

An albino Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* in Spain

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On 4th August 2006 an albino Eurasian Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) was photographed in Los Fayos (Zaragoza province, Northern Spain 41° 52'N 1° 46'W) by two of us (F. H. and D. B.). The bird was roosting on the vulture colony just over the roofs of the above mentioned village.

As it can be distinguished by the shape of ruff feathers, it seems to be a juvenile or immature bird. Other characteristics

such as the eye colour are not enough distinguishable. As result of the photograph analysis (lack of pigmentation) we conclude it is an albino vulture.

From September 2005 to March 2008 the area where the vulture was seen (25 km radius) has been periodically patrolled while vulture monitoring activities. Over this time at least 3,000 Eurasian griffons have been counted at feeding sites, flying over wind farms or breeding cliffs.

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Furthermore, around 225 vultures have died after colliding with turbine blades. However, a conspicuous bird like this has never been re-sighted in the area.

In the literature no detailed descriptions on similar cases have been described

(Mundy et al. 1992). Only a partial albino or leucistic griffon vulture was seen close from this point, only 9.58 km far (Camiña 2005). Similar cases have been described both for the New and Old World Vultures (Clark & Leshem 1988, GGRO 2004).

References:

Camiña, A. 2005. A leucistic or partial albino Eurasian Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*). *Vulture News* 52: 34

Clark, W. & Leshem, Y. 1988. Partial albino Lappetfaced Vulture in Kenya. *Ostrich* 59: 44-45.

Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO). 2004. Leucistic Turkey Vultures. *Vulture News* 50: 53-55

Mundy, P.J., Butchart, D., Ledger, J. & Piper, S. 1992. *The Vultures of Africa*. Academic Press, London.

