

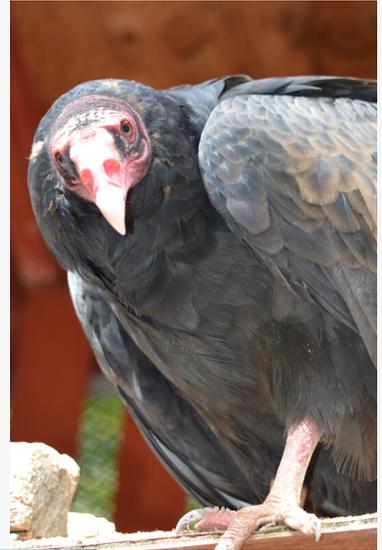
# Vultures

## A Raptor Trust Story & Workbook

Vultures are very common in New Jersey. There are two species of vultures here: Black Vultures and Turkey Vultures. They belong to a group of birds called "raptors." Raptors are predatory birds who hunt for their prey. All raptors have **excellent eyesight, hooked beaks, and strong talons.**

Vultures are unique in that they have all these things, but they prefer to **scavenge** for their food. They play a very important role as nature's clean-up crew. By removing dead animals from the landscape, vultures help to stop the spread of disease from animals to people. Vultures have excellent immune systems and can feast on dead animals without contracting any diseases.

The Raptor Trust is home to two turkey vultures, Virgil and Templeton, and one black vulture, Irving. All three of them were brought in as **imprinted** babies, meaning they were used to people, and were not able to be released as a result.



Virgil

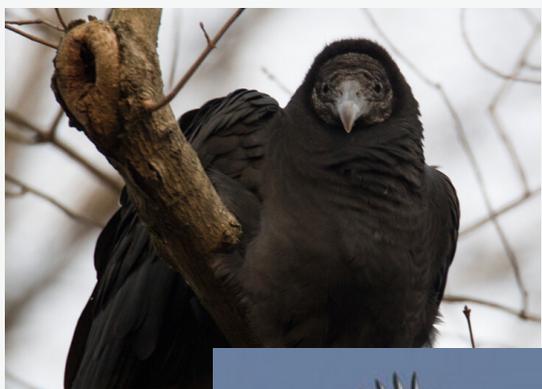


Templeton



Irving

Turkey Vultures like to cruise around riding on currents of air called **thermals** and **updrafts** in open areas. They are commonly seen along roadways and at landfills. At night they roost in high, secluded spots, such as trees and high rocks. Unlike other birds, **turkey vultures have an excellent sense of smell**, and use it to find their prey. They prefer to eat mammals, but will also dine upon fish, reptiles, and other birds.

