Rare Animals of Louisiana

Common Ground Dove
*Columbina passerina*

**Rarity Rank:** S1B,S2N/G5

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**Identification:**
- Very small dove from 15 to 18 cm long
- Adult underparts vary from grayish brown to medium dark brown
- Forehead, face, sides of neck, breast and underparts are pinkish gray
- Crown, nape, and hind neck vary from bluish gray to grayish pink
- Black, square-shaped tail
- Feet and legs pinkish
- Dark spots on folded wings
- Wings with large cinnamon patches visible in flight

**Taxonomic comments:**
Two subspecies of *Columbina passerina* breed in the United States: *C. p. passerina* is found from Eastern Texas throughout the Gulf States including Louisiana

**Habitat:**
- Cultivated land including farms, orchards, and old cane fields
- Clearings, roadsides, and wood edges

**Food habits:**
- Mostly small weed and grass seeds
- Readily feeds at feeders

**Range:**
Southern parts of the United States to Costa Rica and northern South America

**Reproduction:**
- Nests are typically platforms made of small roots, grass and twigs built either in small shrubs, small trees, or amongst leaves on the ground
- Pairs begin to nest in March and eggs hatch 44 days after start of incubation, typically between April and May
- Nests consist of two white eggs
- Additional clutches may be laid in October

*Photo by Dan Lane*

Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database
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Threats:
- Loss of habitat to pine management and residential development
- Human disturbance to nesting areas
- Exotic red imported fire ants may contribute to decline

Beneficial Management Practices:
- Protection of existing habitat through conservation of natural shrub communities and riparian zones
- Restoration of degraded habitat
- Controlling exotics

LA River Basins:
- Vermilion-Teche, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine

References:


