

California Condor

Website: <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/animals/california-condor>

Live Cam: <https://www.sdzsafaripark.org/condor-cam>

Condors are among the biggest birds on the planet. They soar high in the sky on their huge wings. They look for **carrion** to eat. *Carrion* means the flesh or meat of dead animals. There are two types of condors. One lives in North America and the other lives in South America. Today, you will study the one living in North America – The California Condor. Let's learn more!

- 1) Let's look at this big bird before we answer questions about it. Visit the live cam. Write two sentences about what this bird looks like. Use **adjectives** (descriptive words). What does this condor look like? (Hint: Size, color, body parts, wings, talons.)

Now visit the Condor website. Go to this section:

- 2) What type of animal is the condor?
 - a. Bird
 - b. Mammal
 - c. Reptile
- 3) What is its **endangered** status?
 - a. Red – endangered
 - b. Orange – Vulnerable
 - c. Green – Least concern
- 4) What do condors eat?
 - a. Meat
 - b. Salads
 - c. Grasses
 - d. Fruits



Go to this section:

Wing power

- 5) What is a nickname for the California Condor?
 - a. Red head
 - b. Little wing
 - c. Big wing
 - d. Thunderbird

Go to this section: **Keeping clean**

- 6) Like an elephant's trunk or a polar bear's whiteness, the bald head of the condor is an **adaptation**. *Adaptations* are changes to the animal's body that help it to survive. Why is the condor's bald head an adaptation?
- The bald head reflects the sun.
 - The bald head makes it look scarier to predators.
 - The bald head helps the condor stay clean when eating.

Go to this section: **Cleanup crew**

- 7) Condors and vultures eat dead animals. They have an *adaptation* in their bellies. They do not get sick from rotting meat. Which of the following vocabulary words means an animal that eats other dead animals? (*Hint*: you may need to use a dictionary.)
- Carnivore
 - Scavenger
 - Herbivore
 - Cannibal

Go to this section: **Tip-top nests**

- 8) What are some places that a condor would like to make its nest? (Circle many).
- On a cliff
 - Near water
 - In a cave
 - In a nest
- 9) Which of the parent condors takes care of the baby condor?
- Mom
 - Dad
 - Both
 - Neither
- 10) Can the female lay a second egg?
- Yes
 - No
 - What's an egg?

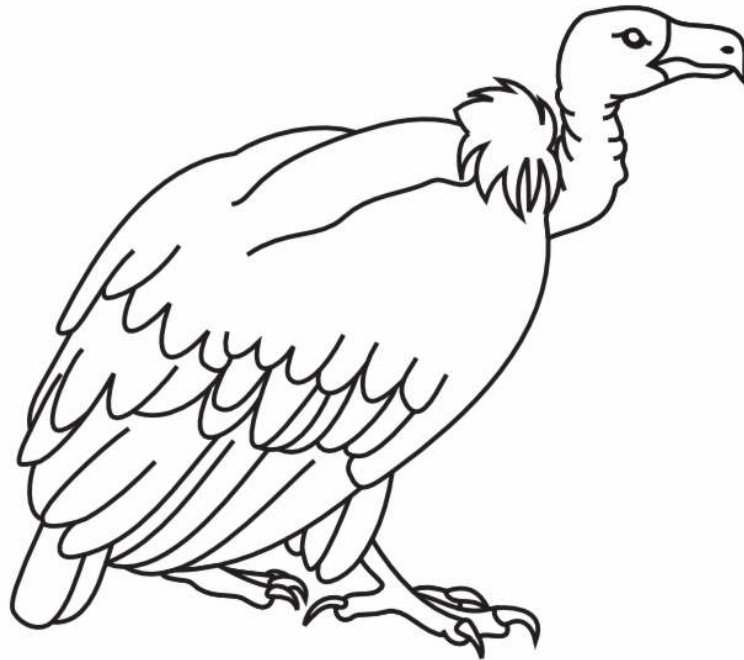
Go to this section: **A wing up**

- 11) **Breeding** means helping animals create babies under some kind of human protection. The San Diego Zoo created a breeding program for condors. How many condors are now in the wild?
- 22
 - 220
 - 500

Lastly, look at the next section: **red heads**

- 12) Study the three facts there. Write one here:

Color in your own Condor. Don't forget to give him or her a name, age, and favorite food!



Your condor's Name _____

Your condor's Age _____

Your condor's favorite food _____

Answer Key

- 1) This answer is open-ended. Some ideas for adjectives include big, bulky, black, red, white, winged, hunched, patient, still, friendly, calm, lazy, and ugly.
- 2) A
- 3) A
- 4) A
- 5) D
- 6) C
- 7) B
- 8) A, C
- 9) C
- 10) A
- 11) B
- 12) The three facts are:
 - a. When the condor gets excited, its head turns red.
 - b. It can eat between two and four pounds of food at once.
 - c. Condors have a white, triangular patch under their wings.

Glossary

- Adaptation (*add-app-tay-shun*) – How an animal's body changes over time to help it to survive (Example: Some animals can swim fast and their bodies are long and skinny).
- Adjective (*add-ject-iv*) – Part of a sentence that describes a person, place, or thing (Examples: Large, small, red, winged).
- Breeding (*Bree-ding*) – When animals make baby animals. In this case, human beings are helping condors to breed so that they become less endangered.
- Carrion (*care-e-on or carryon*) – The flesh or meat of dead animals.
- Endangered – (*en-dane-ger-d*) – When there are very few animals left and they might disappear forever or go extinct.
- Scavenger (*Scaa-ven-ger*) – An animal that eats other dead animals.