

**Media Release:**

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## **Holiday's over for Feral Turtle Doves**

The Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service is set to commence the 2008 trapping project to help reduce the vast numbers of feral turtle doves in Alice Springs.

Parks and Wildlife Services Officer Jon DeLaine said community involvement is vital with more than 100 members of the public involved in the 2007 trapping program.

"Based on previous years we're expecting to trap around 900 doves," Mr DeLaine said.

"In the 1990's 10 turtle doves were released from a backyard aviary and since then their population in Alice Springs has grown into the thousands.

"The Spotted Turtle Doves are highly adaptive and aggressive and force our native birds to compete for food, shelter and nesting sites."

Mr DeLaine said the weather conditions also have a big impact on turtle dove populations.

"This time last year the rains had them in a breeding frenzy," Mr DeLaine said.

"At the moment the current dry weather we're having is encouraging doves to congregate around water sources, including swimming pools, garden irrigation, pet food and water bowls, making it an ideal time to act.

"Enclosing chicken yards, removing excess pet food and water and planting native plants as opposed to non-native plants will help the fight against feral turtle doves.

"We ask residents to destroy the nests and eggs of these doves to help protect and preserve our native birds."

The Spotted Turtle Dove is a large pinkish-grey bird and has a distinctive black and white ring around its neck.

Members of the public in Alice Springs interested in getting involved in the trapping program should register their details with Wildlife Management Staff by calling 8951 8283.

Ends

**Media Note – for more information contact Jon DeLaine on 8951 8283**

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