

KEKA RADIO BROADCASTS
WILD TURKEYS

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NOVEMBER 25, 1980

Nov 26, 1987

THANKSGIVING IS ~~JUST ABOUT~~ HERE! WHEN WE THINK ABOUT THANKSGIVING, WE USUALLY THINK OF TURKEYS.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, WE HAVE WILD TURKEYS ON SEVERAL RANCHES IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY. SOME OF THESE TURKEYS WERE HATCHED IN BROODERS, RAISED ON THE RANCHES, THEN RELEASED IN THE WILD. THIS METHOD HAS NOT BEEN AS SUCCESSFUL AS CAPTURING WILD TURKEYS AND RELEASING THEM TO OTHER AREAS.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THE WILD TURKEY IS THE LARGEST ~~TERRESTRIAL~~ (LAND) BIRD IN NORTH AMERICA. ALTHOUGH NATIVE TO THIS CONTINENT, ITS ORIGINAL RANGE DID NOT INCLUDE CALIFORNIA. EARLY SETTLERS FOUND WILD TURKEYS IN THE WOODED AREAS OF THE EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES. TURKEYS WERE ALSO FOUND IN THE DRY BRUSH AND WOODLAND AREAS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES AS WELL AS IN MEXICO.

WILD TURKEYS WERE FIRST INTRODUCED INTO CALIFORNIA IN 1908. THIS AND SUBSEQUENT PLANTINGS HAVE RESULTED IN A STATEWIDE POPULATION OF OVER 5,000 BIRDS. THE FIRST HUNTING SEASON WAS HELD IN 1968.

WILD TURKEYS ARE SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE TO BARNYARD TURKEYS, BUT ARE SLIMMER AND HAVE A ~~MORE IRIDESCENT PLUMAGE.~~

brighter feathers.

WILD TURKEYS PREFER WOODED AREAS WITH SCATTERED OPENINGS. THEY ROOST IN TREES AT NIGHT, OFTEN 30 TO 40 FEET FROM THE GROUND. TURKEYS PREFER TO LIVE IN FLOCKS. THESE FLOCKS ROAM OVER LARGE AREAS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, TRAVELING 3 OR MORE MILES A DAY IN SEARCH OF FOOD. A FEW BIRDS IN A FLOCK ARE ALWAYS ON THE ALERT, GIVING AN ALARM IF DISTURBED. TURKEYS ESCAPE DANGER BY RUNNING, BUT WILL FLY IF NECESSARY.

Humboldt Co

THIS HAS BEEN GARY MARKEGARD, ~~U.C.~~ FARM ADVISOR, WITH A REPORT ON
TURKEYS IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY. for KFLI