

**The domesticated brain:  
genetics of brain mass and brain structure in an avian species**

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**1 SUPPLEMENTARY METHODS**

**2 Brain regions:**

3 The four regions the brains were divided into are referred to as Cerebral hemisphere,  
4 Optic tectum, Brainstem and Cerebellum throughout the study. The cerebral  
5 hemisphere region refers to the two cerebral hemispheres, which constitutes the largest  
6 part of the avian brain <sup>1</sup>. The optic tectum (sometimes also called optic lobes <sup>2</sup>) is a  
7 major part of the midbrain in birds <sup>3,4</sup>. The cerebellum is part of the hindbrain and is  
8 located at the back of the skull <sup>1</sup>. The brainstem region of this study includes the  
9 remaining part of the brain: including the brainstem-area <sup>5</sup> and thalamus <sup>1</sup>. The  
10 brainstem-area includes the midbrain-area (minus optic tectum) and hindbrain-area  
11 (minus cerebellum).

**12 Brain Volume Measurements**

**Volumetric Measurements of Brain Regions**

13 Volumetric brain measurements were taken of four adult male chickens (two Red  
14 Junglefowl and two White Leghorn domestic layers). Brains were dissected out from  
15 birds, before being weighed in the same manner as stated previously. Brain volumes  
16 were calculated using the method detailed in <sup>6</sup> using a principal based on the changing  
17 mass measurements of the brains when suspended in water as compared to their  
18 standard weight. This method is used due to the increased accuracy as compared to  
19 more typical water displacement methods. A Pearson correlation was used to test the  
20 correlation between total brain mass and total brain volume using the R- statistical  
21 software package <sup>7</sup>.

## 22 **Genotyping, QTL and mapping**

23 DNA preparation was performed by Agowa GmbH (Berlin, Germany), using a  
24 standard salt extraction technique <sup>8</sup>. A total of 652 SNP markers were used to generate  
25 a map of length ~92675cM, with an average marker spacing of ~16cM. SNPS were  
26 chosen based on a previously obtained panel of 10000 SNPs that had been run on the  
27 parental birds. Additional details of marker generation, map generation and the like  
28 can be found in <sup>9</sup>. QTL analysis was performed using R/Qtl <sup>10</sup> for both standard  
29 interval mapping and epistatic analyses. Interval mapping was performed using  
30 additive and additive+dominance models. Map generation and permutation threshold  
31 measures were performed using the F<sub>8</sub> dataset, to account for the map expansion from  
32 the F<sub>2</sub> to the F<sub>8</sub>. In the body mass QTL analysis batch and sex were always included in  
33 the model as fixed effects, whilst a principal component analysis was used to account  
34 for population structure (see below), with the principal components included as a  
35 covariate. In the case of the chicken, males have a larger body mass (F<sub>8</sub> birds, t-test  
36  $P < 9 \times 10^{-88}$ ), as well as a larger brain mass (F<sub>8</sub> birds, t-test  $P < 8 \times 10^{-20}$ ). To account for a

37 particular QTL varying between the sexes, a sex-interaction effect was added where  
38 significant. Two locus (digenic) epistatic analysis was performed as per the guidelines  
39 given in the R/qtl handbook <sup>11</sup>. A global model incorporated standard main effects,  
40 sex interactions and epistasis was built up starting with the most significant loci and  
41 working down for each trait. For brain mass QTL analysis (whole brain and individual  
42 regions), body mass was not included as a covariate to prevent QTL overlaps between  
43 brain and body mass being removed through for body mass. The exception to this was  
44 fitting an additional model with all detected brain mass QTL in conjunction with a  
45 body mass covariate to assess the relative impacts of the genetic loci and body mass  
46 on brain mass. Sex, batch and the population structure PC were included as covariates  
47 for all brain mass QTL analyses, with a sex-interaction term also fitted if significant.  
48 Almost all brain regions were correlated with one another (with the exception being  
49 no correlation between optic tectum and brainstem mass), therefore no multiple  
50 testing correction was needed for mapping multiple phenotypes (see supplementary  
51 table 1). Details regarding significance thresholds, family structure and selective  
52 sweep clustering analysis are given in the supplementary methods section.

### 53 **Significance thresholds**

54 Significance thresholds for all QTL analysis were calculated using permutation tests  
55 <sup>12,13</sup>. A suggestive significance level of a genome-wide 20% threshold was used (due  
56 to this being more conservative than the standard suggestive threshold <sup>14</sup>). The  
57 approximate significant threshold was LOD ~4.4, whilst the suggestive threshold was  
58 ~3.6 Confidence intervals (C.I.) for each QTL were calculated with a 1.8 LOD drop  
59 method (i.e. where the LOD score on either side of the peak decreases by 1.8 LOD) <sup>15</sup>.  
60 The nearest marker to this 1.8 LOD decrease was then used to give the C.I. in

61 megabases. Epistatic interactions were also assessed using permutation thresholds  
62 generated using R/qtl, once again with a 20% suggestive and 5% significant genome-  
63 wide threshold used (using the guidelines given in <sup>11</sup>).

#### 64 **Family structure**

65 Thresholds and analysis for an advanced intercross can potentially be problematic, as  
66 the family structure can lead to non-syntenic association <sup>16</sup>, whereby regions that are  
67 in LD with the actual QTL will appear significant, resulting in false positive results.  
68 To avoid this, we firstly used a large number of families (n=118) to generate the total  
69 number of individuals, to break down this sub-structure as much as possible. For  
70 example, if only one offspring were used per family, no family structure would exist  
71 and the population would function exactly as recombinant inbred lines <sup>16</sup>. A PCA  
72 approach was used to control for any residual family structure <sup>17</sup>, despite these small  
73 family sizes. This was performed by first calculating the ten strongest PCs, then these  
74 being tested for significance in each QTL regression. All significant PCs were  
75 retained in the final model. This approach allowed us to both control for population  
76 substructure and also test for epistatic interactions, a feature that is impossible using  
77 other packages designed for advanced intercross QTL analysis.

#### 78 **Selective Sweep Clustering Analysis**

79 The clustering test was performed using a permutation test based on the total length of  
80 the chicken genome (1.09Gb), which then had a number of regions equal to the  
81 number of each type of QTL detected in the F<sub>8</sub> cross (e.g. whole brain mass QTL,  
82 cerebellum QTL) and the number of selective sweeps (n=133) randomly distributed  
83 along it. The mass of these regions was equal to the average C.I. of QTL from the

84 intercross (5Mb) and the average mass of the selective sweeps (40kb), and tested  
85 against the observed number of overlaps between the detected QTL and the selective  
86 sweeps. This was repeated 1000 times, with the number of overlaps recorded each  
87 time used to generate a significance value.

## 88 **Fecundity Phenotypic Measures**

89 One major behavioural change caused by domestication in chickens is reduced  
90 brooding behaviour. In RJF brooding behaviour in females is associated with the  
91 cessation of egg laying followed by nesting after a clutch of 6-10 eggs have been laid,  
92 but selection for persistent egg production during domestication has resulted in a  
93 reduction in the incidence of this behaviour <sup>18</sup> particularly in Mediterranean breeds  
94 such as the White Leghorn in which brooding behaviour is rarely observed <sup>19</sup>.  
95 Therefore one method for ascertaining if a chicken is brooding is to perform two  
96 fecundity trials, one in which the eggs are removed daily, followed by another in  
97 which the birds are allowed to retain the eggs laid. The number of eggs laid in the  
98 second trial is then deducted from the number of eggs laid in the first trial to calculate  
99 a 'brooding index'. The lower this number is the less broody the individual is (with  
100 negative values indicating a female laid more eggs during the brooding trial than the  
101 fecundity trial). Initially birds were housed individually and eggs were collected daily  
102 over a two-week period for the first trial. The second trial was performed immediately  
103 after the first and was identical except birds were given two dummy eggs to incubate  
104 and were allowed to keep all eggs laid over a ten-day period. Because the brooding  
105 trial was four days shorter than the fecundity trial (with the exception of one batch),  
106 and to make the brooding indices between the two trials more interpretable, we  
107 extrapolated the number of eggs in the second trial to 14 days. We excluded 11

108 females that laid no eggs in the first trial and 55 that laid no eggs in the second trial.  
109 Chickens were reared and tested in five separate batches. In the case of the first two  
110 batches, the number of females exceeded the number of individual cages available for  
111 testing, resulting in assays being staggered in two sub-batches. This was then included  
112 as a covariate in subsequent QTL analyses.

### 113 **Correlations Between Brain Region Mass And Brooding Behaviour**

114 Correlations were performed using the linear model function in R <sup>7</sup>. Total mass and  
115 proportion of total brain mass (i.e. region mass divided by total brain mass) for the  
116 cerebellum and cerebral hemispheres were modelled against brooding behaviour.  
117 Body mass at slaughter was added as covariate, whilst rearing batch was included as a  
118 fixed factor. A total of 123 birds were used in the analysis.

### 119 **Relative and Total Brain Mass and Brain Region Mass Differences between** 120 **Domestic and Wild Birds**

121 The ontogenetic comparison of wild Red Junglefowl and domestic White Leghorn  
122 birds was performed at each age point (six age points used in total – from weeks one,  
123 two, four, ten, fifteen and adult). Eight to seventeen birds from each population (RJF  
124 and WL) were used for each time point comparison (1<sup>st</sup> week: 10-RJF and 10-WL, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
125 week: 10-RJF and 10-WL, 4<sup>th</sup> week: 10-RJF and 10-WL, 10<sup>th</sup> week: 10-RJF and 8-  
126 WL, 15<sup>th</sup> week: 10-RJF and 8-WL, Adulthood: 11-RJF and 17-WL), with both  
127 absolute and relative mass calculated. A 2-sample t-test was used to compare  
128 differences between RJF and WL individuals for absolute brain region mass, using the  
129 R statistical software package <sup>7</sup>.

130 **SUPPLEMENTARY RESULTS**

131 **Brain regions exhibit consistently different mass between domestic and wild**

132 **birds**

133 By measuring brains from RJF and domestic chickens (WL) from 1-week of age until  
134 sexual maturity we show that RJF brain regions weigh about ~85% of the total mass  
135 of their domestic counterparts (cerebral hemispheres ~83%, optic tectum ~88%,  
136 brainstem ~90%, cerebellum ~81%), with this mass difference being largely  
137 consistent throughout post-hatch growth (Supplementary figure 3B-E). The relative  
138 mass of the cerebral hemispheres and cerebellum were consistently larger in WL than  
139 in RJF throughout post-hatch growth (Supplementary figure 3A and D, while the  
140 optic tectum and brainstem regions were consistently proportionally larger in RJF  
141 than in WL (see Supplementary figure 3B and C). Each brain region grows  
142 continuously from the chick-phase (1-week old) until sexual maturity in domestic and  
143 RJF chickens, but the relative mass of each brain region changes (Supplementary  
144 figure 3). In general for all birds (regardless of breed), there is a change in the  
145 different regions from the chick-phase until sexual maturity. In the case of the  
146 cerebral hemispheres, the relative mass changes by around 6% during development,  
147 while the relative mass of the brainstem region is essentially fixed and the relative  
148 mass of the optic tectum decreases by 3%. The relative mass of the cerebellum  
149 increases by 2% during development. The differences between RJF and domesticated  
150 (WL) chickens is also generalised to broilers (chickens produced for meat), with  
151 broilers at two weeks of age showing similar changes in brain composition as WL  
152 (see supplementary figure 4).

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203 **SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURE LEGENDS**

204 **Supplementary figure 1.** Picture showing a whole chicken brain and a brain  
205 dissected into the four regions (Cerebral hemisphere, Optic tectum, Brainstem and  
206 Cerebellum).

207 **Supplementary figure 2.** Brain mass (g) versus brain volume measures (cm<sup>3</sup>) in A)  
208 whole brain and B) brain regions (lower graph).

209 **Supplementary figure 3.** (A-C) Changes in absolute mass in grams (solid lines)  
210 and relative mass (% of total brain mass: dotted lines) of A) Cerebral hemisphere,  
211 B) Optic tectum, C) Brainstem, and D) Cerebellum, in White leghorn (black lines)  
212 and Red Junglefowls (red lines) from 1-week of age until adulthood. For (A-D) T-  
213 test comparisons between WL and RJF brain region absolute mass values were  
214 made within each time point, with \* indicating  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* indicating  $P < 0.01$ .

215 **Supplementary figure 4.** Relative mass (Mean +/- s.e.) of each of the four brain  
216 regions (Cerebral hemisphere, Optic tectum, Brainstem and Cerebellum) in Red  
217 Junglefowl (RJF), White leghorn (WL) and Broilers (B).

218 **SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE LEGENDS**

219 **Supplementary table 1.** (A) Phenotypic correlations between brain regions using  
220 absolute mass values (B) Phenotypic correlations between brain regions using relative  
221 mass values. Correlations given as Pearson correlation statistic, with \* indicating  
222 significance at  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* indicating significance at  $P < 0.01$ , and \*\*\* indicating  
223 significance at  $P < 0.001$ . Tables are symmetrical, therefore duplicate values are not  
224 filled in.

