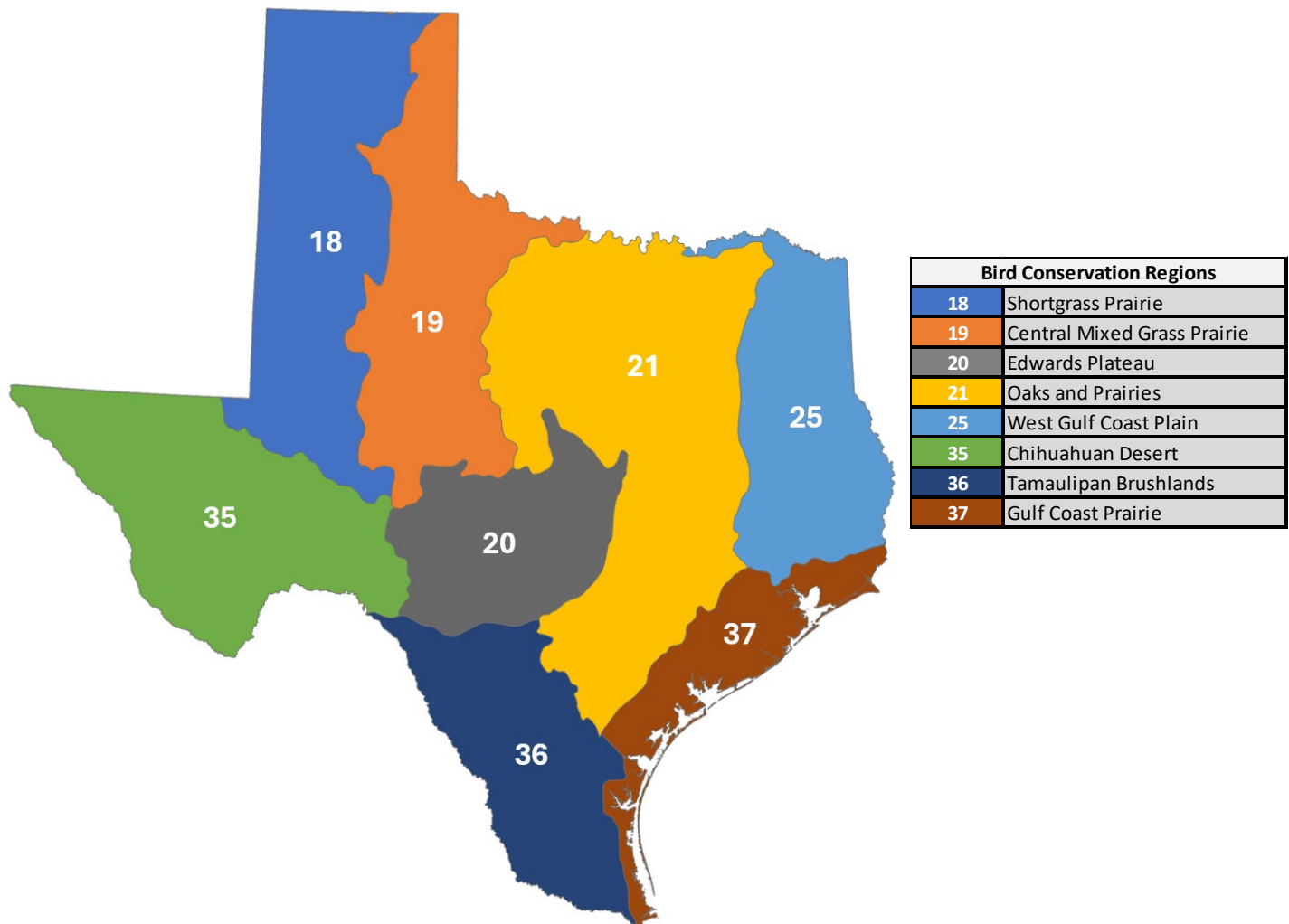


Figure 1. Bird Conservation Regions of Texas

STATUS – STATEWIDE

This section highlights trends in annual statewide abundance, percent composition of statewide abundance by BCR – both current year and long-term average (2008-24), and rural and urban abundance estimates by BCR for mourning and white-winged doves in Texas.

Mourning Dove

Mourning doves are the most popular and numerous game bird in the US, with a range that extends throughout most of North America. Texas supports a large population of both resident and migratory mourning doves.

From 2008-25, statewide abundance ranged from a low of 19.8 million in 2022 to a high of 37.5 million in 2016. The 2025 statewide estimate of 35.9 million is a 5% increase from 2024 and 28% above the long-term average (Figure 2). An estimated 90% of mourning doves observed occurred in rural areas compared to urban areas (10%) in 2025 (Figure 3), and, on average, densities in urban areas were 1.8 times greater than in rural areas.

On average, nearly 80% of the state's mourning doves occur in 4 BCRs every year - the Shortgrass Prairie (31%), Oaks and Prairies (26%), Tamaulipan Brushlands (11%), and Central Mixed Grass Prairie (10%) (Figure 4). In 2025, abundance estimates in both the Central Mixed Grass Prairie and the Tamaulipan Brushlands BCRs were regional record highs, increasing 24% and 16% from 2024, respectively. Abundance in the Shortgrass Prairie BCR increased 16%. The Oaks and Prairies BCR saw a slight 3% decline from 2024 but is still the 3rd highest estimate on record. Abundance estimates in all BCRs were well above long-term averages this year (*range: 3-90%*), except for the West Gulf Coast Plain (-16%) and the Chihuahuan Desert (-30%) (see Status-Regional section below).

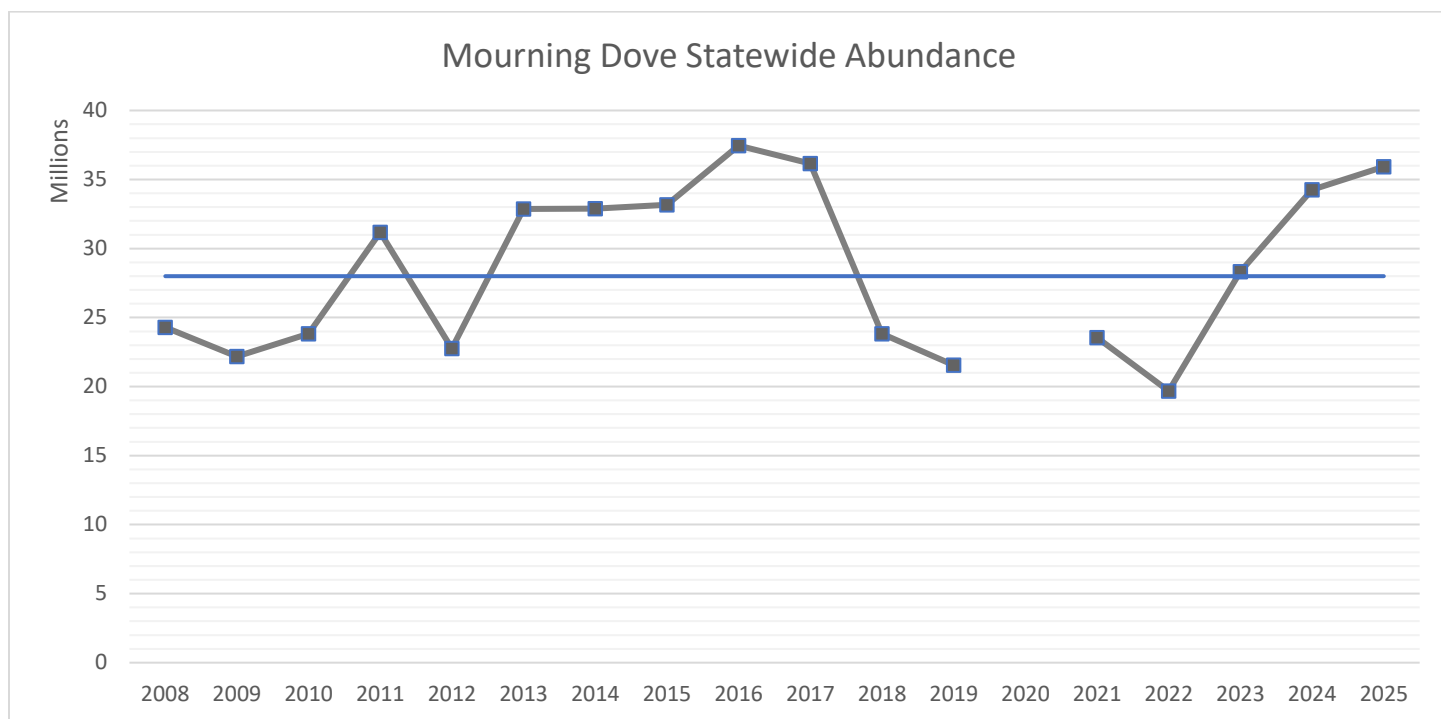


Figure 2. Combined rural and urban breeding abundance of mourning doves. The long-term average (2008-24), represented by the blue line, is 28.0 million.

