Condor Characteristics

- Largest flying land bird in North America, with a wingspan of up to 9½ feet
- Weigh up to 26 pounds
- Soar and glide at speeds of up to 50 miles an hour and may travel 100 miles or more a day in search of food
- Opportunistic scavengers that feed on large, dead mammals like deer, elk, range cattle and sheep
- Male and female condors look alike, with black feathers and a white triangle-shaped patch under each wing
- Adult birds have pinkish-orange, featherless heads; juveniles have dark-colored heads until they are 3-4 years old
- Live up to 60 years in the wild
- Sexually mature at 5-7 years old and mate for life
- Typically produce one egg every other year and nest in cavities such as caves or rock ledges
- Parents share incubation and feeding responsibilities

For more information about condors and how you can help conserve the species, visit:

www.azgfd.gov/condor
www.peregrinefund.org
www.condorcliffs.org

Reintroduction Partners

Photos by Arizona Game and Fish Department and Chris Parish/The Peregrine Fund

Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086-5000
(602) 942-3000

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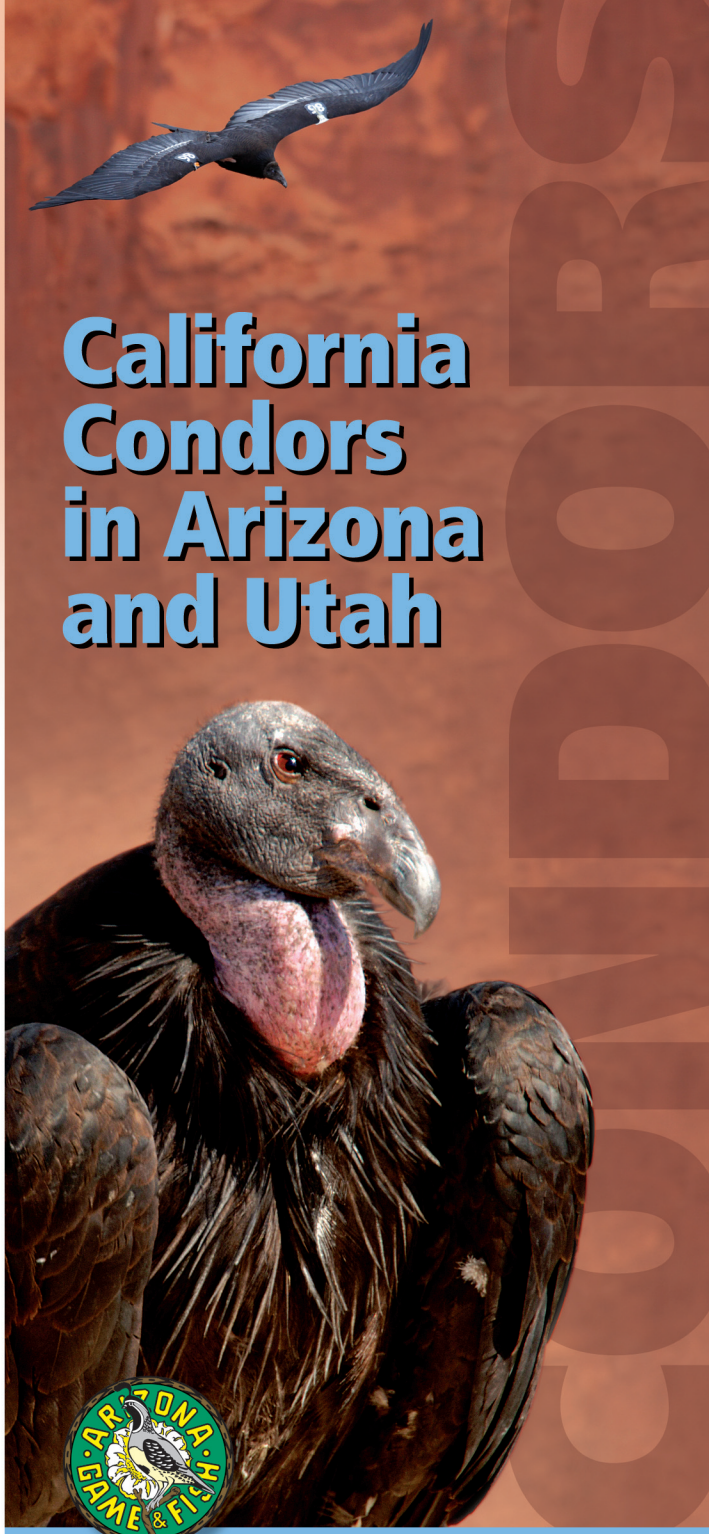
7/2011 IEIN



