

Name _____

Hummingbirds on the Move: The Amazing Journey of Migration

Hummingbirds are tiny birds with incredible abilities, and one of the most amazing things they do is migrate. Migration is when animals travel from one place to another, usually because the weather is changing or they need more food. Hummingbirds migrate to stay warm and find enough food to eat.

As summer ends and the weather starts to get colder, there are fewer flowers for hummingbirds to get nectar from. Nectar is the sweet liquid inside flowers that hummingbirds love to drink. Without enough nectar, they wouldn't have the energy to keep flying. So, when the days get shorter and the nights get cooler, hummingbirds know it's time to start their long journey to warmer places where flowers are still blooming.

Some hummingbirds travel incredible distances during migration! For example, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, which lives in North America during the summer, flies all the way to Central America for the winter. This can be a journey of over 1,000 miles! What's even more amazing is that some of these tiny birds fly across the Gulf of Mexico—a huge body of water—without stopping. This part of the journey can take them up to 18 hours of nonstop flying! Look up their route on Google Maps.

Before they start migrating, hummingbirds eat a lot more than usual. They need to build up their energy so they can make the long trip. They'll visit as many flowers as they can and even eat small insects to store up fat in their tiny bodies. This fat is like fuel for their journey, helping them stay strong and fly far.

Hummingbirds have an amazing sense of direction. Even though they are so small, they can find their way to the same places every year. Scientists aren't exactly sure how they do it, but they think hummingbirds might use the position of the sun, the Earth's magnetic field, and even landmarks like mountains and rivers to help guide them.

When spring comes and the weather warms up, the flowers start blooming again in their summer homes. This is when the hummingbirds know it's time to make the journey back. They follow the same paths they took in the fall, returning to the places where they spent the summer. Some hummingbirds even return to the exact same garden or yard year after year! Put up some feeders in your yard, and you can watch them.



Hummingbird migration is an incredible journey that shows just how strong and smart these tiny birds are. They travel thousands of miles to stay warm and find food, and they always find their way back home. The next time you see a hummingbird in your yard, remember that it might have just finished an amazing adventure!

Name _____

1. What is migration? _____

2. How do hummingbirds know when it is time to migrate? _____

3. How do hummingbirds get ready to migrate? _____

4. What do scientists think hummingbirds use to help guide them during migration? _____

