

What is migration?

Migration is when a group of animals leave their homes and go to another place for a certain period of time. Often animals migrate with the changing seasons and travel to lots of different places to find food, to keep warm or to have babies. Many animals need to migrate and they can make the journey by land, air and water. Keep reading to find out more information about three amazing, migrating animals!



Migrating Animals



Humpback Whale

What do they look like?

Humpbacks are mainly black or grey with white undersides, flippers and bellies. Adults can grow up to 15 meters long. These enormous, wild creatures are extremely active, often slapping their large, heavy flippers happily on the surface of the sea.

Why do they migrate?

During winter, humpback whales live in warm, tropical seas like Hawaii, Mexico and Japan. Calves are born here because the high temperature of the water is the perfect place for them to be raised. However, there isn't a lot of food available for them to eat in these tropical seas so they must migrate north. When summer arrives they gracefully make the long journey to the icy polar waters like Iceland, Greenland and Norway. Here the humpback whales greedily feast on tiny fish and krill.

Did you know?

Male humpback whales are known for their songs and will sing for many hours. They sing loudly and their songs can be heard from 20 miles away. How loud is that!



Ruby-throated Hummingbird

What do they look like?

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird is small bird with a bill that curves down slightly. Their delicate, soft wings are fairly short and don't reach all the way to the tail when they are sitting. These birds can fly fast but can stop instantly. They can also hover gracefully when eating the nectar from flowers. They like to live in open woodlands, forest edges, meadows, grasslands, and in gardens.

Why do they migrate?

Beginning in spring they fly gracefully up through eastern North America to places like Canada, Columbia and Alaska following the pretty, colourful flowers. The Hummingbirds reach their destination by summer and build their nests to raise their chicks. In autumn, the birds can't find much food so they have to journey south to the warmth of Central America. They spend the winter in places like Mexico, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Did you know?

Even though hummingbirds fly up to 12,000 kilometres yearly, they can't fly higher than the tree tops.

Caribou

What do they look like?

Caribou are thick furred travellers with wide, padded feet. They have a long snout, a short tail and long legs with large, round hooves. These magnificent, wild animals travel further than any other animal on four legs. Having no home, the caribou are always on the move in search of food.

Where do they migrate?

Walking in each other's footprints to keep out of the deep snow, the caribou slowly move north in spring to the Tundra. This cold, windy land is treeless and covered in snow. However, by the time summer arrives, bursts of wildflowers appear and the caribou graze on the lush, meadow grass. As winter approaches, the caribou move south and seek cover in the forests. Here they scrape through snow to nibble on lichen, mushrooms and grass.

Did you know?

Caribou and reindeer are of the same species and can run up to 30 miles per hour.

