

## An Eurasian Griffon *Gyps fulvus* disadvantaged for feeding

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An Eurasian Griffon *Gyps fulvus* suffering from a possible disadvantage for feeding was observed in Chibluco, Sierra de Guara, Huesca province, northern Spain (42 °12'N, 0°21'W), on 29 September 2010 while monitoring the vultures present at a feeding site (“muladar”); see Pictures 1 to 3. A griffon was observed feeding amongst around 300 griffon vultures present at the feeding site. They are provided with pig carcass food remains on a weekly basis and photographers can take close-up pictures.

The bird had a perforation just on the throat that left the tongue outside the skin, and the tongue moved forward and backward while the bird was eating. While ingesting, some amounts of meat were lost through the perforation. It was aged as sub-adult or nearly adult based on the reddish eye colour and shape of the ruff feathers. This feeding site has been monitored on a weekly basis for several years with similar vulture

numbers each week. This was however the first occasion that this particular vulture was seen in the area.

In recent years we also described a case that was supposed to be a bill abnormality in this species (Abrego *et al.* 2007). In that case the bird was seen while filming carrion-eating species c.a. 75 km southeast. A not so detailed view of that individual gave us the impression of an abnormal beak, but probably both were a similar case but not the same birds. This second one is younger than that recorded in 2006. Being fast feeders, griffons have an adaptation of the tongue that favours scooping food down their throats (King *et al.* 1977, Mundy *et al.* 1992). As we already stated (Abrego *et al.* 2007) this is the second case ever recorded that has not been published previously. In each case it did not appear that the “damage” was a disadvantage to the birds to get food and survive.



**References**

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