

# WAYS TO USE THIS MAGAZINE

*Some of the many ways to do it*

**Write a limerick about one of the cited studies.** To get you started, here's a limerick about the study "Higher Heritabilities for Gait Components than for Overall Gait Scores May Improve Mobility in Ducks," on page 11:

DUGGAN, RAE, CLEMENTS, AND HOCKING  
REPORT THAT IT'S NOT AT ALL SHOCKING  
THAT PEOPLE CAN RATE  
SOME ASPECTS OF GAIT  
OF DUCKS AS THE DUCKS DO SOME WALKING.

**Write a single-sentence short story** that includes the titles of every study mentioned in one of the review articles. To get you started, here's a story using the study titles mentioned in the article "Improbable Research: Laundry Scent, Blurred Flowers, Backward Speech" on page 4:

Alina and Adelbert worked long and hard, night after night, doing a chemical analysis and origin of the smell of line-dried laundry, though Adelbert was distracted by his ongoing daytime hobby (indulged while performing his daytime job as a fast-food high-speed-bicycle delivery person) of compiling a field guide to roadside wildflowers at full speed, and though Alina was distracted by her ever-growing compulsion to study neurocognitive signatures of phonemic sequencing in expert backward speakers.

P.S. If you write something (a limerick, or whatever) that gets a good reaction from your colleagues, maybe send it to us too.

**Do dramatic readings**, in person, or in live or recorded video, of little chunks from the magazine. Keep them short—say, a maximum length of two minutes for each dramatic reading. To get you started, we suggest over-dramatically reading "Uranium for Ducks" on page 9.

**Watch an Ig Nobel Prize winner.** The prizes honor things that make people LAUGH, then THINK. Every issue of the magazine mentions a few of them (for example, see "Ig® and Beyond: Shrunken Heads, Stings and Fetishes" on page 32). Go see the moment when a winner was awarded their prize. Videos of most of the ceremonies are online at our web site, [www.improbable.com](http://www.improbable.com).

**Go down a rabbit hole.** For some item that catches your fancy, go find a copy of the study itself. (The Internet often makes this quite easy to do.) And/or look up the authors of that study and see what other surprising things they have done. And/or look up what's happened since that study was published. And/or in the study itself, look at the list of other studies it mentions, choose one, and go down the rabbit hole of exploring that earlier study.

**Go down a maybe-important rabbit hole.** The history of science is chock full of (maybe is mostly?) things that [1] got noticed and celebrated, then [2] got forgotten or overlooked, and then, much later, [3] got noticed again. This magazine is full of such things. Go explore some of them.

**If you are a journalist**, some of those rabbit holes house bunnies that can make news editors hop to attention.

**Start an argument** about whether some particular study is good or bad, important or trivial, valuable or worthless.



*On the back cover of this issue: Turkeys on a street. Photo by A.S. Kaswell.*

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The features marked with a star (\*) are based entirely on material taken straight from standard research (and other Official and Therefore Always Correct) literature. Many of the other articles are genuine, too, but we don't know which ones.

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**The Improbable Research podcast is back!**

[https://www.improbable.com/  
category/the-weekly-improbable-research-podcast/](https://www.improbable.com/category/the-weekly-improbable-research-podcast/)

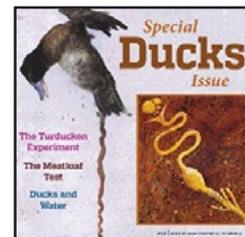
### Where There's More

There's always new improbable — it's not what you expect! — stuff on the **Improbable Research blog** at [IMPROBABLE.COM](https://www.improbable.com)



### On the Front Cover

Artist's rendition of two photographs from the study "Elaborate Vaginas and Long Phalli: Post-copulatory Sexual Selection in Birds." (See page 26) Artwork by Nan Swift.



### Some Coming Events



The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced excitingly boundless uncertainty as to whether, when, where, and how various public activities will happen in the near future. In 2021 some will happen teledistantly.



See [IMPROBABLE.COM](https://www.improbable.com) for details of these and other events:



#### August 14, 2021

Readercon, Boston, MA USA [online]

#### September 9, 2021

The 31<sup>st</sup> First Annual Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony and Webcast



#### September 10-November 3, 2021

Ig Nobel Museum Exhibition, Fukuoka, Japan

