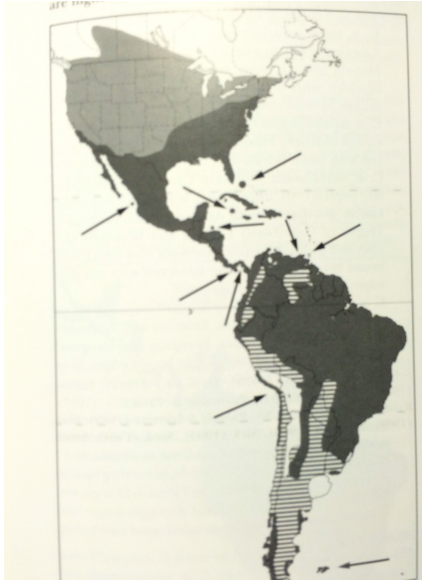


Turkey Vulture

Cathartes aura



Range: Canada to South America to Tierra del Fuego

Size: ♂:41- 45cm(40-64 in)

♀:41- 45cm (36-48in)

Weight :♂:~.9-2kg (2- 4.4lbs)

♀ :0.9- 2kg (2-4.4lbs)

Wing: 47- 56 cm

Habitat: lightly wooded country

Incubation: 38- 41 days

Eggs: 1-3 usually 2

Fledge: 10-12 weeks

Sexual maturity: 36-48 months

Nest: Scrape

Social: solitary or pairs

Breeding: monogamous courtship on ground

Movement : N.A. Migratory
S.A-sedentary

Food: carrion

IUCN: least concern

Subspecies : 6

Longevity: captive: 30yrs Wild:16 yrs

Order:Accipitriformes **Family:**Cathartidae

Unlike most birds the Turkey vulture has a highly developed sense of smell. The part of its brain responsible for processing smells is particularly large, compared to other birds. Its heightened ability to detect odors—it can detect just a few parts per trillion—allows it to find dead animals below a forest canopy.

The turkey vulture has few natural predators. Interestingly, turkey vultures often vomit when approached or harassed by predators, or when handled by researchers. The birds do not "projectile vomit," as many would claim. But they do indeed vomit when stressed, and this behavior may well have evolved as a means for vultures gorging on a carcass to off-load some weight when predators approach and the vulture has eaten too much to fly. (You can imagine how vultures will want to eat as much as possible, given the unpredictable nature of their food source, while still maintaining flight capabilities.) When turkey vultures vomit they simply cough up a lump of meat that can be fresh (if the vulture just fed) or semi-digested and foul-smelling. Some believe this regurgitant may "gross out" would-be predators, but this may be an explanation based on human sensibilities. More often than not, the regurgitated food may in fact be eaten by the predator, which takes the

free meal rather than continuing to pursue the vulture.

