



GAME AND FISH NEWS

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Arizona Game and Fish Department

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**California condor nestling is
first confirmed young of 2019 at
Vermilion Cliffs National Monument**



VERMILION CLIFFS, Ariz. — Many already know that northern Arizona's picturesque, red-rocked, steeply eroded Vermilion Cliffs are home to a bounty of wildlife. However, today it's also home to the state's newest resident: a recently hatched wild California condor nestling.

The nestling is the first confirmed hatching in the wild in Arizona this breeding season. Any additional birds only serve to help bolster the overall population of condors, which was listed as an endangered species in 1967.

A biologist with The Peregrine Fund confirmed seeing the first nestling of the current breeding season Tuesday, June 11. The young bird is believed to have hatched around April 23 to condors 266M (male) and 296F (female).

The historical California Condor population declined to just 22 individuals in the 1980s when the greater California Condor Recovery Program was initiated to save the species from extinction. Today the birds can be seen above Arizona, Utah, California and Mexico.

California condor populations have slowly increased since the first captive-reared birds were released into the wild at Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in 1996. As of December 2018, there were 488 total condors worldwide, with 166 in captivity and 312 in the wild, more than 88 of which can be seen soaring

above in Arizona and Utah skies.

With a wingspan of up to 9.5 feet, California condors are the largest flying land bird in North America and are opportunistic scavengers that utilize thermal updrafts to help them soar and glide up to 50 mph. They can also travel more than 100 miles per day in search of food.

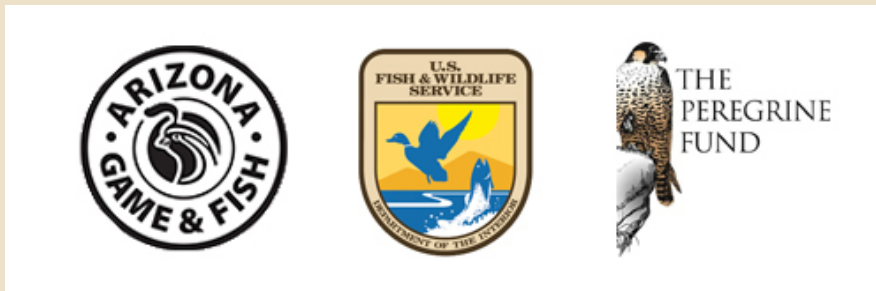
Condors can live up to 60 years in the wild and nest in caves or on rock ledges with a single egg laid on the floor of the cave or ledge. The egg then hatches about 56 days after incubation.

Young condors fledge — or take their first flight — at five to six months of age, but may stay in the nesting area for up to one year.

The Arizona-Utah recovery effort is a cooperative program by federal, state and private partners, including The Peregrine Fund, Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management's Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Grand Canyon and Zion national parks, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Kaibab and Dixie national forests among many other supporting groups and individuals.

For more information about California Condors in Arizona:

<http://www.peregrinefund.org/condor> or www.azgfd.gov/condor.



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