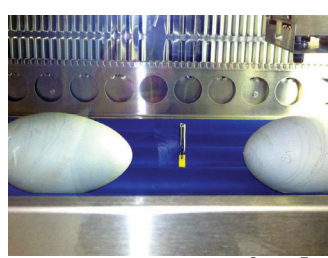


Oregon condor program adds nine new prospects

During a blessing ceremony seventeen years ago, Atwai Wasco Chief Nelson Wallumatum bestowed the name Kun-wak-shun upon the first California condor chick hatched at the Oregon Zoo. The Wasco name Kun-wak-shun refers to thunder and lightning—the traditional Native association of the condor: The bird's voice was thunder and its eyes would flash lightning. In some Wasco tradition the condor came from the Pacific Ocean. In later and more ominous years a darker association arose, as the bird was often seen during the smallpox, malaria and other plagues that settlers brought to Native Columbia River tribes.

The condor is among the sacred Native wildlife, and



In-captivity condor eggs are kept in an incubator.

its likeness is a traditional element in beadwork, basketry, regalia and hieroglyphic designs of the Paiute, Wasco and Ichishkeen tribes of the Northwest.

Atwai Chief Wallumatum long advocated for the return of the California condor, or Thunderbird, to the Northwest. And so in 2004 he was asked to bestow a name upon the first in-captivity Oregon Zoo chick, Kun-wak-shun.

The Native history of the condor is from time immemorial. For example: At ancient tribal village sites along the Columbia, archaeologists have found 9,000-year-old condor bones. Because of the accumulation of bones at specific sites, speculation is that Wasco people may for some reason have kept the birds in captivity.

In the nineteenth century the arrival of non-Native settlers brought the demise of the condor to the Oregon Territory and beyond. Lead poisoning was a main cause: The adult condors would ingest carrion and other game that had been shot with lead bullets. Passing through the system, the eggs of these condors were then decimated. The plight of the species was such that in

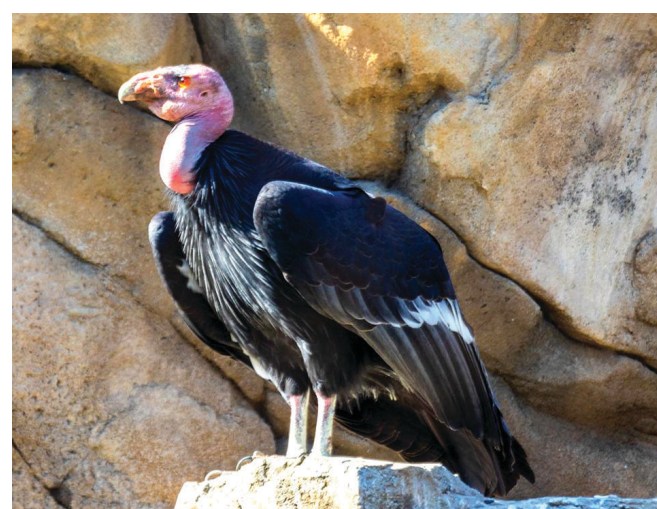
1987 U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists captured all of the remaining wild California condors in North America. At the time there were 22 of them.

Through a captive breeding program, in partnership with the San Diego Zoo and others, biologists in 1992 reintroduced condors into the wild. Today, there may be more than 300 of the birds in the wild.

In more recent years, with lead bullets banned from hunting, a challenge in California has been loss of habitat due to wildfires.

Wild California condors live in California, Arizona, Utah and Baja California, Mexico. As of yet they do not live in the wild in Oregon or the Northwest.

The Oregon Zoo joined



Condor at the Oregon Zoo.

the California condor breeding program in 2003, when they welcomed their first six breeding pairs.

The following year saw the birth of the zoo's first in-captivity chick, Kun-wak-shun. And this year the zoo reports the breeding pairs

have produced nine additional condor chick eggs.

At adulthood the condors will grow to be the largest North American birds with a wingspan up to ten feet.

— Dave McMechan

"We love our elders, our friends, and our community. That's why we are careful to protect everyone."

Brennan & Mateja Sutterlee



#EmpowerWarmSprings