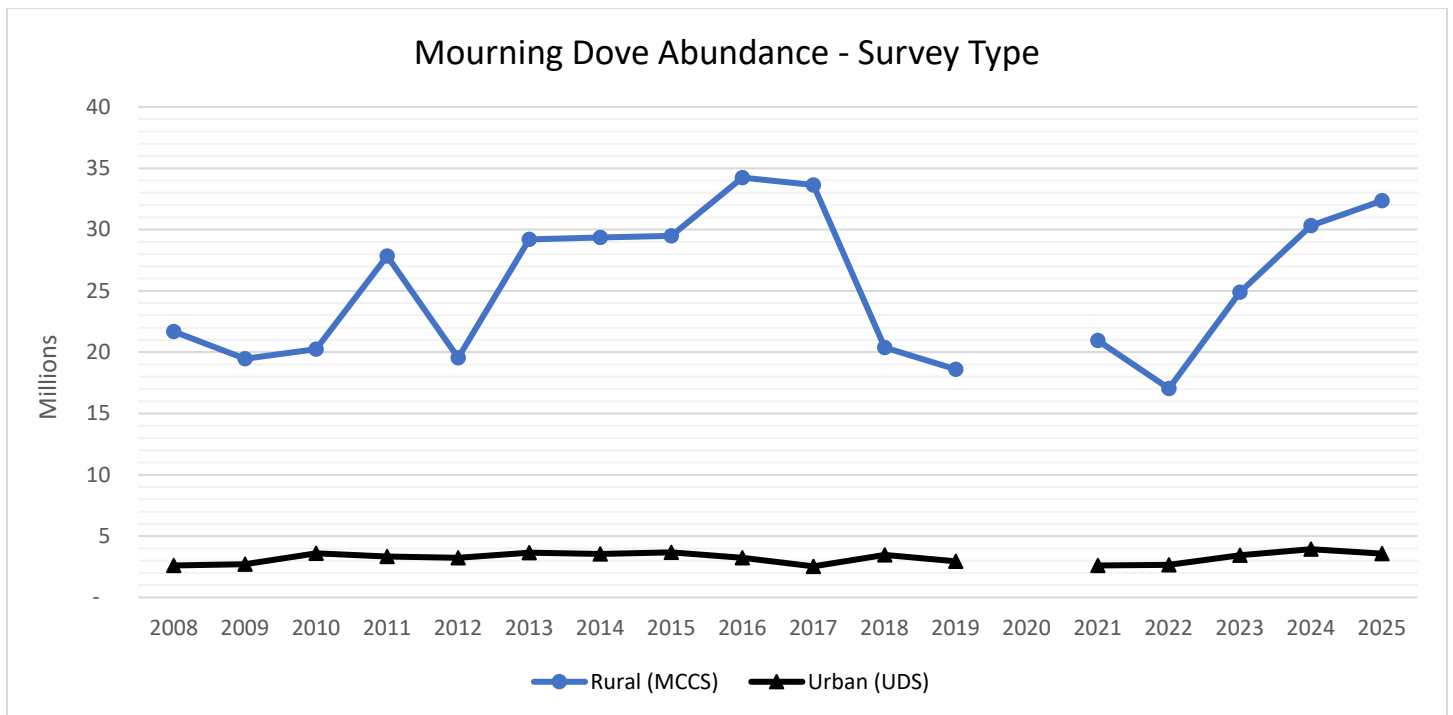


Figure 3. Statewide mourning dove abundance by survey type – Rural, based on Modified Call-Count Surveys (MCCS) and Urban, based on Urban Dove Surveys (UDS).

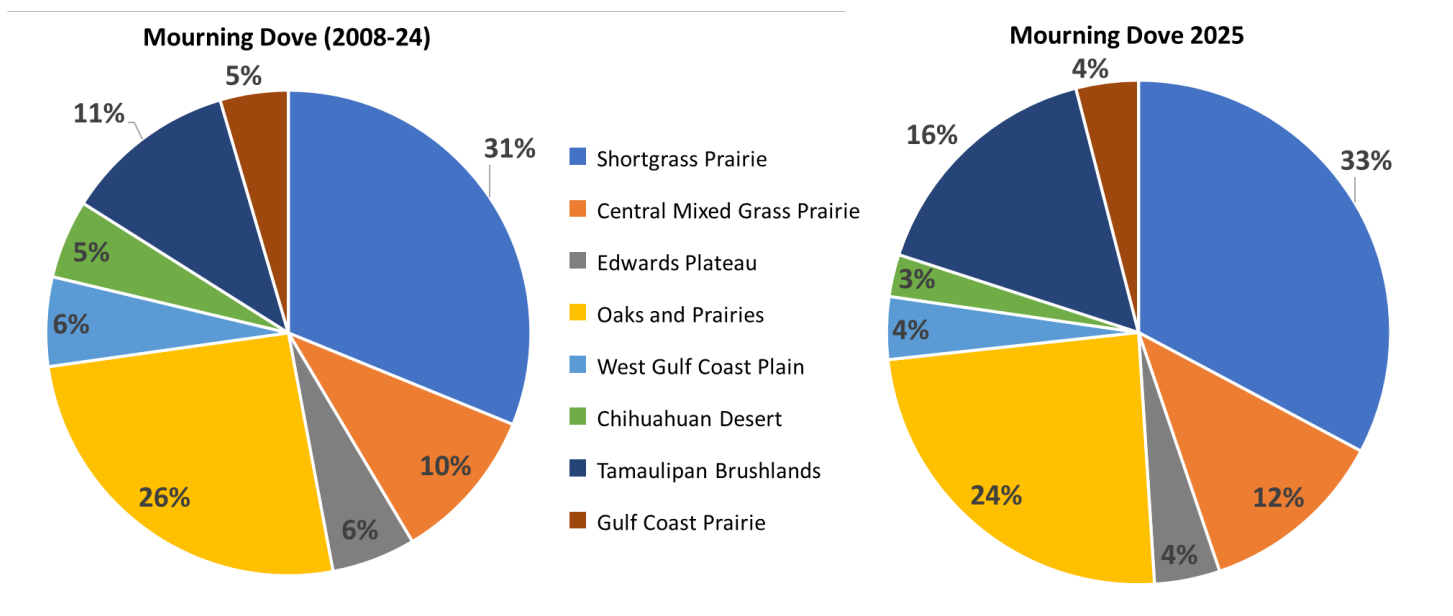


Figure 4. Percent composition of statewide mourning dove abundance in Texas BCRs; long-term average (2008-24) and 2025.

White-winged Dove

Historically found along the Texas-Mexico border, white-winged doves have expanded across most of the state since the 1990s and continue to expand range-wide throughout much of the southern US. Outside of the historic range, white-winged doves are strongly associated with urban habitat in Texas.

From 2008-25, estimated statewide abundance ranged from a low of 6.7 million in 2008 to a high of 12.8 million in 2024. The statewide abundance estimate of 11.7 million for 2025 is an 8% decrease from 2024 and 15% above the long-term average (Figure 5). An estimated 84% of white-winged doves observed occurred in urban areas compared to rural areas (16%) (Figure 6), and, on average, densities in urban areas were 86 times greater than in rural areas in 2025.

On average, nearly 80% of the state's white-winged doves are found in the Oaks and Prairies (34%), Tamaulipan Brushlands (22%), Gulf Coast Prairie (12%), and Edwards Plateau (11%) BCRs each year (Figure 7). In 2025, white-winged dove abundance increased in the Tamaulipan Brushlands 41%, reaching a new regional high, and decreased in the Gulf Coast Prairie (-55%), Edwards Plateau (-45%), and Oaks and Prairies (-2%) BCRs (see Status-Regional section below).