225 **Supplementary table 2.** QTL information for all QTL. Includes locations (both the  
226 chromosome and the position in centiMorgans), % variance explained by each QTL

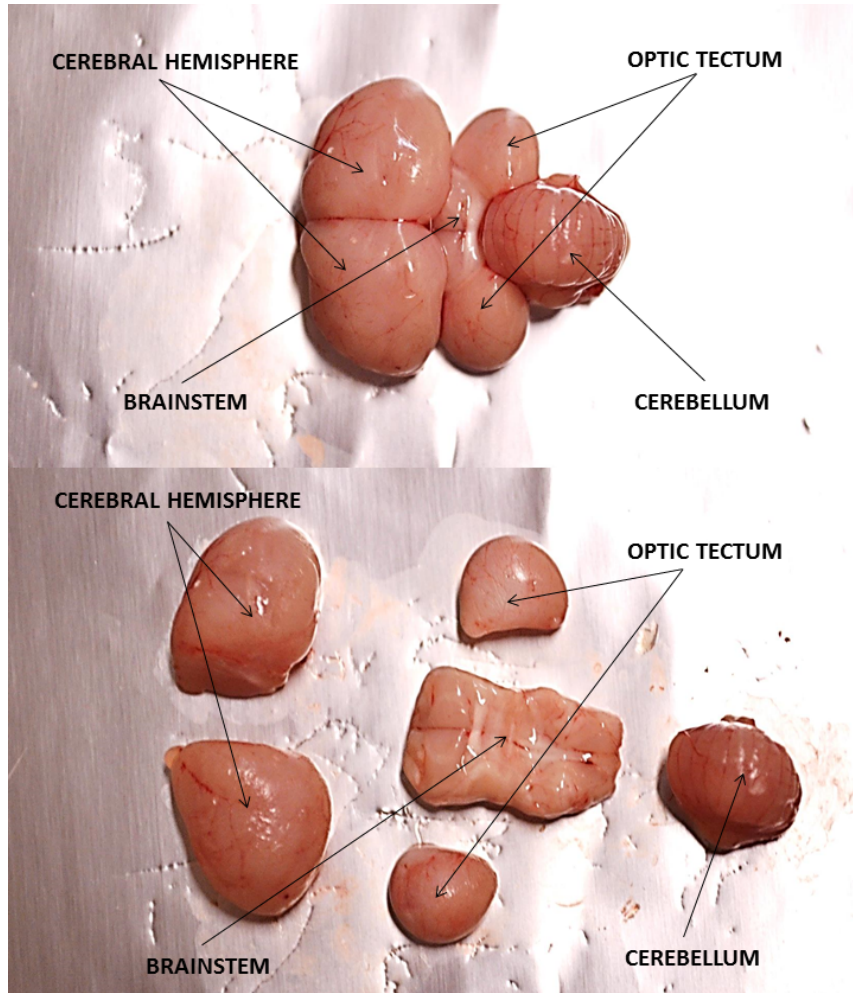
227 (r-squared), additive and dominance effect sizes (positive values for additive values  
228 indicate a larger QTL effect size in domestic genotype birds, negative a larger value  
229 in wild genotype birds). The lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval  
230 (C.I) are noted. The total QTL region is therefore the region bounded between these  
231 two limits. Locations of selective sweeps are also provided, with AD indicating the  
232 sweep is present in both Broiler and Layer birds, and LR indicating the sweep is  
233 specific to Layer birds. For sweeps present in cerebellum and total brain mass QTL  
234 any genes present within sweeps are also provided after the sweep location.  
235 Cerebellum QTL are marked in bold.

