

Condor chick confirmed at Zion National Park in Utah

July 11 2019, by Lindsay Whitehurst



In this April 19, 2014 photo provided by the National Park Service shows a female California condor at Utah's Cable Mountain in Zion National Park, Utah. Biologists have confirmed that this female California condor laid an egg that has hatched at the park and there's a new baby condor. Park rangers said Tuesday, July 11, 2019, they estimate the California condor hatched in May, nestled in a crevice of a sweeping red-rock cliff. (National Park Service via AP)

A sweeping red-rock cliff at Utah's Zion National Park is now the home of a new California condor chick as the species makes a comeback in the wild three decades after they were on the brink of extinction, biologists have confirmed.

The chick is believed to have hatched in early May on the cliffs just north of Angels Landing, park rangers said. If it survives to flying age in November, it will be the first chick to fledge at the [park](#).

"We're hoping it does fledge, it takes off out of the nest and successfully flies off," said Eugene Moisa with Zion National Park on Wednesday.

Birds raised in captivity were first released at Vermilion Cliffs near the Arizona-Utah line in 1996, and now more than 88 flying in the two states.

The new chick's parents are the only identified breeding pair in Zion, and are estimated to have been together two years. The female was born in 2006 at the San Diego Zoo and the male hatched in 2009 in Boise, Idaho, before being released into the wild.

They were bred as part of a program that started after the number of California condors were left in the world dwindled to 22. The remaining wild condors were captured and held in captivity to keep them safe and launch the [breeding program](#) involving [government agencies](#), private organizations, citizens and biologists.



This March 2019 photo taken through a spotting scope and provided by the National Park Service shows a condor nesting site in Zion National Park, Utah. Biologists have confirmed that this female California condor laid an egg that has hatched and there's a new baby condor at Zion National Park in southwest Utah. Park rangers said Thursday, July 11, 2019, they estimate the California condor hatched in May, nestled in a crevice of a sweeping red-rock cliff. (National Park Service via AP)



In this May 13, 2019 photo provided by the National Park Service is a female condor in Zion National Park, Utah. Biologists have confirmed that this female California condor laid an egg that has hatched and there is a new baby condor at Zion National Park in southwest Utah. Park rangers said Thursday, July 11, 2019, they estimate the California condor hatched in May, nestled in a crevice of a sweeping red-rock cliff. (National Park Service via AP)

The Zion chick marks the 1,000 hatched as part of the program, and the surviving [condor](#) population now numbers more than 500. More than half of those birds are living in the wild along a range that includes Arizona, Utah, northern Mexico, and California.

Eggs are typically laid on the floor of caves or large crevices, and the parents share incubation duties. Baby condors typically make their first flight after six months but might stay in the nesting area for up to a year as their parents feed it and teach it how to savage for meat.

That means the condors can only reproduce every two years at most, and at Zion three chicks have been born but died before they were old enough to fly.

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