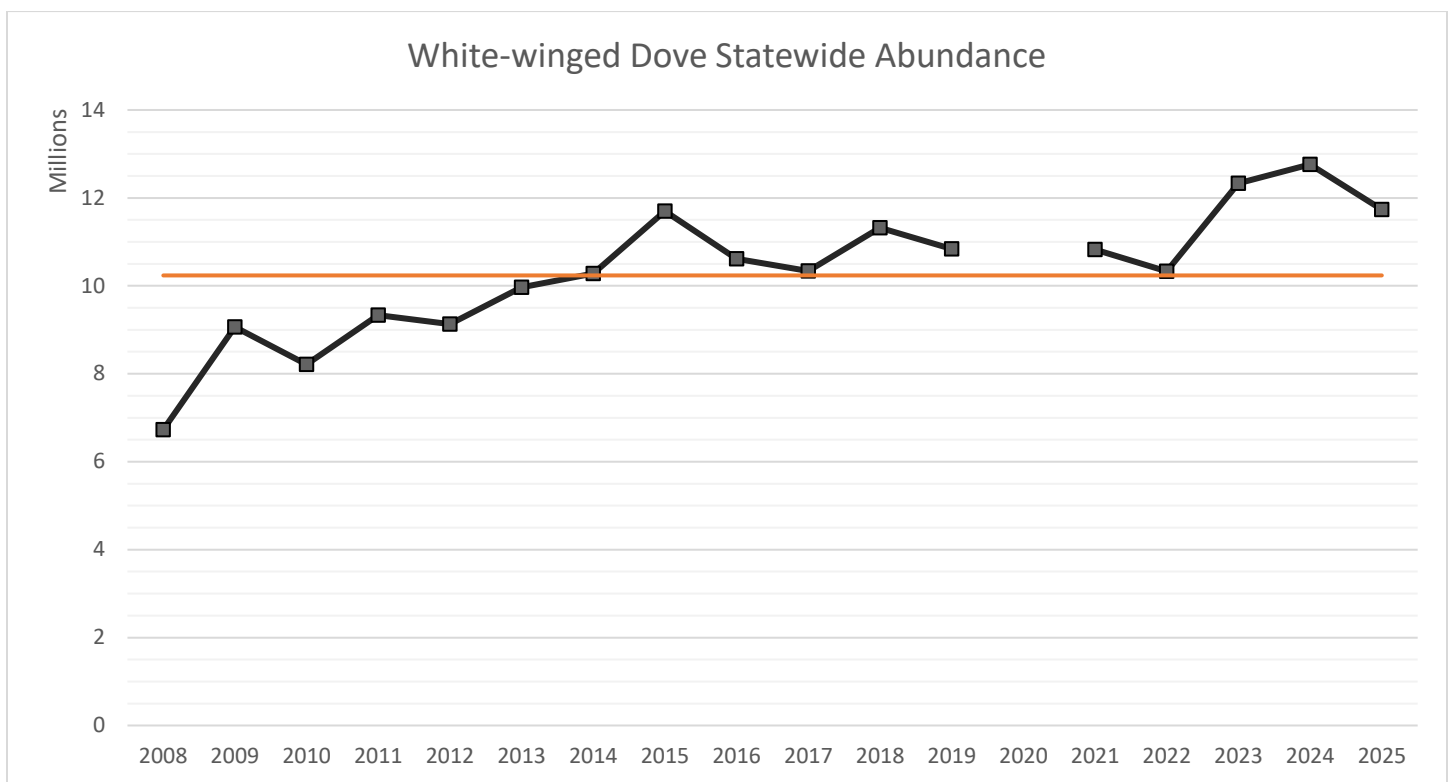


Figure 5. Combined rural and urban breeding abundance of white-winged doves. The long-term average (2008-24), represented by the orange line, is 10.2 million.

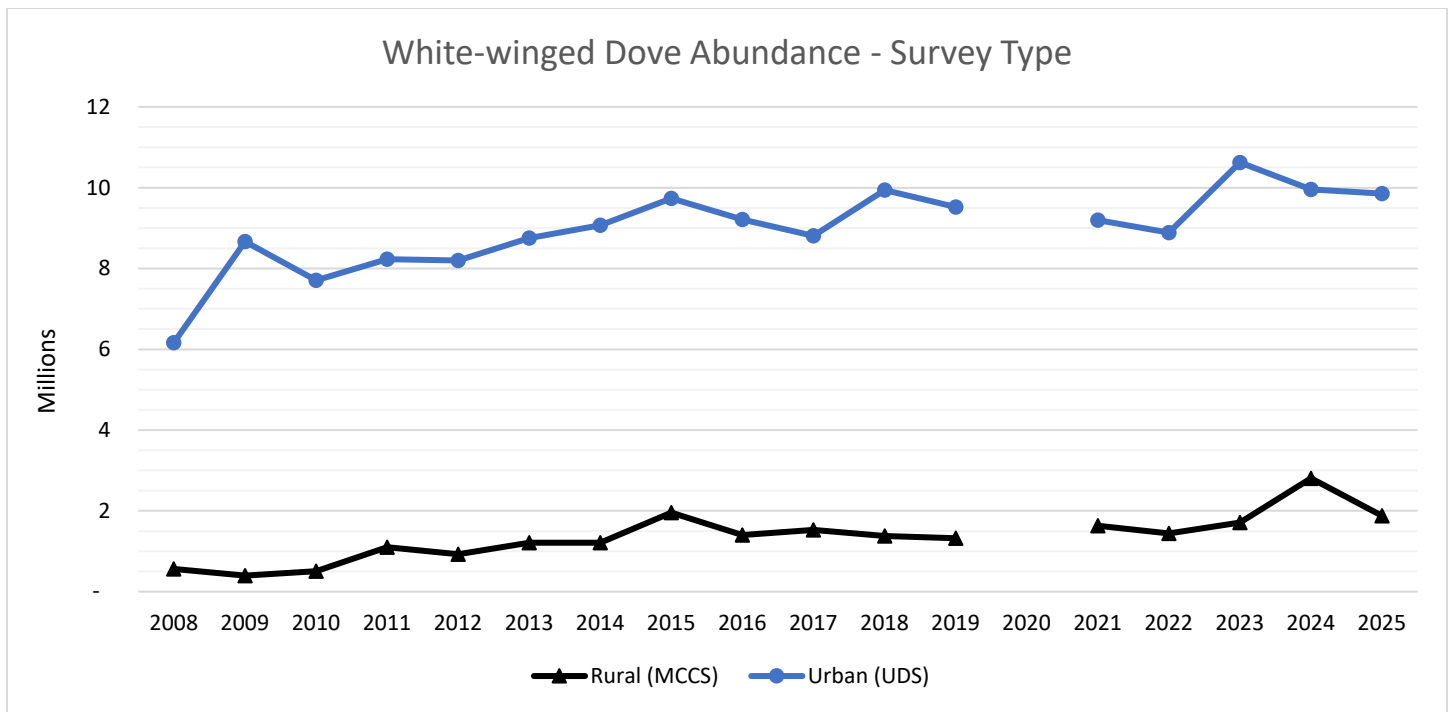


Figure 6. Statewide white-winged dove abundance by survey type – Rural, based on Modified Call-Count Surveys (MCCS) and Urban, based on Urban Dove Surveys (UDS).