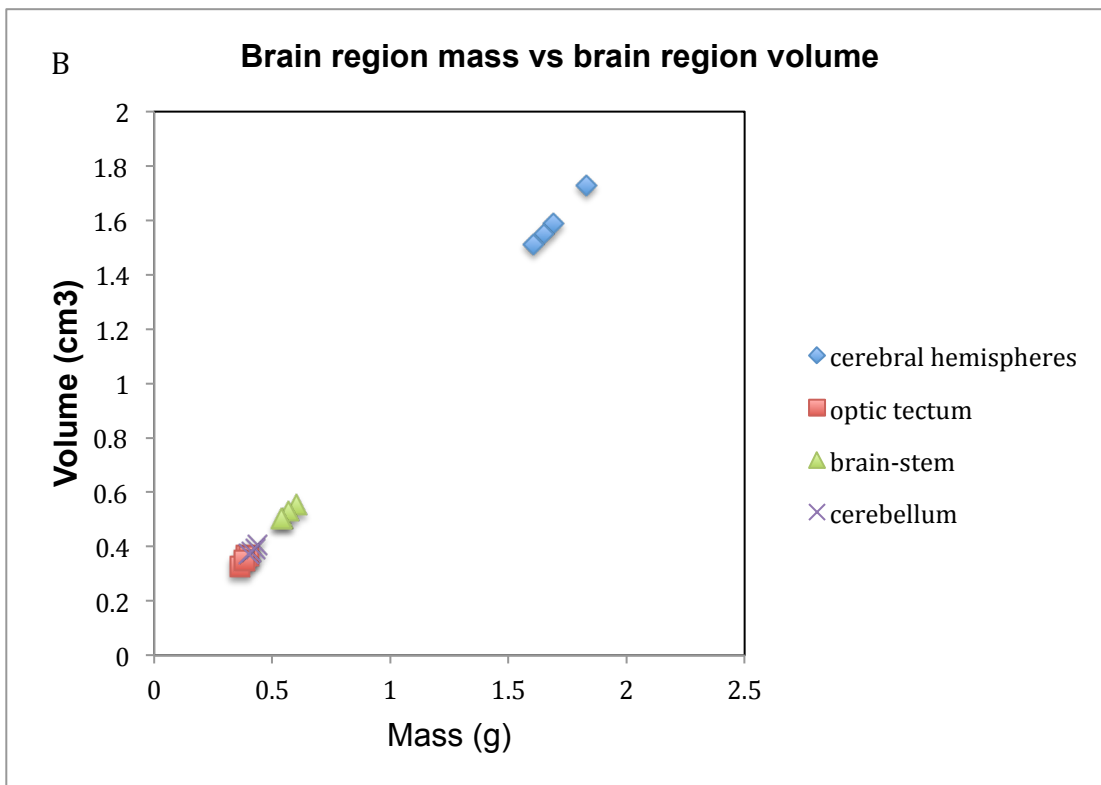
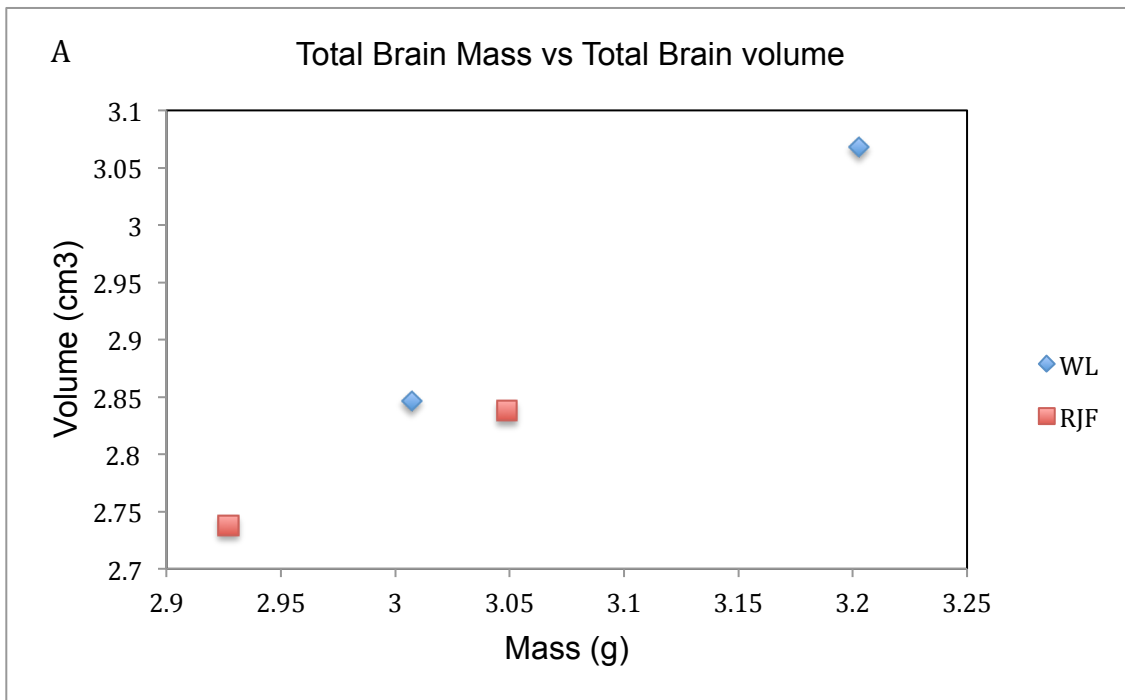
236 **Supplementary table 3.** Covariates and interactions associated with detected QTL,  
237 ordered by chromosome.

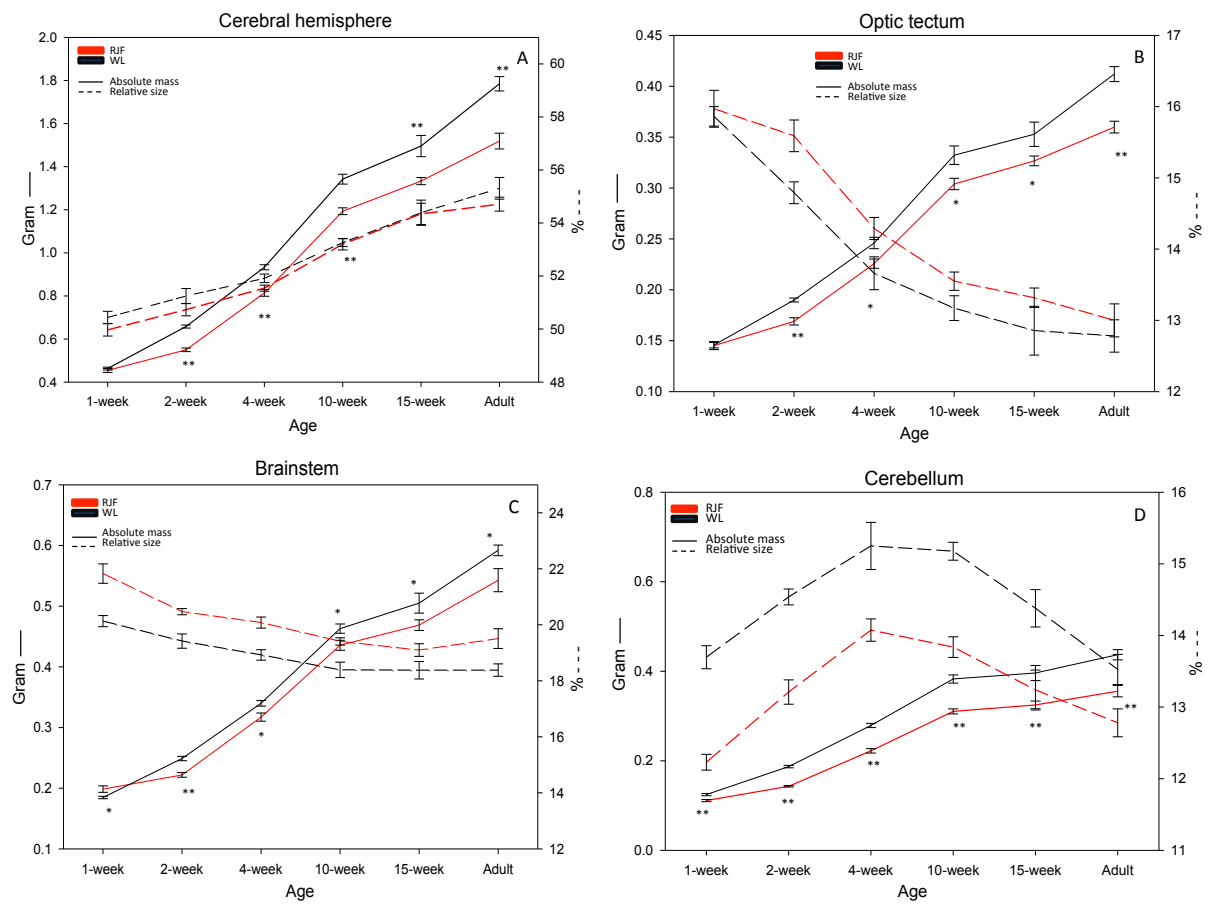
238 **Supplementary table 4.** DXA measures of lean and fat mass in domestic and RJF  
239 chickens.

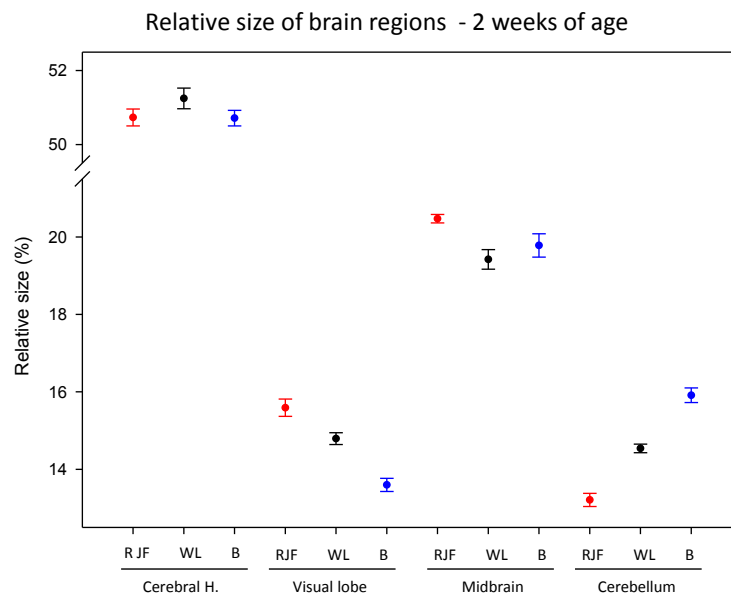
240

241 Supplementary figure 1









246 **Supplementary table 1.** (A) Phenotypic correlations between brain regions using  
 247 absolute mass values. (B) Phenotypic correlations between brain regions using  
 248 relative mass values. Correlations given as Pearson correlation statistic, with \*  
 249 indicating significance at  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* indicating significance at  $P < 0.01$ , and \*\*\*  
 250 indicating significance at  $P < 0.001$ .

