Ishvar Sitaldin

Professor Weyn

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The Egg

The egg is one of the most important objects in our lives, it has a nutritional value for humans as well as for some animals, but its primary goal is to be a vessel for new life. The egg comes in many different colors, be it green, blue, brown, or white and also in many different sizes, as small as half an inch or as big as six in the case of ostriches. Eggs are also not only laid by birds; fish, reptiles and insects all lay eggs. In this essay however we will narrow it down to bird eggs only. So, what does a bird egg look like, and what is inside of these eggs? All of this will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Let’s start with the appearance of an egg, for simplicity’s sake we will use the most well-known egg in the world, the chicken egg. A chicken egg is an oval shaped object with an average weight of 2.5 ounces. Now this is by no means the largest egg in the world, in fact the largest bird eggs are laid by ostriches. These eggs are roughly 6 inches long and weigh about 3 pounds, which is almost as much as 24 chicken eggs combined (Thiyagarajah). In contrast to this the smallest bird eggs in the world are laid by the goldcrest, the smallest birds in the world, which weigh less than a gram (RSPB). But what does an egg consist of, what is inside an egg?

The egg consists of 3 main parts: the eggshell, the albumen, and the yolk. The eggshell is the outside layer of an egg and consists mostly of calcium carbonate. The eggshell serves to protect the egg from damage and bacterial contamination (Wikipedia, Eggshell). The albumen, also known as egg white, is a translucent liquid which surrounds the yolk. This is the part of the egg which turns white when cooking it and it serves to protect the yolk and provide nutrition to the growing embryo (Wikipedia, Egg White). The yolk of an egg is the part which contains the embryo (if the egg is fertilized) and its function is to provide the embryo with food for its growth (Wikipedia, Yolk). This part of the egg normally has a yellow/orange color.

As we can see the egg of a bird can come in many different sizes, and subsequently weights, but the “structure” of the egg remains the same. This “structure” always consists of the eggshell, the albumen, and the yolk.

# References

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