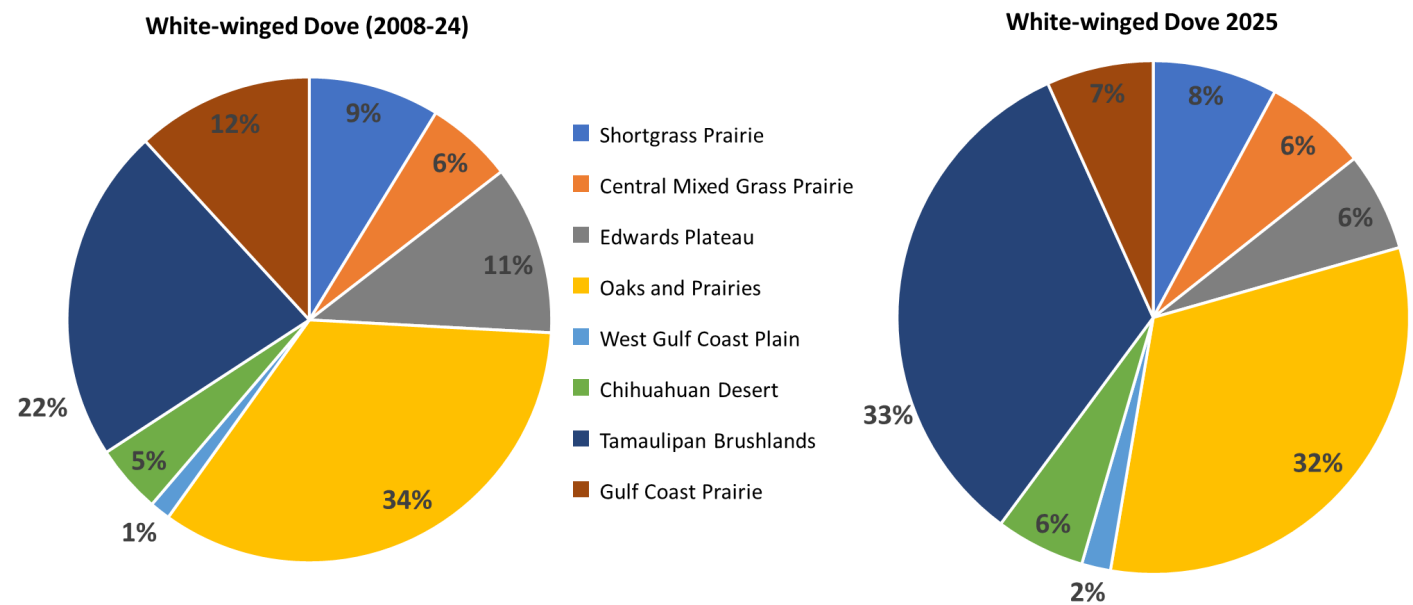
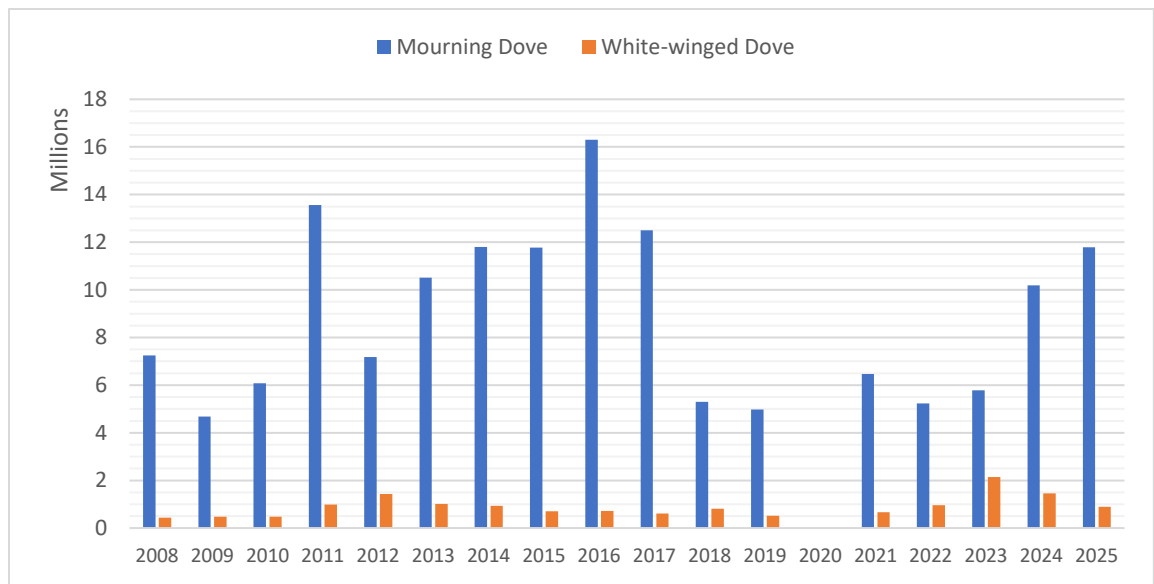


Figure 7. Percent composition of statewide white-winged dove abundance in Texas BCRs; long-term average (2008-23) and 2024.