<b>A</b>			
<b>Brain region mass</b>	Optic tectum	Brain stem	Cerebellum
Cerebral hemispheres	0.39***	0.27***	0.48***
Optic tectum	-	-0.06	0.22***
Brainstem	-	-	0.28***
Cerebellum	-	-	-
<b>B</b>			
<b>Brain region relative mass</b>	% Optic tectum	% Brain stem	% Cerebellum
% Cerebral hemispheres	0.07	-0.70***	-0.36***
% Optic tectum	-	-0.51***	-0.16**
% Brainstem	-	-	-0.18**
% Cerebellum	-	-	-



251 **Supplementary table 2.** QTL information for all QTL. Includes locations (both the  
252 chromosome and the position in centiMorgans), % variance explained by each QTL  
253 (r-squared), additive and dominance effect sizes (positive values for additive values  
254 indicate a larger QTL effect size in domestic genotype birds, negative a larger value  
255 in wild genotype birds). The lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval  
256 (C.I) are noted. The total QTL region is therefore the region bounded between these  
257 two limits. Locations of selective sweeps are also provided, with AD indicating the  
258 sweep is present in both Broiler and Layer birds, and LR indicating the sweep is  
259 specific to Layer birds. For sweeps present in cerebellum and total brain mass QTL  
260 any genes present within sweeps are also provided after the sweep location.  
261 Cerebellum QTL are marked in bold.

trait	chr	pos	LOD	r-sq	add +/- s.e	dom +/- s.e.	lower CI	upper CI	selective sweeps present
body mass (212 days)	1	510	43,5	21,5	235 +/- 28	-20 +/- 38	507	516	
relative cerebral hemisphere	1	596,2	7,7	8,6	-0.004 +/- 0.002	0.001 +/- 0.002	593	607	43.7 AD, 44.9 AD
total cerebral hemisphere mass	1	1078	5,7	4,2	0.04 +/- 0.008	-0.003 +/- 0.01	1058	1084	
relative cerebral hemisphere	1	1221	11,3	13,1	0.004 +/- 0.006	-0.03 +/- 0.007	1212	1225	
total brain mass	1	1516	5,3	3,3	0.06 +/- 0.02	-0.06 +/- 0.04	1494	1583	119.46 LR ( <i>SPAC17A2</i> ), 127.88 LR ( <i>ARHGAP6</i> )
<b>total Cerebellum mass</b>	1	1593	13,5	9,9	0.012 +/- 0.005	-0.023 +/- 0.007	1586	1598	127.88 LR
<b>relative Cerebellum</b>	1	1945	4,8	4,8	0.003 +/- 0.001	0.005 +/- 0.002	1931	1956	179.66 LR ( <i>UBL3</i> ), 182.6 LR ( <i>FGF9</i> )
<b>total Cerebellum mass</b>	1	2204	9,3	6,6	0.0004 +/- 0.004	-0.004 +/- 0.005	2196	2224	<i>MAP6</i> , <i>CCKBR</i> , <i>PLEKHB1</i>
relative brainstem	3	403	5,4	7,4	-0.052 +/- 0.011	0.06 +/- 0.01	386	407.93	
<b>total Cerebellum mass</b>	3	448	8,5	6	0.005 +/- 0.005	0.022 +/- 0.007	442	458	62,62 LR ( <i>KNF217</i> ), 64.04 LR ( <i>SERINC1</i> )
total brain mass	3	448	8,7	5,6	-0.12 +/- 0.07	0.25 +/- 0.09	444	454	62,62 LR ( <i>KNF217</i> ), 64.04 LR ( <i>SERINC1</i> )
brooding	4	154	9	12,5	-3.74 +/- 0.83	3.25 +/- 1.42	150	163	
body mass (212 days)	4	265	8,6	4,7	8.1 +/- 9.8	19.8 +/- 12.3	254	274	
brooding	4	492	7,8	10,6	1.16 +/- 0.36	-0.65 +/- 0.48	470	502	72.46 AD, 76.14 AD, 78.42 LR, 80.32 AD, 80.38 AD, 80.44 AD, 80.76 AD
relative optic tectum	4	205.7	4,7	6,3	0.005 +/- 0.005	0.016 +/- 0.007	201	223	28.02 AD, 29.5 AD
<b>relative Cerebellum</b>	5	124	4,8	4,8	0.002 +/- 0.004	-0.03 +/- 0.006	106	144	18.8 LR ( <i>FGF3</i> ), 19.4 LR ( <i>SHANK1</i> ), 20.2 LR ( <i>CAT</i> ), 20.5 LR ( <i>CD44</i> )
body mass (212 days)	6	207	5	1,9	26 +/- 8	30 +/- 11	195	214	
<b>relative Cerebellum</b>	7	159	7,4	7,6	0.005 +/- 0.002	0.004 +/- 0.002	150	171	
<b>total Cerebellum mass</b>	7	174	5,9	4,1	0.019 +/- 0.005	0.003 +/- 0.005	150	176	23.04 AD ( <i>TANK1</i> )
total brain mass	7	200	6,6	4,2	0.02 +/- 0.018	-0.04 +/- 0.03	190	212	23.04 AD ( <i>TANK1</i> ), 23.1 AD, 25.42 LR ( <i>BIN1</i> ), 25.9 LR
total cerebral hemisphere mass	8	51	4,8	3,5	0.05 +/- 0.01	-0.01 +/- 0.02	36	87	8.98 AD
brooding	9	0	5,1	6,6	0.09 +/- 0.33	0.03 +/- 0.47	0	16	
total brain mass	9	51.1	13,6	8,9	0.018 +/- 0.017	-0.04 +/- 0.02	48	60	
total cerebral hemisphere mass	10	249	5,9	4,3	-0.07 +/- 0.01	-0.05 +/- 0.02	232	257	19.3 LR
body mass (212 days)	12	64	4,4	1,7	35 +/- 10	20 +/- 14	45	79	
total cerebral hemisphere mass	12	232	5,3	3,8	-0.04 +/- 0.008	-0.03 +/- 0.01	218	240	17.2 AD
brooding	13	54	10	14,0	-4.39 +/- 1.62	4.83 +/- 2.84	44	80	3.68 LR
relative cerebral hemisphere	21	8	3,5	3,8	-0.008 +/- 0.002	-0.003 +/- 0.003	0	19	0.1 AD
body mass (212 days)	24	14	9,5	5	0.8 +/- 9.1	38 +/- 11	6	18	
body mass (212 days)	27	68	4,2	1,6	38 +/- 11	-1.8 +/- 9.8	56	80	