California Condors in Arizona and Utah

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Endangered California Condors
(Gymnogyps californianus)

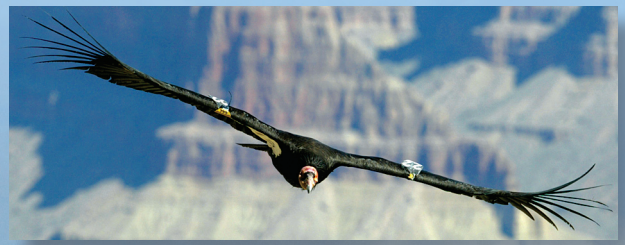
Flying free once again, these highly endangered birds have been reintroduced in Arizona/Utah, California and Mexico after nearly going extinct. Condors have been federally listed as endangered since 1967 and were first reintroduced in Arizona in 1996. Captive-reared condors are now periodically released at sites in California, Mexico and at the Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona.

Arizona's rugged sandstone Vermilion Cliffs provide the necessary remoteness, ridges, ledges and caves favored by condors. The reintroduction effort in Arizona began with the release of six condors, followed by the release of six to 10 birds every year thereafter. By 2011, more than 70 condors were flying free in Arizona and Utah. The birds range from south of the Grand Canyon to north of Zion National Park. Each condor has been fitted with a radio transmitter and numbered wing tags, and biologists monitor the population daily.

In 2003, Arizona celebrated the fledging of a wild condor chick —the first in Arizona in more than 100 years. Natural reproduction now occurs annually in the population.

Visitors at the Grand Canyon's South Rim and Zion National Park may be able to observe the birds in spring and summer. In the winter, condors can often be seen at the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and along the Colorado River corridor near Marble Canyon. To get to the Vermilion Cliffs viewing site, drive north from Flagstaff on Highway 89 and turn west onto Highway 89A toward Jacob Lake. Go approximately 35 miles—past Marble Canyon, Vermilion Cliffs, and Cliff Dwellers—and turn north onto House Rock Valley Road (BLM Road 1065). Travel approximately three miles on this dirt road to the condor kiosk and shaded viewing area. Look for condors at the release site atop the cliffs to the east.

Never attempt to feed or approach a condor. They are naturally curious birds, and they may investigate the belongings of hikers and backpackers. Please report unusual behavior or harassment of condors to The Peregrine Fund at (928) 355-2270. Condor sightings can also be posted on the Condor Cliffs Facebook page.

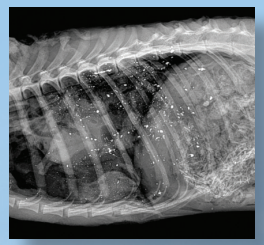


Saving the California Condor

In 1982, only 22 California condors were left in the world. The birds were captured in an effort to breed and save the species, as one of the first wildlife recovery efforts ever attempted. Captive breeding facilities at the Los Angeles Zoo, San Diego Wild Animal Park, The Peregrine Fund and the Oregon Zoo have helped the condor population grow to almost 400 in 2011, including approximately 200 condors that fly free in the wild.

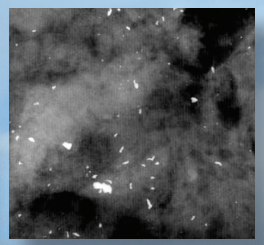
Help Protect Condors by Using Non-lead Ammunition

Lead poisoning has been identified as the leading cause of death in condors and the main obstacle to a self-sustaining population. Studies show that lead shot and bullet fragments found in game carcasses and gut piles are the main source of lead in condors. Because condors are group feeders, several birds can ingest fragments from just one carcass or gut pile containing lead.

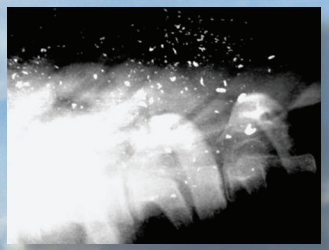


X-ray of coyote carcass showing lead fragments.

To help the species recover, anyone who uses a firearm to harvest or dispatch wildlife or a domestic animal is asked to use non-lead ammunition in northern Arizona and southern Utah to reduce lead poisoning in condors. If you use lead ammunition, please remove all carcasses and animal parts from the field and dispose of them at a landfill.



X-ray of deer gut pile showing lead fragments.



X-ray of deer carcass showing lead fragments.