



# Application guide: collection of eggs from protected species

**FIG Environment Department**

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**Contact Information:**

FIG Environment Department  
Stanley  
Falkland Islands

Tel.: +500 28449  
E-mail: [environment@sec.gov.fk](mailto:environment@sec.gov.fk)

## 1 Introduction

“Egging” is the colloquial term used in the Falkland Islands for the collection of eggs from wild birds, including penguins. This guide is for anyone wishing to apply to collect eggs from protected wild birds.

Whilst egging has been a traditional practice in the Falkland Islands, it is now strictly regulated under law. Egging without a valid permit issued through the FIG Environment Department is against the law in the Falkland Islands, and this can incur fines up to £4,000. Although egging had been a traditional practice on a number of species, the collection of eggs is now limited to those of Gentoo Penguins (*Pygoscelis papua*) and Logger Ducks (*Tachyeres brachypterus*). The egging season typically runs from October/November to December. This is linked to the natural breeding cycle of the species. Eggs can only be collected for human consumption and must not be sold.

If you need further information in relation to the permit application, don’t hesitate to contact the FIG Environment Department on 28499 or by email at [environment@sec.gov.fk](mailto:environment@sec.gov.fk)

## 2 The Application Process

Anyone wishing to collect eggs from wild birds must apply for and obtain a valid permit. Each application is assessed individually. Please allow at least three (3) working days for your application to be processed from receipt. Please note that it is not possible to expedite this process.

All forms and this guide can be found on the website of the FIG Environment Department:

FIG: <https://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licenses-permits>

If you do have any questions or queries during the application process please do not hesitate to contact the FIG Environment Department, on 28449 or email [environment@sec.gov.fk](mailto:environment@sec.gov.fk)

To collect eggs from wild birds, you will need to complete the Application for Licence to Collect Eggs for Human Consumption form. Once this is signed and dated, please submit this to the FIG Environment Department at [environment@sec.gov.fk](mailto:environment@sec.gov.fk). You will receive confirmation once your permit application has been received.

### 2.1 The Application Form

The “Application For Licence to Collect Eggs for Human Consumption” form (available here: <https://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licenses-permits>) must be completed in full and in English to apply for a permit.

The person completing the form must be the landowner, or have written permission from the landowner and must be the person intending to collect the eggs. The application includes the Applicant Details and the Collection Details. Once you have completed both of these sections you need to sign and date the application.

## **A. Applicant Details**

This section is about the person applying for and intending to collect the eggs. The applicant's details must be the same as the person signing the form.

- i. Name of the Applicant – Here provide us with your full name of the applicant, you must be the person intending to collect the eggs.
- ii. Contact Telephone number – Here provide us with a Falkland Islands contact number.
- iii. Contact email address – here provide us with your contact email, this will be the email which all subsequent information is sent to regarding this eggging licence and any other contacts pertaining to it.

## **B. Collection Details**

This section is about the eggs you wish to collect for human consumption.

- i. Species egg collecting – Tick the appropriate box with regards to the species you wish to collect eggs from
- ii. Number of eggs wishing to collect – Here provide us with the number of eggs you would like to collect, be aware that the number you would like to collect and the number licenced to collect may be different.
- iii. Location of colony and farm – Here provide us with the farm name you are collecting the eggs from, please note you must have written permission to collect eggs if you are not the landowner. In the case of Gentoo penguins, you must specify the location of the colony from which you are planning to collect eggs.

## **C. Name and Signature**

This section is where you provide us with your printed name, this must be the same as the name of applicant section, the date on which you are signing this form and your signature.

## **2.2 The Decision Process**

Your application approval to collect eggs is dependent on a number of pre-requisites:

- Who the landowner is? If the landowner is not the applicant then we reserve the right to ensure landowner permission is in place and on file;
- Which species of birds the eggs are requested to be collected from, eggs can only be collected from gentoo penguins and logger ducks;
- If there are any situation that would prevent safe collection from the colony or impact the safety of the eggs for human consumption;

and

- If your application meets these pre-requisites, then your permit will be assessed based on the health of the target colony or species both on a local and National scale, this comes from the Falklands Conservation: Falkland Islands Seabird Monitoring Programme Annual Report. In general, we limit the collection of eggs to 2-5% of breeding pairs within the colony.
- If your application does not meet the pre-requisites then we may contact you to provide further information prior to being able to formally process the application. This may result in a delay in receiving your permit. If your application does not meet the pre-requisites then it may be refused and you will be provided with a reason for the refusal.

## **3 Understanding your permit**

Your permit will include a number of different details which you must adhere to regarding the collection of eggs. This includes:

- Your name, only the named person on the application may collect eggs;
- Your address, please ensure this matches your residential address;
- The species of bird you are collecting eggs from, you may only collect eggs from this species and no other species under this permit;
- The maximum number of eggs you are allowed to collect, if you exceed this number of eggs then you will be outside the permission of the licence;

and

- The colony from which you are able to collect the eggs. Note that a geographic description of the colony name will be given.

In line with your permit, there are also a number of conditions you must follow:

- you must not enter anyone else's land to access the colony without written permission from the landowner;
  - You may not sell eggs to anyone or any group of people. Selling includes any transaction that has a benefit, including exchanging for a service or good, as well as any financial transaction, or appear to benefit from such a transaction;
  - The eggs collected are for human consumption only, you must not feed the eggs to any animal or use them for purposes not related to human consumption;
- and
- You must make a return declaration on your licence (please see the information below).

Please note that the conditions may vary. Once you receive your permit, please read this carefully and take note of any conditions as these may vary. If you have any queries, then please don't hesitate to contact us.

#### **4 Your Permit Return**

It is your obligation as the permit holder to complete a return on your permit, this is to help us support the environmental monitoring of the health of the penguin colonies.

To facilitate this process, a prefilled return form has been included with your permit. Please check your details on this form and ensure the licence number matches the number on your permit. You will be required to include the number of eggs you collected as well as where you collected them from in the space provided. You will also be required to sign and date the return.

Your permit will refer to a date by which we must have received your permit return. It is your responsibility to ensure that if you are sending this by post you allow sufficient time for your return to reach us. Failure to do so is a breach of the permit conditions and can constitute an offence. Return my email is the preferred method.

#### **5 Minimising disturbance during collection**

Although the collection of Penguin eggs is an invasive procedure and there will no doubt be some disturbance of animals, there are ways this can be kept to a minimum. As such, we advise the following when collecting eggs.

- **Minimise the number of people collecting eggs:** Keep numbers of visitors or assistants whilst collecting eggs to a minimum. Ideally you should be the only person collecting eggs. This will ensure noise levels are kept low as well which could further stress animals.
- **Collect all eggs in a single visit:** Collect all eggs in a single visit to minimise the number of trips to the colony and the number of disturbance events. Where this is not possible, consider visiting the colony at least one week apart to allow for the colony to be less stressed.
- **Collect only one egg per nest:** Most bird species will lay more than one egg. You can minimise stress to the parents by collecting only one egg per nest. Where there is only one egg, consider collecting from a different couple.

- **Be Biosecurity aware:** seeing wildlife in distress or diseased is never pleasant but there are a number of steps you can take towards ensuring that these instances are kept low. If there is a footbath with a biocide (such as Virkon) available, please use this prior to approaching the colony. Please keep an eye out on your visit to a colony for any wildlife that may seem distressed or acting strangely. If you notice any wildlife that may be sick, diseased or injured please do not enter the colony and contact the FIG Environment Department as soon as possible. More information can be found here: <https://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/guidance-documents> under “Wildlife Diseases: Guide for landowners, farmers and visitors”.