



The Bird Rescue Center  
of Sonoma County

## A Tale of Two TUVU's (Turkey Vultures)



Some people really dislike Turkey Vultures because they think they're gross, but the more you work with them you see how amazing their structures are (to be able to eat ANYTHING and not get sick), inquisitive and (dare I say) how playful they are. One issue with baby Turkey Vultures is that their sense of smell is so incredibly keen that they imprint on whatever is feeding them almost immediately. The association of the feeder's scent and food scent becomes so strongly

linked that even with precautions of masks, puppets, seclusion, etc. they STILL may imprint and be forced to live their days, that should have been full of free flight, in captivity. We will tease you here with a story of 2 tiny chicks that came into our rehabilitation hospital this year. **WARNING: THESE CHICKS WERE BROUGHT TO US LIKELY AS A RESULT OF THE EGGS BEING TAKEN FROM THE NEST AND ATTEMPTED TO BE INCUBATED.** Fish and Wildlife was involved in receiving more information as Turkey Vultures are so susceptible to imprinting and it is completely illegal to disturb a native, wild nest let alone attempting to raise wildlife without any permits. Now that you have heard our side, we will let them tell their side of the story!

I felt a rolling, then like I was being lifted away... Trying to break out of my shell took what seemed like forever. My eyes aren't open yet, but the smells are a little funny. I peck around and find my brother still slumbering inside his egg. I'm making my hunger noise, but Mom and Dad must be busy.

Brother is starting to hatch now, I can hear it. It's taking him a while and he's not as noisy as he was earlier today. Mom and Dad must be having trouble finding food. I've been calling all day. It's also getting colder, I'm used to Mom's warmth on me.

I can't make my calls very well now. I can't hear Brother anymore either, every now and then just a scratch. I don't know what's going on with Mom and Dad, but I'm just so hungry and cold. We're being lifted again and going somewhere.

There's some murmuring and.. **WARMTH!!**  
We must be back with Mom and Dad! I think I'll take a rest now that I'm

comfortable again...

Brother! I hear him scratching again and making calls like me! His egg is lifted out of the warmth, there's some mumbling again. He's been returned without his egg. I'm glad Mom and Dad were able to help him out of it. He was having trouble and I was afraid he wasn't going to make it out.



I'm lifted out, stretched, and FINALLY SOME FOOD! No real noises other than a hum where the warmth is and it smells funny here too. I'm placed back with Brother then he leaves, Mom and Dad are probably feeding him too. He returns and nuzzles me, I nuzzle him back. He's fluffier than he was before. Tonight was a good night.

I wake up and my eyes can open just a bit. Everything is a little blurry, but large bushes are moving in and out of the area. Suddenly our whole warm area is moved and there's not as much commotion. We can sleep in peace now and Brother is much more fun to be around now that he's not stuck in his egg. Mom and Dad are feeding us until we fall asleep every few hours, though they look and smell weird. When we are put back in the warm nest there are feathers all around us now that smell better than Mom and Dad.



(To Be Continued....)

Those feathers were Bird Rescue's resident Turkey Vultures' molted feathers and used to provide ambient, natural musty smell of Turkey Vultures to hopefully delay any smell-imprinting by the babies. One of our resident vultures, Arnold, has his 35th birthday coming up celebrated as the Festival of Feathers. He was admitted to BRC on 8/8/1982 for Damage due to being hit by a car and has lived in residency for 35 years.

Stay tuned for what happens to the baby vultures (it's a nail biter) and say thank you to Arnold (and Barf) at Arnold's birthday party/Festival of Feathers on Sept. 23rd.



## Upcoming events

18  
RESIDENT  
RAPTORS  
UP-CLOSE

enjoy  
APPETIZERS &  
REFRESHMENTS

fun  
EDUCATIONAL  
ACTIVITIES  
& GAMES

RAFFLE  
prizes!

Join the fun at the 5th Annual  
**Festival of Feathers!**

Saturday Sept 23 11am - 3pm  
3430 Chanate Road in Santa Rosa **it's free!**

A close-up photograph of an owl's face, showing its large yellow eyes and detailed feather patterns.

[Festival of Feathers September 23rd, 2017](#)



## Open House

[September 2nd, 2017 - 10am to 12pm](#)  
[October 7th, 2017 - 10am to 1pm](#)



## Different ways to support us

You can support The Bird Rescue Center through:

- **Amazon Smile**
- **Olivers**
- **Escrip program**
  1. *Luckys*
  2. *Fircrest (Sebastopol)*
  3. *Glen Ellen Market*
  4. *Molsberry Market*
  5. *Petaluma Market*
  6. *Sonoma Market*



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