

All About Migrations!

Age/Grade Range

- Grade 10-15

Group Size

- Large group activity (15-30 students)

Time

- Set-up: 5-10 minutes
- Activity: 30 minutes

Materials

- Devices with access to the Internet
- A projector (optional)
- Handouts: blank map of the world, or large flipchart paper for small group activity

Set-Up

1. Set up an account with ebird, its free and gives you access to their interactive maps.
2. Familiarize yourself with the migration map.
3. Bring up the ebird map (link below) on the projector, so it is ready to go.
4. Ensure you have enough map handouts for the class.
5. You may want to write out some migration descriptions on the board as examples.

Delivery Tips

- Best run with at least two facilitators

Activity Directions

1. As a class, explore the interactive map of bird migrations on ebird.org/map, you will need an account to log in. If you would prefer not to log in, you can find other maps of bird migration at blog.education.nationalgeographic.org/2015/10/27/mesmerizing-maps-of-bird-migration/
 - a. It offers a great perspective on the scope of bird migrations in the Americas.
 - b. Try to track a few of the bird species across their entire migration. Choose species that migrate to the NWT, or at least Northern Canada.



NWT SCIENCE FOCUS

Topics

- Ecology and Animals

Objective

- Learn about where, why and how animals migrate.
- Be creative, and hands-on in practicing geographical thinking.
- Encourage students to think critically about animal movements.





2. Split into small groups and have students draw their own migration map, including animal paths that they know or can look up on the Internet. This can be done on individual map handouts or in a large group on chart paper.
 - a. Students will need to discover where various animals migrate to and from, and then draw arrows on their map to mark the routes.
 - b. You may want to give them a list of migrating species in the NWT, like ptarmigan and barren-ground caribou, as examples to get them started. Try to cover a variety of migrations (long-distance, alpine, overland, flying, marine, etc.)
 - c. They can draw a picture of each animal along their respective routes.
 - d. Alternatively, have students add their migration paths or the paths of their family.

Questions/Points of Discussion

- Why do some animals move around while others don't?
- Think about why people move, what pressures have influenced the movements of humans and other animals in the past?
- How do the growing effects of climate change influence these movements into the future?

Modifications

- If students do not have access to computers/internet, you can run this activity by providing handouts with descriptions of the migrations that they can then try to draw as lines on their map. You do the research ahead of time, but they still have to try to interpret your descriptions and put their understanding of geography to use.
- Find more activity ideas and information about bird migration from the United States National Environmental Education Foundation:
<https://www.neefusa.org/nature/plants-and-animals/important-message-birds>
<https://www.neefusa.org/resource/animal-migration-activity-guide>

