

Turkeys are domestic (farm) birds that were originally bred from wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallop*). The adult female turkey is called a **hen**, the adult male is called a **tom**, and the young are called **poults**. A group of turkeys is called a **rafter**. Over 300,000,000 turkeys are raised in the USA each year.

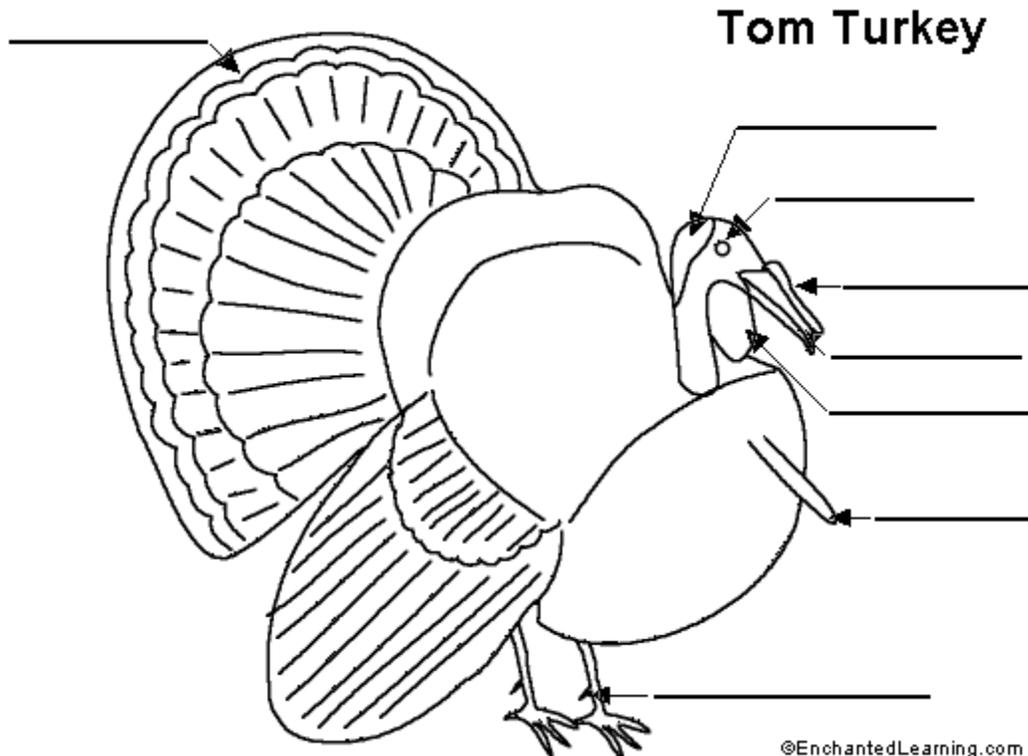
**Anatomy:** The tom turkey is larger and more brightly colored than the hen. Toms grow to be up to about 30 pounds (13.5 kg). Turkey eggs are tan with brown spots; they are a little bigger than chicken eggs. Poults are brown.

**Diet:** Turkeys have a varied diet. They eat insects, worms, fruit, seeds, acorns, grains, slugs, snails, and many other foods. They have a well-developed **gizzard** (a part of the stomach that contains tiny stones) that grinds up their food.

**Predators:** Many animals prey upon turkeys, including skunks, owls, raccoons, hawks, bobcats, and snakes.

## Label The Turkey

Read the definitions below, then label the turkey diagram.



**beard** - Male turkeys (and a few females) have a bundle of long, thin, dark feather on the chest, called a beard.

**bill** - Turkeys have a hard, pointed bill (also called the beak) which they use to get food. They eat insects, worms, fruit, seeds, acorns, grains, slugs, snails, and many other foods

**caruncle** - The reddish-pink fleshy growth on the head and upper neck of the turkey.

**eye** - Turkeys have two eyes and excellent vision.

**snood** - The flap of skin that grows from the base of the turkey's bill and hangs over the bill.

**spur on leg** - Male turkeys have a spike above each foot.

**tail fan** - The long, colorful tail feathers of the turkey.

**wattle** - Bright red skin that hangs from a turkey's neck.