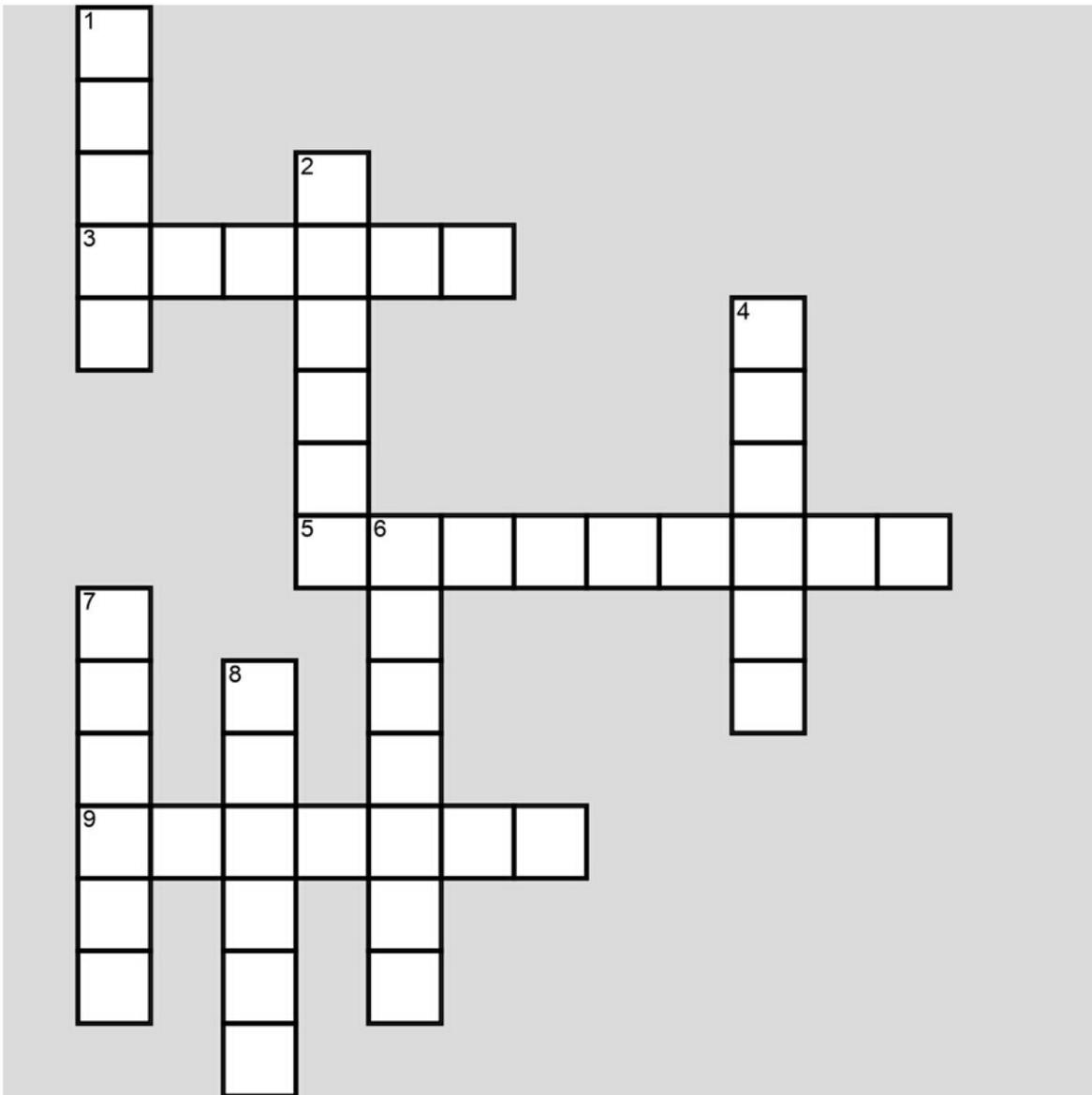


Black Vultures prefer forested and open areas. Historically they were found only in the southern United States, but have expanded their range northward into New England. Like turkey vultures, black vultures can be seen flying overhead, cruising the skies in search of a meal. Unlike turkey vultures, black vultures will occasionally kill their prey. They do not have a very good sense of smell like turkey vultures do. Sometimes Black Vultures will wait for Turkey Vultures to find **carrion**, and then push them out of the way to feed. Black Vultures feed their young for as long as eight months and maintain strong social bonds with their families throughout their lives.

Both species of vultures nest in rock crevices, caves, ledges, thickets, abandoned buildings, hollow logs, and fallen trees. They do not build a nest, but lay their eggs in a **scrape**. They have high **nest site fidelity**, meaning they will return to their nest sites year after year. Some pairs will use their nest site for over a decade.

# Vultures

Complete the crossword puzzle using the clues below.



## Across

- 3 A type of bird's nest on the ground
- 5 An animal that searches for carrion
- 9 Animal that is used to people

## Down

- 1 Where a bird sleeps at night
- 2 Nails on a raptor
- 4 One of TRT's turkey vultures
- 6 Food that is already dead
- 7 The Raptor Trust's Black Vulture
- 8 Bird of prey

# Vultures

Circle the places a vulture would like to make its nest.



# Vultures

Circle the words from the word bank.

J U Q I M P R I N T A C V S L  
P U U R Q U S P V I O T G H R  
I B P V B N C E I W I E C E A  
J A D I U S A R R E O M E E P  
S O R N D H V V G N H P T R T  
C X A G K U E Y I H P L M C O  
R V F R O R N T L Z R E F A R  
A U T X H Y G L N Z I T Q R Y  
P L J R B I E Q F V W O R R W  
E T X T H E R M A L G N E I C  
J U X Z E N U P R E D A T O R  
F R Y J Q I H T B T A L O N S  
B E A K L F Z U E N K R H E W  
S F R I N W G W F C U B K S I  
I F Y Q I Y A R Z S L C J T F

BEAK  
IRVING  
RAPTOR  
TALONS  
UPDRAFT

CARRION  
NEST  
SCAVENGER  
TEMPLETON  
VIRGIL

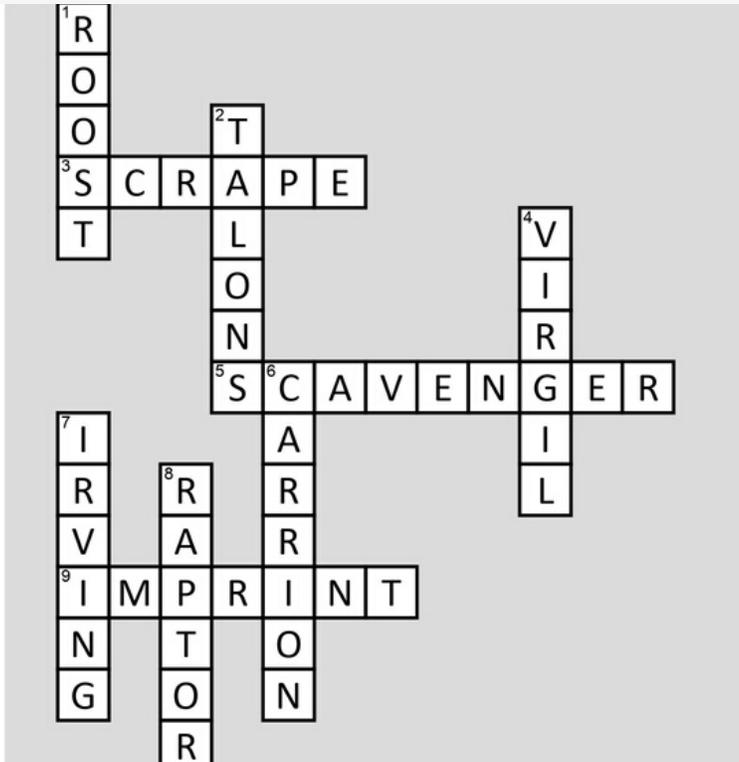
IMPRINT  
PREDATOR  
SCRAPE  
THERMAL  
VULTURE



**Draw your  
own vulture**

# Vulture Answer Key

Vulture Crossword Puzzle:



Places a vulture would nest:



Word Search Answers:

