But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids

Why do turkeys gobble?

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Jane 00:21
This is But Why: a Podcast for Curious Kids from Vermont Public. I'm Jane Lindholm, and on this show, we take questions from kids just like you, and we find answers. I'm actually out in the woods right now, on the edge of a field, but slightly tucked into the trees, and I'm hoping to find, or at least hear, one of the largest and heaviest birds you can see in North America. I'm hoping to find a wild turkey. Here in Vermont, you often see groups of them in farm fields as you're driving along on the road. I'm hoping to find a turkey so I can test something a wildlife biologist just told me.

Toni 01:01
So the male turkeys that gobble have a reflex, which some people call shock gobbling, and they can be induced to gobble by almost any loud sound. So even a turkey on a farm, if you walk up to it and clap your hands or whistle, they'll probably gobble at you. And wild turkeys have the same reflex, and it's a really puzzling thing for a prey animal to have a reflex that gives itself away like that. But this is something that hunters like to exploit when they're out hunting for turkeys. They will imitate like a crow or some other animal, and a turkey will gobble if it hears a crow or an owl or a car door slamming, or even thunder. So that's that's probably one of my favorite things about turkeys.

Jane 01:46
Should we try it? I'm going to clap my hands really loudly, in the hopes that there's a turkey nearby. Darn it! No turkey around. I guess. Well, here's a recording of what a wild turkey sounds like.

Toni 02:07
Back to the wildlife biologist. I'm Toni Mikula, and I'm the upland game bird biologist. So part of my job is to manage the turkey and the rough grouse flocks in Vermont, and that means making sure that they have the habitat that they need to live and thrive, and that people can enjoy them. And whether that means hunting or whether that means just seeing them in your backyard, I want to make sure that people have the opportunity to do those things.

Jane 02:34
I met up with Toni on a sunny November day at a wildlife refuge in northern Vermont, wedged on a slice of land between a river and a highway.

Toni 02:42
So this is the Sandbar Wildlife Management Area. This is actually our oldest wildlife management area.

Jane 02:50
In Vermont?

Toni 02:50
In Vermont, yep. This was the very first one back in 1921, is when it was first established, and it's our only wildlife management area that's a refuge, so it means there's no public access on most of it, and that means that you know we do get a lot of wildlife in here that tends to live a little bit longer because there's no hunting in here.

Jane 03:14
We hopped in Toni's vehicle and she drove us over to a favorite turkey spotting location, a little sandy open spot near some trees. The ground was littered with fallen acorns.

Toni 03:25
This is a really important food source for them in the fall because they're very fattening. So it helps them to build up a little bit of fat for the winter. But this whole area, this exposed sand here, they love to take dust baths. If you've ever had backyard chickens and you've watched your chickens take dust baths, turkeys are very similar, and they love to just wallow in the dirt. So here's some old, some old scuff marks from dust baths from turkeys.

Jane 03:53
Can you explain why turkeys and other birds would want to take a dust bath?

Toni 03:57
Yeah, it sounds counterintuitive. Like you want you want to take a bath to get clean, right? Why would you bathe in dirt? It's really good at discouraging parasites, so fleas, lice, mites, things that would irritate the skin. The dust is really good at dislodging those, and so they love to to roll in the dust and get rid of those mites.

Jane 04:19
So, if you were looking out looking for turkeys, if you're a kid and you're trying to find sign, what would it look like if you see an area where they've been taking dust baths?

Toni 04:30
So, you're going to want to look for an area of dry, loose dirt, and it's just going to be like kind of a shallow depression in the dirt where they've been wallowing, basically.

Jane 04:42
While we saw some signs of turkeys, we didn't see the actual birds, so we decided to try another spot.

Toni 04:48
In the summertime, they're mostly found in the fields because they're eating insects and things. And then, as we change seasons, they kind of transition their food requirements to be more, nuts and berries, so you won't find them out in these like grassy fields as much.

Jane 05:08

So right now we're driving, but it's we're not really on a road. So if if kids are picturing a road, it wouldn't quite be what they're normally picturing. It's more like a almost like a hiking trail.

Toni 05:22
Yep, this is a one of our access roads, and they're really only good for trucks or SUVs. So it was a road like this one where I once had the opportunity to test how fast turkeys can run. So if you read a book about turkeys, it says they can run 25 miles per hour.

Jane 05:44
Wow!