262 **Supplementary table 3.** Covariates and interactions associated with detected QTL,  
 263 ordered by chromosome.

Trait	covariates	Interactions
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	
relative cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	<a href="#">1@596.2:1@1221.0</a>
total cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
relative cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	1@596.2:1@1221.0, 1@1221.0:sex
total brain mass	sex, batch, PCs,	1@1516.0:9@51.1
total Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs,	3@448:7@174, 1@1593:1@2204
relative Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs	
total Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs,	1@1593:1@2204
relative brainstem mass	sex, batch, PCs	sex:3@403.0
total Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs,	3@448:7@174
total brain mass	sex, batch, PCs,	<a href="#">3@448.0:sex</a>
Brooding	w212, batch, part_fec, PCs	4@154.0:13@54.0
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	
Brooding	w212, batch, part_fec, PCs	4@492.0:9@0.0
relative optic tectum mass	sex, batch, PCs	Sex
relative Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs	sex:5@124.0
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	
relative Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs	
total Cerebellum mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
total brain mass	sex, batch, PCs,	9@51.1:7@200.0
total cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
Brooding	w212, batch, part_fec, PCs	4@492.0:9@0.0
		1@1516.0:9@51.1,
total brain mass	sex, batch, PCs,	9@51.1:7@200.0
total cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	
total cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
Brooding	w212, batch, part_fec, PCs	4@154.0:13@54.0
relative cerebral hemisphere mass	sex, batch, PCs,	
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	
body mass (212 days)	sex, batch, PCs	

264 **Supplementary table 4.** Dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) measures of lean  
 265 and fat mass in domestic and Red Junglefowl (RJF) chickens.

trait	WL females	RJF females	WL males	RJF males
total mass (g)	1408	818	1566	1221
lean mass (g)	910	684	1349	944
fat mass (g)	427	98	146	221
% lean	0.65	0.84	0.86	0.77
% fat	0.30	0.12	0.09	0.18
DXA Bone Mineral Density	467	331	389	376
DXA Bone Mineral Content	72	35	71	56
BMD/ mass	0.33	0.40	0.25	0.31
BMC/ mass	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05