

# Species Fact Sheets

**Order:** Accipitriformes  
**Scientific Name:** *Gyps coprotheres*

**Family:** Accipitridae  
**Common Name:** Cape Vulture or Cape Griffon

**AZA Management:**  Green  Yellow  Red  None

**Photo (Male):**



Male smaller in size than female

**Photo (Female):**



Female larger in size than male

## NATURAL HISTORY:

<b>Geographic Range:</b>	Europe <input type="checkbox"/>	Asia <input type="checkbox"/>	North America <input type="checkbox"/>	Neotropical <input type="checkbox"/>
	Africa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Australia <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<b>Habitat:</b>	Forest <input type="checkbox"/>	Desert <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grassland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coastal <input type="checkbox"/>
	Riverine <input type="checkbox"/>	Montane <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Favors nests/ roosting on cliff sides</a>
<b>Circadian Cycle:</b>	Diurnal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Crepuscular <input type="checkbox"/>	Nocturnal <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>			
<b>Cold Tolerance:</b>	To 70° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 60° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 50° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 40° F <input type="checkbox"/>
	To 30° F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To 20° F <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<b>Heat Tolerance:</b>	To 30° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 50° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 70° F <input type="checkbox"/>	To 90° F <input type="checkbox"/>
	To 110° F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	
<b>Diet:</b>	Frugivore <input type="checkbox"/>	Carnivore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Piscivore <input type="checkbox"/>	Insectivore <input type="checkbox"/>
	Nectivore <input type="checkbox"/>	Omnivore <input type="checkbox"/>	Folivore <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Add Below) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Captive Dietary Needs:

Scavengers; feeding on carrion. Will eat bone fragments, soft muscles and organ tissues. Does well with a primary diet of whole rats and rabbits. Can consume bird of prey diet as well. Larger groups feed well on bigger whole prey items like goat or pig.

**Life Expectancy in the Wild:** Males: 20-25 years Females: 20-25 years

**Life Expectancy in Captivity:** Males: 25-30 years Females: 25-30 years

# Species Fact Sheets

## BREEDING INFORMATION:

**Age at Sexual Maturity:** Males: 5-6 years Females: 6-9 years

**Courtship Displays:** Pair formation may take anywhere from a matter of days to multiple years. Any individual which shows preference for another vulture (roosting close together, allo-preening, or occasional mounting) should be left with the other individual for at least a few years before determining it will or will not breed.

**Nest Site Description:** The large breeding colonies tend to build stick platforms along the ledges of cliffs, using soft grasses to line the nests. In captivity, birds have used wooden boxes, flat platforms, and other areas within their exhibits that they feel fitted to build on. Materials used are uprooted grass from the enclosure floor, and other tree branches/leaves provided by caretakers. The birds will also use own feathers to line the inside of the nest. Each breeding pair is unique in their nest building requirements. Some will build large nests, up to one meter high, while others prepare nests which are basic and more closely resemble wild nests. Providing nesting material daily once habitual copulations are noted, will allow for proper nest building within the pair.

**Clutch Size, Egg Description:** 1 egg, off white in color

**Incubation Period:** 55 days

**Fledgling Period:** 140 days

**Parental Care:** Both of the parents will incubate the egg. Once the chick is born, both the male and female will continue to care for it until it can feed and protect itself.

**Chick Development:** Hatchlings have grey skin, bare necks and heads, and white feathery downs. Food is regurgitated directly to the beak of hatchlings by adults. As chicks get older, food is regurgitated next to the chick for them to pick up. Calcium is crucial for proper chick bone development. It is vitally important to provide either intact small adult carcasses from which the parents can extract small bones or ready crushed bones to feed to chick. Around 4 months of age chicks are independent of parents but remain close until they are around a year old. Their down is replaced by a slightly darker plumage than the adults, the neck is pink, and eyes are brown, and remains this way for the first few years. Around the fourth and fifth year, they gain their dark brown center patches on the greater wing coverts and the scapulars. There is a white ruff at the neck base and the neck shows some sparse whitish down, and crown and nape are covered in white hairy feathers. Around the sixth year, the crop is dark brown, the bare shoulder patches are blue with reddish borders and the eyes are now a reddish-brown. The growth of their pale creamy-buff plumage, contrasting with the blackish-brown flight feathers and rectrices are signs of maturity, and can be used to estimate age.

## CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

**Social Structure in the Wild:** Gregarious species; seen in large groups or breeding pairs. Can live within colonies of up to 1,000

**Social Structure in Captivity:** Birds held in pairs and family groups with yearling offspring.

**Minimum Group Size:** 2

**Maximum Group Size:** 20 + offspring

# Species Fact Sheets

---

**Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:** Varies      **Comments:** Have been exhibit with marabou storks and large vultures.

**Optimal Habitat Size:** Large netted exhibits are optimal with privacy for nesting on high platforms. However, these birds are flexible and can be housed in a variety of enclosures.

**Management Challenges:** In some cases, aggressive displays and fighting amongst each other have been noted.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Some institutions use these raptors as program animals in wildlife/bird shows. Cape Griffon utters a combination of high-pitched, hoarse squeals. They are particularly vocal when feeding, defending their food noisily from smaller vultures as well as each other. Males and females are not sexually dimorphic and should be DNA sexed.

## REFERENCES:

[www.vulpro.com](http://www.vulpro.com)

[www.sa-venues.com](http://www.sa-venues.com)

[www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

## COMPLETED BY:

**Name:** Mallory Peebles- Birdshow Keeper Los Angeles Zoo

**Date:** 9/5/2017