Toni 05:45
And one day I was driving along a road like this that had tall grass on either side, and as I came around a corner, there was some turkeys standing in the road, and as I approached them in the truck, instead of going off into the grass, they just went up the road away from me, so I decided to have a little fun with them. And I went a little faster, and they went a little faster. So I went a little faster, and they went a little faster. And by the time we reached the woods, and they finally scattered, the speedometer said 21 miles an hour, which doesn't just just about as fast as the fastest Olympic runner can go.

Jane 06:30
Farther down the road, we came to a spot in the woods with more oak trees.

Toni 06:35
This is a good spot to look for activity. So, if you look at the leaves here, you can see the bare spots where the leaves have been kicked away. So that's from turkeys scratching, just like a just like a chicken will scratch in the yard, looking for insects or whatever. Turkeys do the same thing, so they're out here looking for the acorns under the leaves. Maybe any last little insects that are still out here this late in the season. You know, any other little tidbits, even like salamanders or small snakes. Any anything they can swallow is food. They're omnivores, so they eat both insects and tiny animals and plants as well.

Jane 07:28
And at this time of year, they're just trying to make sure that they're getting enough food.

Toni 07:31
Yep, yep. So this time of year, the acorns are especially important because, like I said, they're fattening and it helps them to build up a little bit of fat before we go into winter. They don't hibernate or anything like that. They're active all winter long, so it does take a lot of food to keep them going.

Jane 07:49
How many turkeys do you think you have around here?

Toni 07:51

Oh, there's quite a few in these woods. This is a pine oak wood that we're standing in. It's really good habitat because the oaks provide those those acorns that they really need, so we have I would say at least 20 resident turkeys.

Jane 08:09
Now we have kids from all over the world, so some kids live in places where they don't see a lot of turkeys. Whether there are turkeys there, you know, native to where they live or not, they may not see them if they live in a city, or don't live in a country that has turkeys, and even some kids who know what turkeys look like may be picturing a turkey that they see on a farm. What is a wild turkey, and what would how would you describe it to someone who's never seen one?

Toni 08:35
So wild turkeys are similar to the kind of turkey that you find on your plate at Thanksgiving. The turkeys that we raise for meat are descendants of wild turkeys. The first farmed turkeys came from captured wild turkeys that people started keeping. Now, when we farm animals, we tend to breed them for characteristics that we like. So, with turkeys, we want meat, so they're going to be breeding turkeys for very large breast muscles and very big leg muscles. So if you were to compare a plucked wild turkey to a plucked farm turkey, you can see the difference. The farm turkeys are very very fat compared to a wild turkey, which is going to basically look like it's been skinny its whole life because they don't, they're out here getting a lot of exercise, where they have to walk around to look for their food. They're escaping from predators all the time. So a wild turkey compared to a farm turkey, I like to say it's like like an athlete versus a couch potato. It's just you know these different lifestyles where one animal is active all the time and eating lean food, and the other animal is being pampered and being fed fattening food, so that we can have a nice fat turkey.

Jane 09:48
Turkeys are birds, and they're pretty big. The tallest male turkeys can be almost four feet tall. Females are a little shorter. They can weigh up to 25 pounds, or sometimes even more. And they have beautiful iridescent feathers. They also have some very weird-looking stuff on their beaks and necks, which has one of you wondering.

Eisley 10:09
My name is Eisley. I live in Downers Grove, Illinois. My age is seven, and I'm asking why do turkeys have extra skin under their necks?

Toni 10:21
Yeah, so they have the feathers to to impress females with their colors, and they also have a lot of decoration on their head, and it tends to look ugly to us humans. It's very very attractive to a female turkey, so males have these like lumpy red spots on the bottom of the neck. Those are called caruncles, and they...

Jane 10:41
That's such a fun word. Can you say it again? And why is it called a caruncle?

Toni 10:45
I don't know why it's called that. The the it gets better. So they have this droopy appendage that hangs down over their beak. That is called a snood. And I love that word because it sounds like a word that a four year old just made up. And again, these are these are just decorations they have to impress females.

Jane 11:04
And turkeys also, you know, turkeys are birds, so they have feet that look like bird feet with little claws at the end. But they also have spurs. What are the spurs for?

Toni 11:15
So the spurs are used for fighting. Only the males have them. And during the breeding season, they don't like to have other males around because it's competition for the ladies' attention, and so they use the spurs for fighting. When they fight, they beat each other with their wings and they also kick each other. And what they're trying to do is scratch their opponent with those spurs.

Jane 11:36
Now, some people think turkeys can't fly. Can they fly?

