



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Contact**

Eddie Feltes, The Peregrine Fund, (928) 890-8276  
Chris Parish, The Peregrine Fund, (928) 606-5155  
Susan Whaley, The Peregrine Fund, (208) 362-8274  
Lynda Lambert, Arizona Game and Fish Department, (602) 789-3203  
Jeff Humphrey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (602) 242-0210, Ext. 222  
Rachel Tueller, Bureau of Land Management, (435) 688-3303  
Maureen Oltrogge, Grand Canyon National Park, (928) 638-7779  
Cory Maylett, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, (801) 518-6125

## **Peregrine Fund biologists confirm presence of record three wild-hatched condors in Grand Canyon area of northern Arizona**

VERMILION CLIFFS, Arizona – For the first time, three California Condor chicks have hatched in the wild in Arizona during a breeding season. A third chick was visually confirmed by Peregrine Fund field staff on Sept. 9. Previously, chicks had been observed on Aug. 20 and April 22.

“We are delighted to see our wild population reproducing and increasing their numbers on their own,” said Eddie Feltes, field manager for The Peregrine Fund in northern Arizona and southern Utah. “Three chicks in one year increases our confidence that this endangered species will thrive again someday without our assistance.”

The first chick was confirmed soon after it hatched in April because the nest was located in a place that allowed easier access for monitoring than the other two suspected nests, Feltes said.

“The other two nests were in caves deep in the Grand Canyon, making it more difficult to obtain good vantage points, but we were pretty sure there were chicks based on the behavior of the adults,” Feltes said. “The chicks were finally old enough to venture to the opening of the caves where we were able to see them with our own eyes.”

Two of the nests are located on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and one is on the Kaibab Plateau.

The three young condors – now about six months old -- bring to 15 the number of chicks hatched in the wild since condors were first released in Arizona in 1996. The

newest members of the wild flock are expected to take their first flights in October. They will remain dependent on their parents for about another year.

The chicks bring the total number of California Condors in the world to 396. Of those, 196 are in the wild, with 67 in the Arizona-Utah population. In the 1980s, the population had plunged to just 22.

The parents of the three chicks were produced in captivity at The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho, and the Los Angeles Zoo. Young birds are released to the wild at The Peregrine Fund's release site in Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in northern Arizona. The organization began raising condors in 1993, then releasing them to the wild near the Grand Canyon in 1996.

The recovery effort is a cooperative program by federal, state, and private partners, including the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Division, and Kaibab National Forest.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Prior to reintroduction, the last wild condor in Arizona was sighted just south of the Grand Canyon in 1924.
- Condors reach maturity at about six years of age. They usually produce one egg every other year.
- The condor is the largest land bird in North America. The birds can weigh up to 26 pounds and have a wingspan up to 9½ feet.
- Condors were added to the federal Endangered Species List in 1967.

For more information:

The Peregrine Fund  
[http://www.peregrinefund.org/conservation\\_category.asp?category=California%20Condor%20Restoration](http://www.peregrinefund.org/conservation_category.asp?category=California%20Condor%20Restoration)

Arizona Game and Fish Department

<http://www.azgfd.gov/condor>

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/california-condors.htm>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/CA\\_Condor.htm](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/CA_Condor.htm)

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