

VULTURE, RUPPELL'S GRIFFON

RANGE:

Central Africa.

HABITAT:

Barren areas such as mountain steppes, high plateaus and cliffs.

SIZE:

Weight: 15-18 lbs.

Wingspan: 6-8 feet

LIFE EXPECTANCY:

Wild: Unknown.

Captivity: Approximately 30-40 years.

REPRODUCTION:

- Breeding from May to September, high in the mountains where there are cliffs and deep ravines.
- Nests in trees and on rocks, with nests built of twigs, grass and excrement.
- Incubation period is 54 days with parents sharing incubation duties.

DIET:

Wild: Large dead animals, eating only the flesh and intestines.

Captivity: Bird of prey diet, rats, mice and chicks.

BEHAVIOR:

- Very social birds.
- Usually nest in loose colonies of up to 100 pairs, but have been seen in colonies up to 1,000 pairs.
- Colonies are found in open, arid areas.
- Prefers open areas, since they hunt for carcasses using sight, not smell.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Distinguished by a slender, relatively weak beak and a long goose-like neck of even thickness.
- Tail is rounded.
- Ruff is found only on the back of the neck and consists of dense quill and down feathers.
- Circling motion in the sky is an alert to other vultures that a carcass has been spotted.
- A group of vultures can devour an antelope carcass in 20 minutes.

STATUS:

Common, however populations in decline due to human encroachment and habitat destruction.

REFERENCES:

Griffon Vulture- <http://www.theoaklandzoo.org>

Ruppell's Griffon Vulture- <http://www.thebigzoo.com>

theZOO
LOUISVILLE

PHOTO
COMING
SOON

Order:	Falconiformes
Family:	Accipitridae
Genus:	Gyps
Species:	rueppelli