

## Scientists say the egg came before the chicken

11th November 2024



One of life's greatest mysteries may finally have been solved. Scientists believe they have unlocked the conundrum of the age-old question of whether the chicken or the egg came first. This problem has baffled great minds for centuries. However, researchers from the University of Geneva believe they have cracked this philosophical mystery. They suggest the egg came first. The scientists studied a tiny marine organism called *Chromosphaera perkinsii*. This single-celled species dates back over a billion years. The researchers found it can form multicellular structures which are similar to animal embryos. This means there was no need for a prehistoric chicken to lay an egg.

Researcher Marine Olivetta told "Nature Journal" that *Chromosphaera perkinsii* was first discovered in 2017 off the coast of Hawaii. She said it has offered many insights into ancient life forms. She said: "It's fascinating that a species discovered so recently allows us to go back in time a billion years." The researcher suggested that the genetics behind egg fertilization and embryonic development were present before animal life existed. This means nature could have created eggs long before evolution "invented chickens". A more straightforward answer to the chicken and egg problem is that chickens came into existence 10,000 years ago, whereas eggs have existed for millions of years.

Sources: [ladbible.com](http://ladbible.com) / [metro.co.uk](http://metro.co.uk) / [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk)

## Writing

The chicken came before the egg. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

life / mystery / conundrum / age-old questions / chicken / egg / philosophical / species / coast / insights / ancient life / genetics / embryonic development / animal / evolution

## True / False

- 1) The article says one of life's mysteries has been solved. T / F
- 2) The chicken and egg riddle has puzzled people for hundreds of years. T / F
- 3) A clue to the chicken and egg riddle was found in a marine organism. T / F
- 4) The marine organism was around over a billion years ago. T / F
- 5) The marine organism was discovered last year. T / F
- 6) Nature was creating eggs before it created chickens. T / F
- 7) Chickens have been around for one hundred thousand years. T / F
- 8) Eggs have been around for one hundred million years. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                           |               |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>mysteries</b>       | a. unearthed  |
| 2. <b>baffled</b>         | b. life form  |
| 3. <b>cracked</b>         | c. created    |
| 4. <b>organism</b>        | d. puzzled    |
| 5. <b>prehistoric</b>     | e. elementary |
| 6. <b>discovered</b>      | f. growth     |
| 7. <b>development</b>     | g. puzzles    |
| 8. <b>invented</b>        | h. being      |
| 9. <b>straightforward</b> | i. solved     |
| 10. <b>existence</b>      | j. primitive  |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'egg'?
- c) What do you think of eggs?
- d) Do you think the chicken or the egg came first?
- e) How will evolution change animals in the future?
- f) How will the world change if we know the egg came first?
- g) Why do cows always face north or south when grazing?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. One of life's greatest     | a. great minds for centuries  |
| 2. the age-                   | b. forms                      |
| 3. This problem has baffled   | c. old question               |
| 4. a tiny marine              | d. structures                 |
| 5. it can form multicellular  | e. coast of Hawaii            |
| 6. discovered in 2017 off the | f. straightforward answer     |
| 7. insights into ancient life | g. mysteries                  |
| 8. the genetics behind egg    | h. existence 10,000 years ago |
| 9. A more                     | i. organism                   |
| 10. chickens came into        | j. fertilization              |

## Discussion – Student B

- What are the arguments for the chicken coming first?
- What other great mysteries are there in life?
- What do you think of chickens?
- Does it matter if the chicken or egg came first?
- What things are you baffled by?
- What was animal life like in prehistory?
- Why do we never see baby pigeons?
- Would you like to see a prehistoric chicken?

## Spelling

- they have unlocked the onuruncmd
- This problem has lffbade great minds
- cracked this loolahcpiiph mystery
- it can form ulmcatilurlel structures
- similar to animal mobeysr
- no need for a presitoichr chicken to lay an egg
- it has offered many sntqsih
- entcna life forms
- It's ginniafasct
- the ncsiget behind egg fertilization
- bnoremciy development
- chickens came into eesxeticn 10,000 years ago

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. j
6. a	7. f	8. c	9. e	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Omelettes

You think omelettes are the best ways to cook eggs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): fried eggs, boiled eggs or scrambled eggs.

### Role B – Fried Eggs

You think fried eggs are the best ways to cook eggs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): omelettes, boiled eggs or scrambled eggs.

### Role C – Boiled Eggs

You think boiled eggs are the best ways to cook eggs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): fried eggs, omelettes or scrambled eggs.

### Role D – Scrambled Eggs

You think scrambled eggs are the best ways to cook eggs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): fried eggs, boiled eggs or omelettes.

## Speaking – Egg Dishes

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| • Omelette   | • Scrambled egg |
| • Quiche     | • Fried egg     |
| • Souffle    | • Poached egg   |
| • Boiled egg | • Pickled eggs  |

### Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	T	5	F	6	T	7	F	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.