STATUS – REGIONAL

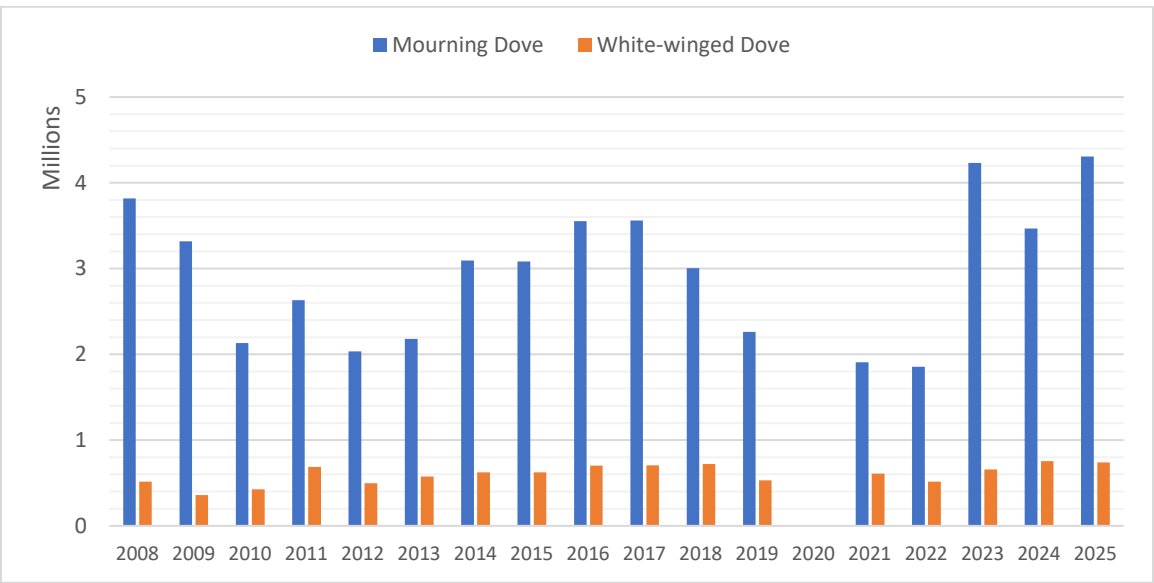
This section highlights regional trends in annual abundance (2025 N), year-over-year percent change from 2024 to 2025 (% change YOY), and percent difference between the 2025 estimate and 2008-24 long-term average (% change LTA).

BCR 18 - Shortgrass Prairie



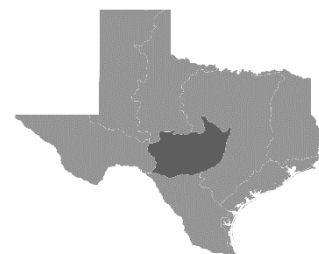
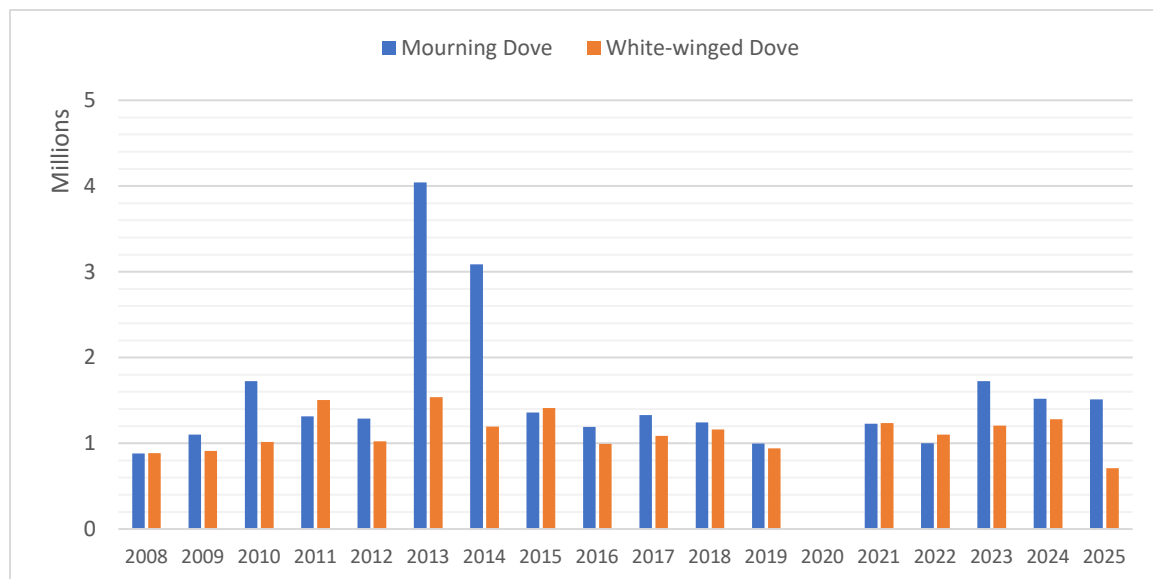
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	11,785,946	16%	44%
White-winged Dove	898,568	-39%	7%

