

## Bloedel Bird of the Month - The Diamond Dove



The Diamond Dove is the smallest Australian dove. It is easy to identify as it has a distinctive red or orange eye ring. It lives only in Australia, in the dry deserts in the north and central parts of the country.

The top layers of wing feathers have small grey dots; these are the 'Diamonds' that give the bird its name.

The name of British Columbia has an odd link to doves. The pigeon and dove family<sup>1</sup> is the *Columbidea*. The name *Columbia* comes from the surname of Christopher Columbus.<sup>2</sup> His ancestors may have been dove keepers.<sup>3</sup> So BC's name ultimately honours pigeons or doves!<sup>4</sup>

The table<sup>5,6</sup> describes the wild form of the Diamond Dove, the Grey or Blue Diamond.<sup>7</sup>

	Adult Male (1 Year)	Adult Female (1 Year)	Juvenile
<b>Length</b>	193 - 213 mm		Less than adults
<b>Weight</b>	23 - 32 g		Less than adults
<b>Bill Colour</b>	Dark Grey		Light Grey
<b>Feet/Legs Colour</b>	Pink		Grey
<b>Wing 'Diamonds'</b>	Yes		No
<b>Eye Ring</b>	2 - 3 mm Red/Orange	1 mm Red/Orange	As adult/Fawn
<b>Colour</b>	Silvery Grey	Brownish Grey	Grey

The bird above has a thick, red eye ring and visible wing 'diamonds'. The feet and legs are not very pink and its beak is pale grey. It is a juvenile male starting to show its full adult colours.

Captive bred birds have many colour variations as well as blue and silver. Colours include peach, yellow, cinnamon, red, pied and. snow white.<sup>8</sup> With colours in particular places (such as Blue White Rump or Yellow White Tail) there are dozens of options for named bird types.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Large birds in the family are pigeons; smaller ones are doves, but this is only a rough guide.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christopher-Columbus>

<sup>3</sup> Alternately 'Dove' was a name given to orphans: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombo\\_\(surname\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombo_(surname))

<sup>4</sup> The Irish monk who took Christianity to Scotland used the symbol of the bird of peace, the dove. His name became 'Saint Columba'. The name 'Malcolm' means 'Follower of Saint Columba'.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.diamonddove.info/bird01\\_Diamonds.htm](https://www.diamonddove.info/bird01_Diamonds.htm)

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamond\\_dove](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamond_dove)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.zebrafinch.com/DiamondDove/Dove.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.singing-wings-aviary.com/diamonddoves.htm>

<sup>9</sup> [http://aaa-webs.com/whitedoves/Love\\_Doves/diamonddoves/diamondcolors.htm](http://aaa-webs.com/whitedoves/Love_Doves/diamonddoves/diamondcolors.htm)



Male

Female



### Dove Symbolism<sup>10</sup>

Christianity – The dove is the messenger of peace.

In Japan – A dove with a sword is an emblem of peace.

In China – Doves suggest long life and marital fidelity.

<sup>10</sup> <http://decodedarts.com/language-art-peacocks-doves-owls-legendary-phoenix-birds-symbolise/2506>

**Clutch**

2 Eggs

**Incubation Period**

13 – 14 days

**Nesting**

The male sits on the eggs during the day and the female sits on the eggs at night. Near hatching, both may sit on the eggs.

**Food**

- In the wild they feed on seeds, mainly from grasses. They may also eat ants.
- Doves, do not crush their seed with their beaks, and so need grit in their diet.

**Lifespan**

- In captivity:  
15 – 20 years
- In the wild:  
3 - 5 years

**Young**

- Hatched without feathers.
- Fully feathered within a week.
- Flying 12 - 14 days after hatching.
- Fed regurgitated food by their parents for their first two weeks.