

# Ruppell's Griffon Vulture

*Gyps rueppellii*



Photo credit: Mel Covey



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## Species Status

- IUCN:** Critically Endangered
- ESA Status:** Not Listed
- CITES:** Appendix II
- TAG:** Raptor TAG
- AZA SSP DESIGNATION:** Yellow

**GEOGRAPHIC REGION:** Africa  
**BIOME:** Savanna

## EXHIBIT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

### HUSBANDRY AND CARE

#### SPECIAL EXHIBIT CONSIDERATION

<b>Outdoor Climate Conditions:</b>	kept outdoors except for severe weather (freezing rain or temperatures below 25F)
<b>Substrate:</b>	grass covered yards ideal; textured floor in indoor spaces; avoid rugs and bar matting due to tendency of vultures to tear these up; hay or wood used, and gravel, decomposed granite, and pea gravel avoided due to possible ingestion risk
<b>Ideal Carrying Capacity:</b>	frequently housed in pairs, but if space allows then multiple pairs ideal
<b>Size of Space:</b>	indoor stall minimum size 18' x 18' for a pair; outdoor space minimum 15' x 10' but larger spaces preferred; closed-top, free-flight aviaries preferred, to increase the number of facilities that could hold flighted vultures
<b>Complexity of Space:</b>	ground perching opportunities and sufficient ground space to build a nest (minimum 6' x 6') for flight-restricted birds; multiple levels of sturdy perches for flighted birds (hardwoods with plenty of texture for grip preferred); platform or building structure large enough to support a nest needed in place of nest building
<b>Breeding Environment:</b>	outdoor enclosure preferred for breeding; copulating, egg-laying, incubating, hatching, and rearing all possible in multi-species enclosures with sufficient space, given area of refuge; large amounts of nesting materials needed for success

#### OPTIMAL EXHIBIT FEATURES

Areas for privacy or hiding, Large colony/herd/group management, Open space for free flight, Perching area, Properly spaced nest sites, Sunlight/basking area

### SPECIES APPEAL

- Candidate species for AZA SAFE
- Inexpensive to hold (less than \$1000 per year)
- Assurance population
- Warm weather tolerant
- Multi-species opportunities
- TAG priority species
- Conservation significance
- Well established husbandry

### MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Wildlife trade
- Poaching/illegal take
- Human-wildlife conflict
- Endangered species conservation
- Habitat loss

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## MULTI - SPECIES EXHIBIT OPPORTUNITIES

- Kudu, Greater
- Springbok, South African
- Secretarybird
- Crane, Grey-Crowned
- Kudu, Lesser
- Ostrich
- Hog, Red River
- Stork, Marabou
- Hornbill, Trumpeter
- Gazelle, Thomson's
- Secretarybird
- Hornbill, Northern Ground
- Bontebok
- Crane, Black Crowned
- Impala
- Bird (Various spp.) - Hornbill
- Eland, Common
- Gerenuk
- Hornbill, Southern Ground
- Hornbill, Red-Billed
- Giraffe

## NON - SSP SPECIES THAT COULD BE SUBSTITUTED BY RUPPELL'S GRIFFON VULTURE

- none identified

SPECIES BIOLOGY	
Activity pattern:	Diurnal
Potential risk to humans:	Sharp bill or beak, Talons
Diet	commercial meat diet, rabbits, rats, knuckle bones
Health and Veterinary	typical raptor care
Social	typically kept in pairs, but mixed-sex groups also successful
OFFSPRING HOUSING and REPRODUCTION	
General Offspring Holding:	institutions expected to hold 8 to 12 months
Number of Offspring per Reproductive Event:	1
Gestation or Incubation:	54 to 62 days
Weaning, Fledging or Metamorphosis:	12 weeks
General Offspring with Parent:	around 1 year; parent independent until ~10 months

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## SSP SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE

**Current Size:** 60 (29.31.0) at 18 institutions (3 non-AZA )

**SSP Coordinator:** Mr. Bryan Emberton  
(bryan.emberton@disney.com)

### CURRENT POPULATION SUMMARY

The Raptor TAG has set a target population size of 75 animals in the Ruppell's Griffon Vulture SSP population. The managed population has been increasing ( $\lambda = 1.03$ ) historically, and has retained 88.26% of its founding gene diversity.

