

The “Dead Turkey Observation and Examination Quiz”

So you have your turkey in hand. You check out the spurs & beard, spread that tail, heft it up for the weight, and smooth out those beautiful feathers. But have you ever REALLY taken a good look at a turkey. There is a lot more to a turkey if you take some time to observe.

This quiz is about what you might observe with a bird in hand. It deals with the typical characteristics of the wild turkey. There are many anomalies in nature but we are not concerned with those here, just what is normally found.

This is a fun quiz. There are no prizes, just anatta boy or two if you do well. Test what you know, don't go googling or checking your mounts first.

Disclaimer: I am not a scientist or biologist. On many of the answers the proof is in the pictures. A few answers have no picture and, to the best of my knowledge ,and my limited research, they are correct.

Question 1. We all know that a gobbler will wear the tips of his primary wing feathers as they drag on the ground while he struts. A turkey has 10 primaries on each wing.



Q1: How many of those primary wing tips show any wear on each wing?

- A. 3 to 4
- B. 5 to 6
- C. 7 to 8
- D. 9 to 10

Question 2. Speaking of worn primaries.

Q2: Does a hen wear the tips of her primary feathers like a gobbler?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 3: This is an empty crop from an adult gobbler. Turkeys store food in their crop as they feed and then digest it later. This allows them to feed fast when necessary and limit their exposure to inclement weather and predators.

Q3: Approximately how big will a gobbler's crop be when it is stuffed completely full?

- A. 3 by 5 inches
- B. 4 by 6 inches
- C. 5 by 7 inches



Question 4: Turkeys have no teeth. On the back of the tongue there are some small appendages to facilitate the intake of food.

Q4: Is the roof of a turkey's mouth smooth or are there also appendages there.

- A. Smooth
- B. There are appendages



Question 5: Many feathers on a gobbler have black tips. A gobbler has a large iridescent and somewhat bronze colored patch of wing feathers known as the speculum.

Q5: Are these speculum feathers tipped black?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 6: Turkeys have 3 forward toes that make their track unique and easy to identify. The middle toe of a turkey is the longest and can help us identify who made it, hen or gobbler.

Q6: Which toe is the second longest?

- A. The outer toe
- B. The inner toe
- C. The inner and outer toes are the same length

Question 7: Turkeys have excellent eyes. Their primary function seems to be busting turkey hunters. They do close them at times though.

Q7: When a turkey does close its eye, how do the eyelids close?

- A. The top eyelid comes down over the eye
- B. The bottom eyelid comes up over the eye
- C. Both eyelids meet in the middle

Question 8: Here is an easy one for you...a gimme.

Q8: Which way are the spurs on a gobbler oriented?

- A. They point straight back
- B. They point back and slightly inward
- C. They point back and slightly outward

Question 9: Plucking a turkey can sometimes reveal a turkey's past history. Like tracks in the snow, marks on their skin can tell us something.

Q9: What caused the mark on this gobbler?

- A. It is a scar from fighting
- B. He has been doing all the breeding
- C. That is where the limb rubs him on the roost
- D. It is an old wound from being shot



Question 10: Most mammals have pair of pinna as part of their ears. The pinna is the part of the ear we see, that resides outside of the head and can be focused towards sound to help locate it. The long ears of a rabbit are a good example. Like most birds, turkeys do not have pinnae and just have an opening in the head to hear. Unlike most birds, turkeys do not have feathers all over their head.

Q10: Is there any type of covering over a turkey's ear?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Extra Credit Question: Turkeys are very good at locating sound.

With no pinnae to help them, what can turkeys do to help them locate where a sound is coming from.

(This is a written answer, no multiple choice (hey it IS EXTRA credit) and hint, there are TWO POINTS awarded for the correct answer.)