Toni 11:40
Wild turkeys can fly. Most farm turkeys cannot fly because, like I said, we've made them too fat and lazy to fly. But wild turkeys can fly. You're never going to see one soaring overhead like a hawk, but they can fly short distances, and that's to escape from a predator or cross a river or a pond. A lot of times, you'll see them glide down from their roost when they when they so they go up in the trees to roost at night and in the morning they glide down, and they they spend most of their time walking around on the ground.

Jane 12:10
You mentioned the where they roost. So when they sleep at night, they actually like to sleep up in trees. So if you or somebody who thought a turkey couldn't fly, and then all of a sudden you see one in a tree, it's a pretty shocking thing to see, but they love to sleep high up in the tree to protect themselves.

Toni 12:24
Yeah, yeah, it's much safer from predators to sleep up in the trees. And when hen turkeys have very little babies, they can't fly, so she has to stay on the ground with them at night at first. But the first thing a baby turkey does is grow its wing feathers so that it can fly, and it's much less vulnerable to predators that way. So when they're about two weeks old, they start flying up in a tree and sleeping with mom, and she'll actually brood them under her wings. It's very funny if you find a picture on the internet, you can find pictures of these turkeys with their wings out on a branch and there's baby turkey heads sticking out from from under their wings. So yeah, they they they sleep in trees, and if you ever see a turkey airborne, it's it's startling because they're big birds, and you don't think that they should be able to fly because they're so big. If you have one fly across the road in front of you when you're driving, it's a really frightening experience.

Theo 13:15
I'm Theo, and Minneapolis, and my question is why turkeys like to go on your fence posts?

Jane 13:26
Why do turkeys like to jump on fence posts?

Toni 13:29
It's a little bit of a better view, you know. They they rely on their eyesight a lot for finding their way around and and looking for predators. They don't have a sense of smell to speak of, so they're relying on their eyesight. So yeah, fence post just gives them a little bit of a better view of the landscape.

Toni 13:46
No turkeys in here, but we have lots more road to check.

Jane 13:49
We still weren't seeing any turkeys, so we got back in the car and headed to yet another spot to see what we could find. Alas, no turkeys for us there either. They must have all been hiding. So we decided to pepper Toni with your questions instead.

Esperanza 14:03
Hi, my name is Esperanza, and I'm six years old. And I live in Union City, California. Why do turkeys have good eyesight?

Toni 14:11
They do have really good eyesight. Yeah, they have excellent eyesight, even better than humans. They don't have a sense of smell. You know, a lot of our mammals, like deer and bear are relying on their sense of smell to find food and detect predators, and most birds don't have a sense of smell, so they use their eyesight to find their food, to find their way around, and to keep an eye out for predators.

Jane 14:34
How good is their eyesight?

Toni 14:36
So they're really good at detecting motion. Any turkey hunter can tell you that. They can see color very well. They can even see more colors than we can.

Jane 14:45
Wow! You mentioned that they have ears, but they don't hear great.

Toni 14:50
No, they actually do have good hearing. They don't have external ears like most mammals do. Their ears are just holes in the side of their head, but they have very good hearing.

Esme 15:01

My name is Esme. I live in Boston, Massachusetts. I'm five years old. Um, and my question is, um, why do some turkeys have wattles and others don't?

Jane 15:16
We've been talking about some of the different features on the head of a turkey, what's a wattle?

Toni 15:22
That's just a collective term for the extra fleshy bits. It's also used when we refer to chickens, like they have a comb on the top of their head and these flappy bits under the beak. Wattle is just kind of the collective term for for all those weird fleshy bits that they have on their face. And again, the males have them as decoration to impress the females. The females don't have those kind of features; they just have this bald, wrinkly head.

Dorothy 15:50
My name is Dorothy. I'm five years old, but I live in Colorado Springs. My question is: Why do turkeys have gobbles?

Jane 16:01
What about the noise that turkeys make? Sometimes when we're taught what a turkey sounds like, we're told it sounds like gobble, gobble, gobble. What does a turkey really sound like?

Toni 16:11
Well, I'm not going to try to imitate one.

Jane 16:14
Oh, come on!

Toni 16:14
No. So the only the males make the gobbling sound, and that's kind of a turkey's song, you know. Think of the robin in your backyard that sings, or a canary in a bird cage that sings, and a rooster that crows. That's his song, and they they they use that sound for the the same reason that all birds make a sound, which is to say this is my territory. All the males stay away, and all the ladies come in.