BCR 19 - Central Mixed Grass Prairie



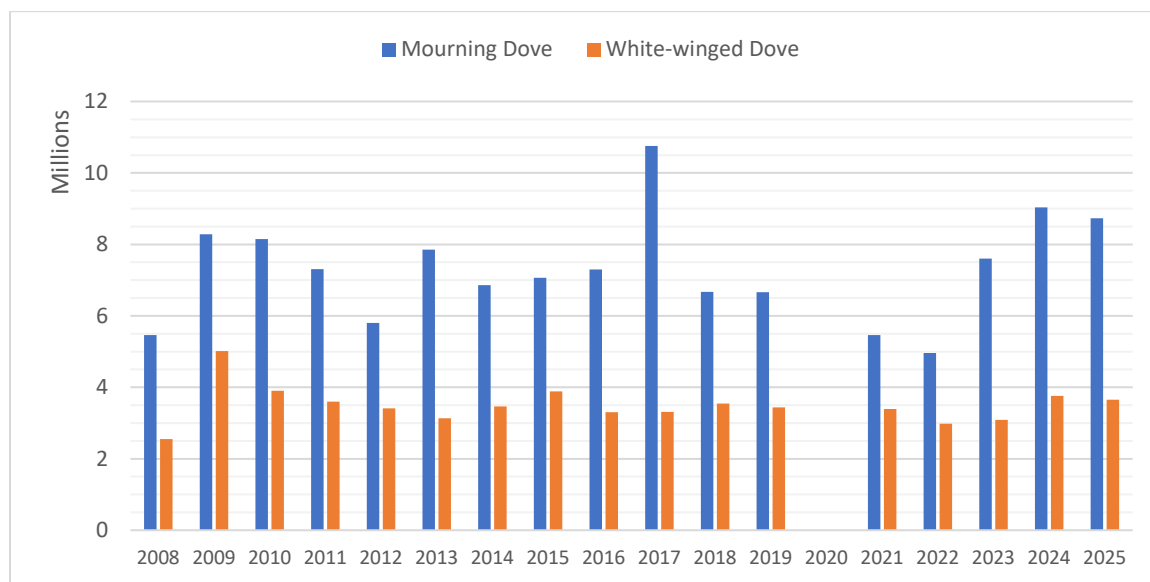
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	4,308,449	24%	59%
White-winged Dove	739,960	-2%	32%

BCR 20 - Edwards Plateau



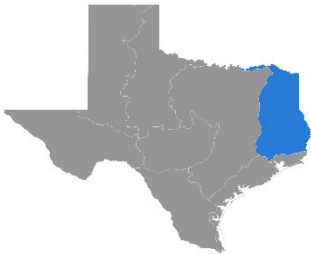
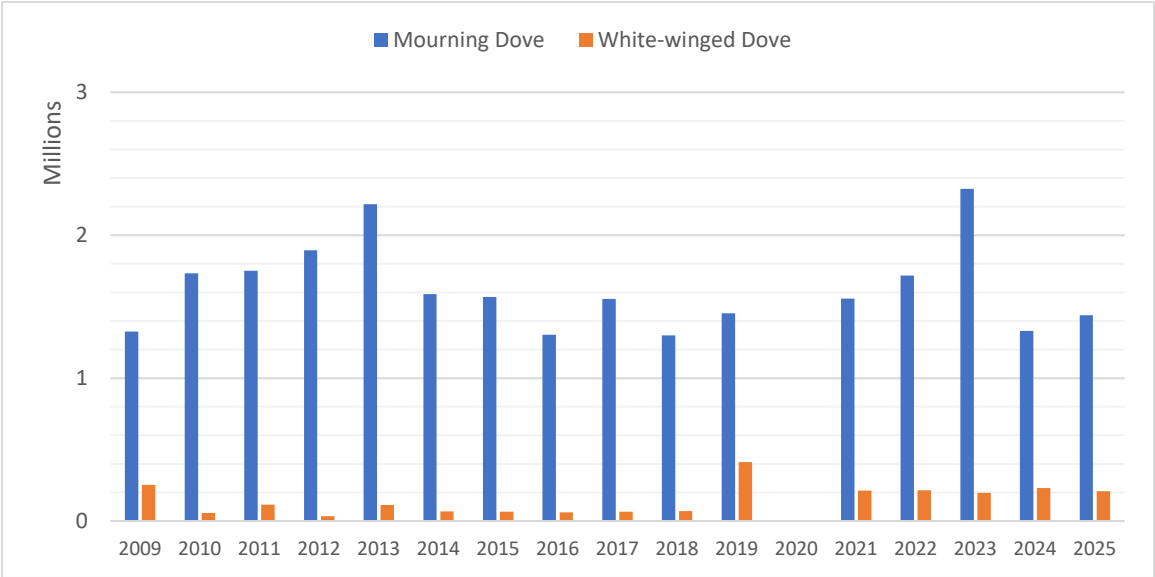
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	1,511,006	-1%	3%
White-winged Dove	709,819	-45%	-35%

BCR 21 - Oaks and Prairies



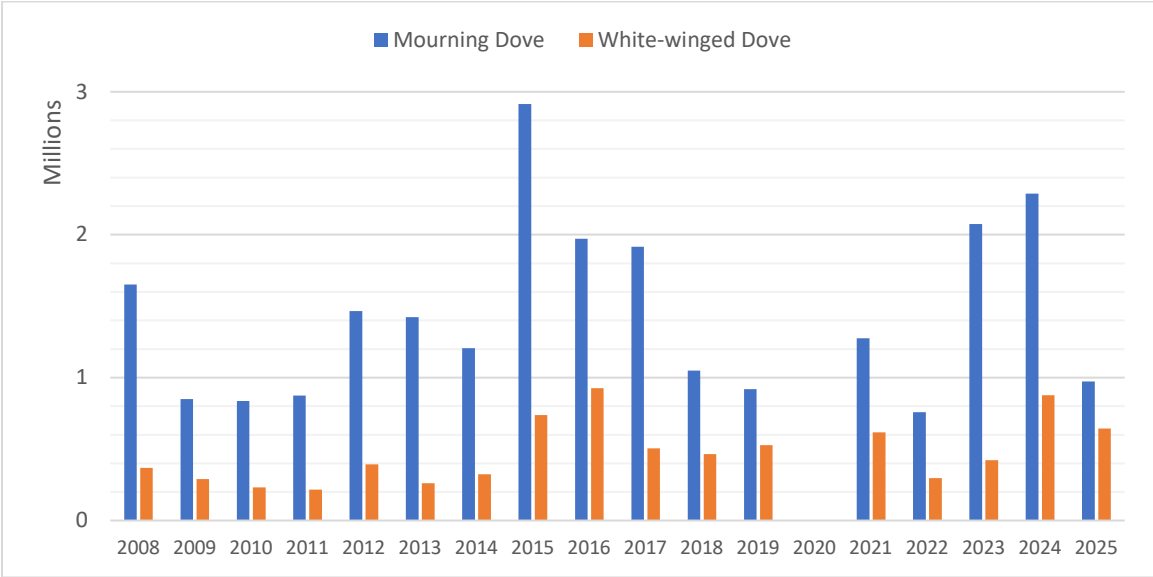
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	8,728,634	-3%	29%
White-winged Dove	3,656,115	-3%	11%