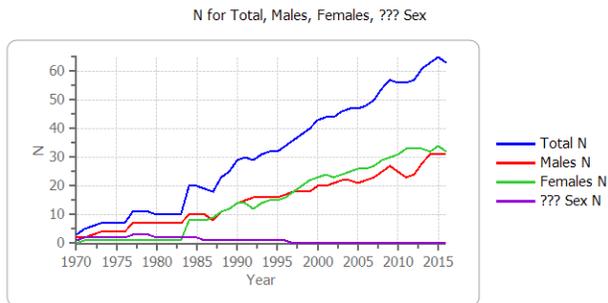


Figure 1: Census of managed Ruppell's griffon vultures in the AZA population over time, by sex. Breeding and Transfer Plan 2017

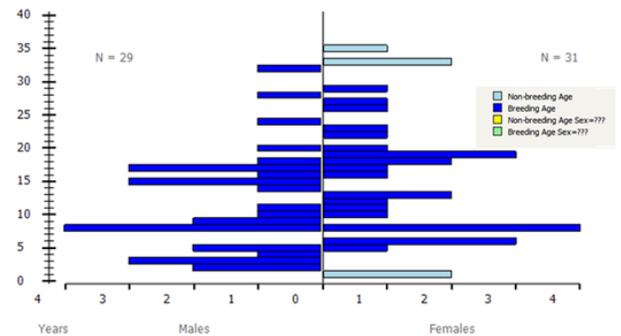


Figure 2: Age pyramid of the AZA Ruppell's griffon vulture population. Breeding and Transfer Plan 2017

### PROJECTED POPULATION SUMMARY

Population Viability Analysis has not yet been conducted for this population. Estimates indicate the gene diversity is likely to be reduced to 77% over the next 100 years under current management trends.

No Image available

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## CHALLENGES TO SSP POPULATION SUSTAINABILITY

CHALLENGE	GOAL	ACTION	NEED
Ambassador Animal	Increase reproductive output or recommended breeding pairs	Include reproductively viable ambassador animals in breeding population	At least 3 birds are in education programs. These birds, while serving a great purpose, could be utilized in breeding situations. The population needs to grow in numbers to reach the TAG goals.
Demographics	Promote stable recruitment	Adhere to breeding and transfer recommendations from the SSP	This population is somewhat columnar with even age distribution. An aggressive but achievable Breeding and Transfer Plan will give this population an increase in young birds over the next 10 years and help achieve a more classic bell curve profile.
Genetics	Improve founder representation	Adhere to breeding and transfer recommendations from the SSP	Some founders in the population have not yet bred, and their unique lineages may be lost without their contribution to the population through future generations. This Breeding and Transfer Plan targets these individuals, and institutions are asked to make every effort to fulfill recommendations.
	Increase genetic diversity by importing reproductively viable individuals	Identify institutions to support importation	Gene diversity has already likely been lost from the original founder group. Unrelated individuals may be available in EAZA facilities, if young enough founders are identified, or from South African rescue facilities, if an institution is willing to support an import with the TAG approval. Interested institutions are encouraged to contact the SSP Coordinator to discuss plans.

## REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES AVAILABLE

- None

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## ACQUISITIONS AND TRANSFERS

### IMPORTS, EXPORTS AND REINTRODUCTIONS

Imports	Rescued individuals may be available from South Africa, but currently exports from SA are prohibited. Other imports may come from EAZA facilities, depending on availability.
Exports	There are no plans to export at this time.

### CHALLENGES TO ACQUISITIONS AND TRANSFERS

Regulatory	Exports from South Africa are currently prohibited.
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\*DISCLAIMER: This report was last updated on 08/16/2017. The AZA Species Sustainability Database and SSP Sustainability Reports were developed through funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Content is based on Animal Program recommendations and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums or other collaborating institutions. Modeling results and analyses are based on the best understanding of the current population dynamics and should not be regarded as absolute predictions. The use of this report should be in accordance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Some government laws and regulations may be referenced, but these are not all-inclusive nor is this report intended to serve as an evaluation tool. Please consult the SSP Coordinator if you are considering incorporating this species into a zoo or aquarium, or with questions regarding husbandry practices.