Jane 16:42
Here's a recording of the beautiful call of the turkey.

Jane 16:50
So, what sounds do females make?

Toni 16:52
So, the females make clucks and purrs and small sounds like that. They have certain sounds that they use to communicate with their babies, which are called poults, they have other sounds that they use to communicate with other adult hens in the group. Some sounds like indicate predators. I've I've seen a hen turkey make a sound, and all of her poults disappeared into the grass. And then 10 minutes later,

she made a different sound, and they all came out again. It's it's it's like a language that they have, and most hunters will try to figure out all those different sounds and figure out ways to make them with a turkey call, so that they can communicate to male turkeys and try to fool them into thinking that they're actually a female turkey.

Jane 17:32
In fact, there are competitions. If you're someone who really thinks that you make a good turkey call, you could enter a turkey calling competition and maybe win.

Toni 17:40
Yeah, yeah, and there are competitions just for kids too to to try and make the best turkey call.

Jane 17:46
Here's the sound female turkeys called hens make. Since we didn't see any turkeys on our trip with Tony, we didn't actually collect these sounds ourselves. They come from the Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. One of the other cool things about turkeys is that here in the northeastern United States, they are a really big conservation success story. There was a time not so long ago, when there weren't any turkeys at all in Vermont.

Toni 18:23
so when when settlers first came to the to the New England area, wild turkeys were endemic to most of the area. Unfortunately, they make great table fare, and so the settlers like to harvest them to eat, and they would also, when trains came along, they started shipping wild turkeys on trains down to the cities for people for people that lived in cities to eat them as well. And back then, there weren't any laws; there were no hunting seasons, there were no bag limits, so people could just go out and shoot as many turkeys as they wanted, as they could find any time of the year. And as more and more people came to Vermont, they just harvested too many turkeys, and at the same time, they were cutting down all the woods to to grow farms on, and so there was a lack of habitat and over-harvesting from unregulated hunting, and so those two things combined meant that by the late 1800s there weren't any turkeys left in Vermont, which was a real shame. So by about 100 years later, like the 1960s, late 1960s, by then our forests were starting to grow back. There weren't as many farms as there were in the 1890s, and by then we had what was at the time called the Fish and Game Service, which is now the Fish and Wildlife Department, and they decided to try to bring turkeys back. So they said we haven't. We have the habitat back now. If we put on some some seasons and some bag limits to to regulate the hunting, maybe we can have turkeys in Vermont again.

Jane 19:50
And a bag limit is how many of the animals you're allowed to hunt and harvest.

Toni 19:55
Yeah. So the bag limit is how many turkeys one hunter can kill in a season. So they went to New York, where there was still some wild turkeys living, and they caught a couple, and they brought them here to Vermont and let them go. And poof! By in 20 years, there were turkeys all over Vermont. It was

amazing how well they did. the The turkeys that reestablished in Vermont went on to to repopulate New Hampshire and other New England states.

Jane 20:19
They have so successfully come back in many areas that you often see turkeys in cities, and there are videos that sometimes go viral of like turkeys chasing kids who have just gotten off the bus and are trying to just get in their homes. Are turkeys aggressive, and why are they chasing people?

Toni 20:37
So during the breeding season, which is in Vermont, it's like May, April, May. The males do become quite aggressive, and they don't like to see other male turkeys. But I mean, they'll also take out their aggression on non-turkeys, so that can include people, and especially in urban areas, sometimes they can get a little over-abundant because people aren't hunting in those areas, and there's plenty of food in suburbs. There's bird feeders, and sometimes people will just, you know, go out and just give them food. So there's plenty of food. There's no hunting pressure, and so they kind of lose their fear of people a little bit. And so that's when you develop these situations where you might have males in the breeding season that are that are chasing poor, helpless people that are just trying to go out for a walk.

Jane 21:29
Coming up, a lot of you, at least in the United States, probably don't think much about turkeys until a specific holiday is approaching. We'll dig into that.

Jane 21:39
This is But Why: a Podcast for Curious Kids from Vermont Public? I'm Jane Lindholm. We're talking turkey today, and of course, a lot of you have one specific question about turkeys.

Anne 21:50
My name is Anne, and I'm seven years old, and I live in Texas.

Nora 21:55
My name is Nora. I'm five years old.

Preston 21:59
I am Preston. I am three years old.

Clara 22:03
My name is Clara. I'm eight years old. I live in Olivebridge, New York, and my question is: Why do people usually eat turkey on Thanksgiving?

Levi 22:11
Hello, my name's Levi, and I am seven. I live in Tittusville, Florida.

Lennon 22:20
My name is Lennon, and I am six and a half years old. I live in Los Angeles, California.

Ian 22:27
Hi, my name is Ian. I am eight years old, and I'm my question is why turkey is Thanksgiving meal.

Jane 22:41
We called up someone who's written a lot about just that.

Elan 22:44
My name is Elan Abrell.

Jane 22:46
Elan teaches at Wesleyan University, and he's an anthropologist.

Elan 22:50
And I mostly teach college students about things related to how humans relate to other animals.

Jane 22:55
For American Thanksgiving, a lot of us have heard this sort of lore. It's not really true history necessarily about how Thanksgiving supposedly came to be in the United States. Early European settlers in New England coming together with indigenous people to feast at the end of a harvest to celebrate that basically that they survived. This was over 400 years ago. Was it likely that they were eating turkey at that meal?

Elan 23:20
There's no real evidence that they were eating turkey from the the scant historical writings about it, which I think were just a diary entry and a letter that somebody sent back to England. There were probably around five deer that were hunted, probably by the Wampanoags who joined the Pilgrims for this harvest celebration, and that was probably the main meat dish. And then there was a mention of fowl in general. Different kinds of birds, which might might have included turkeys. There were a lot of turkeys around, but it doesn't really say anything about turkeys. And and those are sort of side dishes, along with things like oysters, which we never see at Thanksgiving anymore. As far as I know, I've never been to a Thanksgiving feast where someone's serving oysters.

Jane 24:03
When did people in the area where turkeys, you know, are from? When did people start eating them? When did turkeys become food?

Elan 24:11
They probably were being eaten by indigenous people in North and Central America for a very long time, and actually, they already were being raised for food and eaten in England and elsewhere in Europe at that time too. So Spanish colonizers in the 1500s brought domesticated versions of turkeys back from the area that's now Mexico. And so interestingly, the pilgrims probably were familiar with turkey as a food, but it was kind of a more luxury food. So they might, as sort of poor farmers, they probably didn't eat turkey very often, but it was being served in like London and other places. Like in a

Christmas Carol, Ebenezer Scrooge buys a big turkey for the Cratchit family in place of what would have been probably a goose for more working class family like that.

Jane 24:54
How did this holiday, as we know it today in the United States, get started?

Elan 24:59
It wasn't until maybe that around the 1830s that people who were practicing some more closer to what we do now version of Thanksgiving even looked back on this first Thanksgiving, and and sort of saw it as the first Thanksgiving and made this connection to this more recent past. But harvest festivals had gone back hundreds of years in in both indigenous cultures and European cultures, and then as the United States sort of expanded, and and more states came into the union, and people were celebrating versions of Thanksgiving feasts at at just sort of random times connected to specific things they might want to celebrate, like oh, an epidemic came through town and everybody was really sick, and now it's gone and we're better. Let's have a Thanksgiving feast or celebrating a military battle, beating the beating the British or whatever point in history there might have been different military conflicts. But but there was these moments of like specific one-off Thanksgiving holidays, like George Washington declared a Thanksgiving holiday in 1789, for example, but it was really that kind of made it the official in the United States. What made it sort of the official national holiday was when Abraham Lincoln declared it a national holiday. I think in 1863, and this was like mostly as an effort to kind of bring some unification to the a sense of unification to the country because they were in the midst of the Civil War still, but the the holiday itself and what it's come to look like goes back a little earlier than that to a woman named Sarah Josepha Hale, who sort of thought of as the mother of Thanksgiving, and she she was a really big advocate for this being a feast that people do annually, she wrote a novel called Northwood in 1827 with these really extensive descriptions of Thanksgiving celebrations in New England and elsewhere. And she also was the editor of a magazine called Gody's Ladies Book, which in which she lobbied really heavily for making Thanksgiving a holiday before Abraham Lincoln eventually did it, and and the sort of meals she was writing about, and the images she was painting of these meals, it was turkey was always at the center of it. There was there were elaborate buffets with all kinds of things. Chicken pie was in there too, but turkey was sort of central to the way she described these feasts. As this became a regular holiday that everybody was doing every year, this sort of started to become a central part of it, and then you get actually much later than people think. The practice of presidents pardoning turkeys at Thanksgiving like further cemented this idea of turkeys being central to the meal. But yeah, it was really a late 19th century, 20th century time when turkeys really became a part of Thanksgiving.

Jane 27:38
The types of turkeys we eat now often that some people eat are often turkeys that have been raised on a farm specifically to be eaten. They're very large. Sometimes you think of a turkey that people eat at Thanksgiving as having white feathers, for example. How different is this from a wild turkey, and and maybe the turkeys that we imagine people were eating back in the 1600s.

Elan 28:04

Very different. That's that's a great question. It's the the turkeys that people buy at the grocery store that were raised or farmed usually for for meat are kind of like the difference between a Saint Bernard and a Chihuahua with a wild turkey, although wild turkeys aren't tiny, so that's not a that's not the best analogy. But they they are very different in body size and shape, and like you said, even color. And it's the result of farmers' normal domestication practices, where people who farm animals over time try to get animals with the kind of traits they want to breed and have offspring that then will continue those traits and and even enhance those traits over time. So they for the turkeys that are now sold in in grocery stores, the selective breeding focused a lot on size and also not only getting bigger but getting bigger faster. So most of the turkeys that are are now eaten, whether it's at Thanksgiving or other times, are killed when they're about four months old. Which that's not an adult for a turkey, but they're already big enough to the size of an adult. And most of the focus on on the getting them bigger was around getting them to have a lot of breast tissue, so they seem really top heavy in the way that if you see wild turkeys running around, which you can see pretty much anywhere in North America, including Hawaii, if you want to count that as part of North America, I've seen lots of wild turkeys in Hawaii now. They weren't there originally, but they thrive there. They're they're long and skinny and and kind of lanky, and they move very fast, which the sort of industrial agricultural turkeys can't do because, yeah, like you like you pointed out, their bodies are very different now.

Jane 29:48
You're not going to see a farmed turkey sitting up in a top of a tree branch, but you might see a wild turkey up in a tree.

Elan 29:55
Right. Yeah. It would. I think would be very hard, unfortunately, for a farmed turkey to get up in a tree branch. The the process of choosing particular traits that people want animals to have for food doesn't usually account for how that impacts their health otherwise. So the those kind of turkeys, if if they do live to adulthood, like some do at sanctuaries or in other places, they have chronic health problems that come with that from the from their weight, they have joint problems and foot infections and and other things that, yeah, it would make it unfortunately very hard for them to do what wild turkeys do.

Jane 30:30
So while it may seem like turkeys have always been linked to Thanksgiving, that's actually more of a recent cultural practice.

Elan 30:36
As an anthropologist, what I like to always tell my college students is that culture is constantly changing. We're in sort of one point in a river in time of culture, and it was very, very different hundreds of 1000s of years ago when humans first appeared, and it's going to be very different 100,000 years from now. And so we do have a lot of flexibility and freedom to decide how we want to live our culture and practice our culture.

Jane 31:02
and he says if turkeys aren't your thing, that's okay too.

Elan 31:05
So whenever I talk about turkeys, I do like to point out that there are other ways that you could continue the sort of turkey theme for Thanksgiving without having to lead any more turkeys to not get a pardon and whatever comes from not getting a pardon, which is dine. There is tofurkey, which I've eaten for many years. But there's there's lots of lots of great plant-based recipes out there, and and products you could also buy at the grocery store that work really well for sort of displacing the turkey. And I think for people where that sounds like it really wouldn't be Thanksgiving without the turkey. If you look back at the history of Thanksgiving, it often wasn't the turkey. So there's there's a lot of different histories to draw on. You could even you could even just do oyster stuffing without the turkey.

Jane 31:54
Are you going to try oysters for Thanksgiving this year? I made an oyster stuffing once, and it was delicious. And in my family, while we do usually have turkey, we also always have venison, deer meat, usually that my uncle got, and lots of vegetarian options as well. Whatever you do to celebrate, we hope you have a wonderful day with people you care about. That's it for this episode. Thanks to Elan Abrell for sharing Thanksgiving history and culture with us, and Toni Mikula for teaching us all about turkeys. As always, if you have a question about anything, have an adult record you asking it on a smartphone using an app like Voice Memos. Then have them email the file to questions@buykids.org. But Why is produced by Sarah Baik, Melody Bodette, and me, Jane Lindholm at Vermont Public and distributed by PRX. Our video producer is Joey Palumbo, and our theme music is by Luke Reynolds. If you like our show, please have your adults help you give us a thumbs up or a review on whatever podcast platform you use to listen to us. It helps other kids and families find us. We'll be back in two weeks with an all-new episode. Until then, stay curious.