BCR 25 - West Gulf Coast Plain



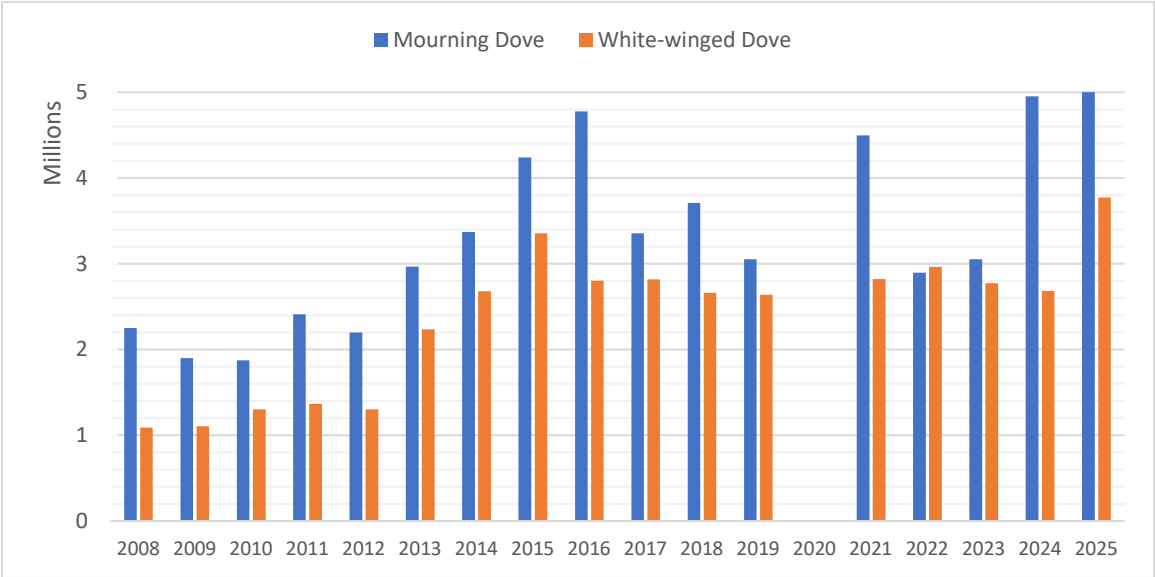
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	1,440,072	8%	-8%
White-winged Dove	208,321	-10%	58%

BCR 35 - Chihuahuan Desert



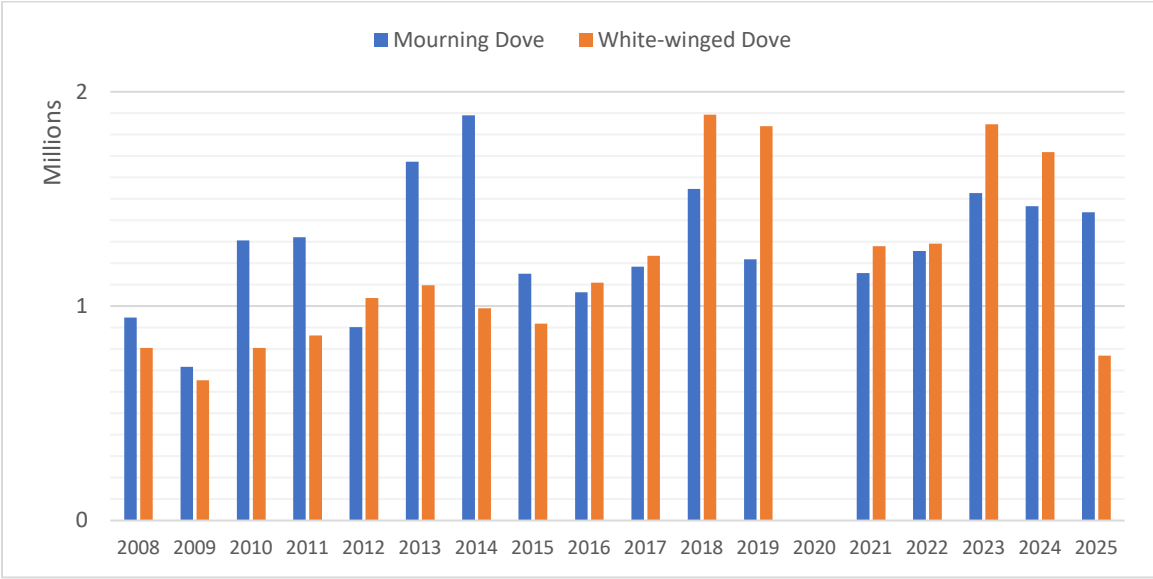
	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	973,345	-57%	-30%
White-winged Dove	643,469	-27%	47%

BCR 36 - Tamaulipan Brushlands



	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	5,751,902	16%	90%
White-winged Dove	3,772,491	41%	75%

BCR 37 - Gulf Coast Prairie



	2025 N	% change YOY	% change LTA
Mourning Dove	1,438,277	-2%	20%
White-winged Dove	769,531	-55%	-33%

LITERATURE CITED

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