



Ranger Marcy's Acorn Adventure: Gobble up Turkey Tracks & Facts!



Unscramble the Turkey Words Below:

1. Forests, pastures, cornfields and hayfields make up a wild turkey's **B A T I T A H**.
2. Young turkeys are called **U T O L S P**.
3. A tom turkey has **S R U P S** on its legs and a **D E R B A** on its chest.
4. Turkeys eat primarily **R N A O C S**, **F R T I U S** and **S N S I T C E**.
5. Adult male turkeys are called **T S M O** and adult female turkeys are called **S E H N**.

Welcome Back Wild Turkey

Although wild turkeys were common in Connecticut when the first settlers arrived and are common today, this was not always the case.

*Turkeys disappeared from the state by the early 1800s due to clearing of their forest habitat, overhunting (there were no laws to protect them like there are today) and several bad winters which caused many turkeys to starve because they could not find food.

*By the 1950s, many forests grew back and wildlife biologists and sportsmen began looking for ways to bring the turkey back to Connecticut.

*In 1975, 22 wild turkeys from New York were live-captured (using a large net carried over the birds by 3 small rockets) and then released in the northwest corner of Connecticut. This population grew to such a large number that they could be captured and moved to other towns.

*Now, between 18,000 to 25,000 wild turkeys are found throughout the state. To pay for this project, Connecticut received money from a program called the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act. By paying a special tax on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment, sportsmen provide money for wildlife projects like Connecticut's turkey restoration project.

Q&A with a Turkey Biologist:

Where do turkeys live?

A: Wild turkeys mainly live in the forest, spending their days feeding on acorns, berries and other fruit and roosting in trees at night. Their habitat also includes pastures, cornfields and hayfields where they feed on seeds and insects.

Why do turkeys gobble?

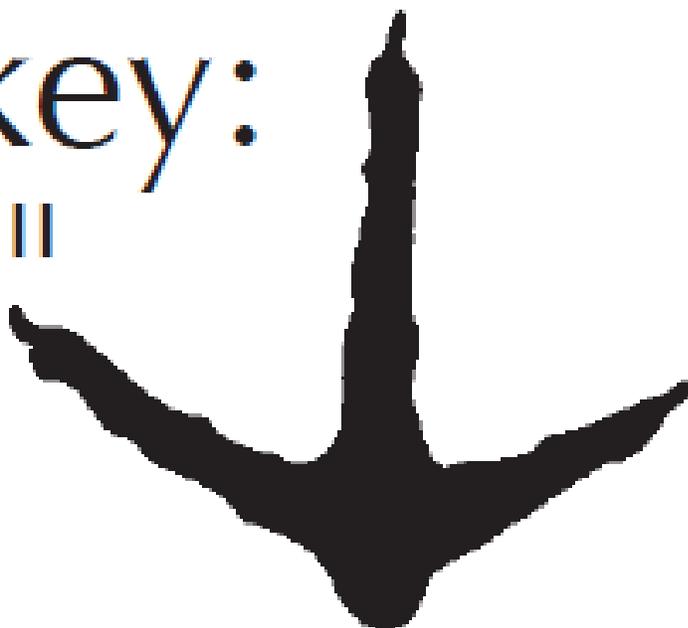
A: Only male turkeys gobble and they do so because they want to attract hens for mating purposes. Males will also gobble at loud noises such as thunder, owl hoots, coyote howls or crow calls: however, no one is sure why they do this.

Can turkeys fly?

A: Wild turkeys are good fliers and can fly as fast as 55 miles per hour. Young turkeys can make their first flights at about eight to 10 days old.

Turkey:

4"



The tracks of an adult tom are 6 to 7 inches long; adult hen tracks are 4.5 to 5 inches long.

More Turkey Talk to Gobble up!

Description: Adult males weigh between 15 and 25 pounds, and measure 48 inches. Adult females are smaller, weighing between 8 and 12 pounds and measuring 36 inches.

Males or “toms” are dark in coloration with iridescent feathers. They have a fleshy, unfeathered head that is brightly-colored in red, white, and blue, especially during the mating season. Toms also have spurs (up to 1.5 inches in length) on their legs, and a hair-like beard (up to 12 inches long) protruding from their breast.

Female turkeys (hens) are lighter in coloration (brown and buff colored). They lack spurs and have a pale blue head. Although uncommon, a small percentage of hens will have a beard.

Habitat and Diet: Wild turkeys live in a mixture of mature hardwood forests and open fields. They frequently forage in fields that border forestland. The diet of wild turkeys include acorns and other mast (hard fruit), fleshy fruits, corn, a variety of seeds, and invertebrates. Young turkeys (poults) feed heavily on insects.

Life History: The breeding season starts in late March and early April when toms begin gobbling and displaying for the hens. Hens lay a clutch of 8 to 14 eggs at the rate of about 1 egg per day. The eggs are incubated for 28 days beginning when the final egg is laid. Once hatched, the poults will remain with the hen throughout summer, fall, and winter. In late summer, hens with their broods will join up to form flocks. Flocks can be as big as 100 birds, usually have from 10 to 20 birds. On occasion, adult toms will join the flock, but more often will form groups of their own or travel as individuals.

All this info came from the [ct.gov/deep](http://www.ct.gov/deep) website turkey facts page:
<http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?A=2723&Q=326110>

Just for Kids Page: http://www.ct.gov/Deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=326216&deepNav_GID=1655

Turkey Cookies to Make and Gobble up!



Sugar cookies (or some other flat cookie)
M&Ms
Candy corn
Tube of decorative frosting