

Researchers ponder the shape of birds' eggs

February 23 2017



A guillemot egg showing the typically pointed shape. Credit: TR Birkhead

The shape of birds' eggs varies considerably, for reasons that are unclear.

The peculiarly elongated and pointed shape of the Common Guillemot's egg is thought to prevent it from rolling off the narrow cliff ledge it is laid on, but new research suggests instead that the [shape](#) has more to do with providing resistance against impacts and protection from faecal and other contamination.

"I have studied guillemots for over forty years and have never been convinced by the rolling explanation. It has been exciting coming up with [new ideas](#) and testing them," said Dr. Tim Birkhead, lead author of the Ibis study.

More information: *Ibis*, [DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12458](https://doi.org/10.1111/ibi.12458)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Researchers ponder the shape of birds' eggs (2017, February 23) retrieved 11 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-02-ponder-birds-eggs.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.