



What is the origin of Easter eggs? When did people first start to use them?

The custom is likely older than one might think. Scholars believe the practice of using Easter eggs may have originated in Persia:

*The use of eggs at Easter seems to have come from Persia into the Greek Christian Churches of Mesopotamia, thence to Russia and Siberia through the medium of Orthodox Christianity. From the Greek Church the custom was adopted by either the Roman Catholics or the Protestants and then spread through Europe. (See Culture and Progress: The Early Sociology of Culture, Volume VIII, edited by Kenneth Thomas, at page 138.)*

How about Easter-egg hunts? When, and where, did they originate?

Georg Franck von Franckenau was a German physician and botanist who was born in 1643 in the [city of Naumburg](#). He taught anatomy, chemistry and botany in [Jena](#) and became a professor of medicine at the University of Heidelberg.

Among von Franckenau's published works is an essay entitled "De Ovis Paschalibus" in which he writes about Easter eggs. In this work he considers ancient pagan symbols of life and fertility and how they were connected to religious customs. He says this (in English translation) about Easter eggs and the Easter Bunny:

*In Alsace, and neighboring regions, these eggs are called rabbit eggs because of the myth told to fool simple people and children that the Easter Bunny is going around laying eggs and hiding them in the herb gardens. So the children look for them, even more enthusiastically, to the delight of smiling adults.*

Von Franckenau moved to Denmark, at some point in his life, to serve as personal physician of Christian V, King of Denmark and Norway. He died, in Copenhagen, during 1704.

This image depicts the cover of the work which includes von Franckenau's essay, "De Ovis Paschalibus."

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