

**MICHIGAN AUDUBON SOCIETY  
RESOLUTION 2006 – 02**

**OPPOSITION to HUNTING of MOURNING DOVES**

**BACKGROUND**

The Mourning Dove, declared Michigan's Official Bird of Peace in 1998 (HB224), and the universal symbol of peace has been a protected bird in the State of Michigan since the early 1900's and considered a song bird by the Michigan Audubon Society since its inception in 1904.

It is ironic there is effort to change the status of Michigan's Bird of Peace from a song bird to a game bird especially since Mourning Doves, smaller than pigeons, provide little meat and often function solely in the capacity of target practice.

Michigan Audubon Society is NOT an anti-hunting organization, but we do object to the hunting of song birds.

Mourning Doves mate for life, and back yard bird-feeder surveys in recent years have shown a marked decline in the population of Mourning Doves in Michigan. Changing the status of this bird from song bird to game bird will only add to the decline of these birds in Michigan.

The preferred ammunition in states where Mourning Doves are hunted is toxic lead shot. The U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates 30% of successful kill is not retrieved and has determined that hunters discharge between five and eight shots for every successful kill. In addition, it is legal to shoot doves over open water. As a result, hunters are responsible for discharging an enormous amount of lead shot over the landscape and into the water.

Lead shot ingested by multiple species via predatorship of dead or dying animals, or as grit, suffer lead poisoning and painful, slow death.

The random dispersion of lead shot across land and water creates another negative invasion of our already burdened environment, cumulatively degrading Michigan's land and water as it breaks down, ultimately entering the human food chain.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Audubon Society expresses its long-term commitment to the protection and preservation of Michigan's Bird of Peace, the Mourning Dove, as a song bird, and is strongly opposed to efforts by the executive or legislative branch, or any state agency to list this bird as a game bird and;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Audubon Society supports the Mourning Dove Referendum opposing the hunting of Mourning Doves.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006 by the Michigan Audubon Society

\_\_\_\_\_ Peggy Ridgway, President