



The Wild Bird That Became Breakfast

How a jungle fowl and a rice field sparked 3,500 years of eggs

A Forest Bird Not Built for Eggs

The red junglefowl of Southeast Asia is the ancestor of every chicken alive today. In the wild, a hen lays just one small clutch of about 10 eggs per year.

Source: [Bird Spot](#)

Dry Rice Fields Changed Everything

Around 1,500 BC in what is now Thailand, farmers began growing dry rice. The grain drew wild jungle fowl out of the forest undergrowth and into human settlements for the first time.

Source: [Oxford School of Archaeology](#)

Placed in Graves Not on Plates

The oldest confirmed chicken bones, at Ban Non Wat in Thailand (1,650 to 1,250 BC), were found whole inside human graves. People valued the bird for its cultural significance, not as food.

Source: [Science News](#)

Three Thousand Years Moving West

From Thailand, chickens spread to South Asia and Mesopotamia roughly 3,000 years ago. They reached Mediterranean Europe around 2,800 years ago, carried by Phoenician and Greek sea traders.

Source: [Oxford School of Archaeology](#)

Romans Turned Chickens Into Food

For centuries, many societies that kept chickens did not eat them. The Roman Empire changed that, popularizing both chicken meat and eggs as everyday food across their empire.

Source: [Oxford School of Archaeology](#)

One Gene Unlocked Daily Eggs

From around 920 AD, breeders consistently chose hens that laid through the year rather than only in season. Those birds carried a change in the TSHR gene that freed them from seasonal cycles. A domestic hen today lays close to 280 eggs per year.

Source: [Bird Spot](#)

IN SHORT

Every golden yolk on a Multan morning carries the long journey of a wild bird that once followed rice into our lives.

References

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