

Just Passing Through

GRADE LEVEL: upper elementary, middle school

DURATION: at least two 30-40 minute class periods

OBJECTIVES

After this activity, students will be able to:

- List the migratory species that pass through the local area
- Identify resources that are available and used by migratory species in the local wetlands

MATERIALS

- Paper and pens, markers, or pencils
- Research materials (see Procedure, Step 2)

PROCEDURE

Version 1:

1. Students will begin creating a list of species that pass through their local area on a migration path (either annually or over the course of their lifetime). If time allows, ask students to research this in advance through the internet, visiting local parks, interviewing adults, or searching guide books. If time is limited, simply present them with a list and briefly familiarize them briefly with the each species.
2. Assign a species to each student or small groups of students and ask them to create a card for each migratory species, in the style of a trading card (see template that follows or create your own). Supply students with time and resources to research their species (guidebooks, library, interviews with local experts, internet, personal observations).
3. Display a large map in the classroom with wetlands habitats identified and labeled (either an actual local map, or a drawing representing the local area). Ask students to present their species, identifying reasons why they stop locally and other fun facts. Ask students to post their cards on the 'last seen' location on the map.

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Each location has a unique set of species that migrate through, and each species uses the resources of the local habitats for a variety of reasons.

Migratory species may be in search of food, rest, a breeding area, or water. Wetlands may provide food in the form of submerged plants, emergent plants, insects, or even larger animals. Breeding areas may come in the form of a gravel streambed for salmon eggs, a nest at the shoreline of the wetland, or a tree canopy leaning over the wetland shore. Whatever the migratory species is in search of, each wetland habitat is unique in the combination of resources that it offers to those passing through.

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4. Lead a discussion with the students, identifying which resources are available and used by migratory species passing through the local wetlands.

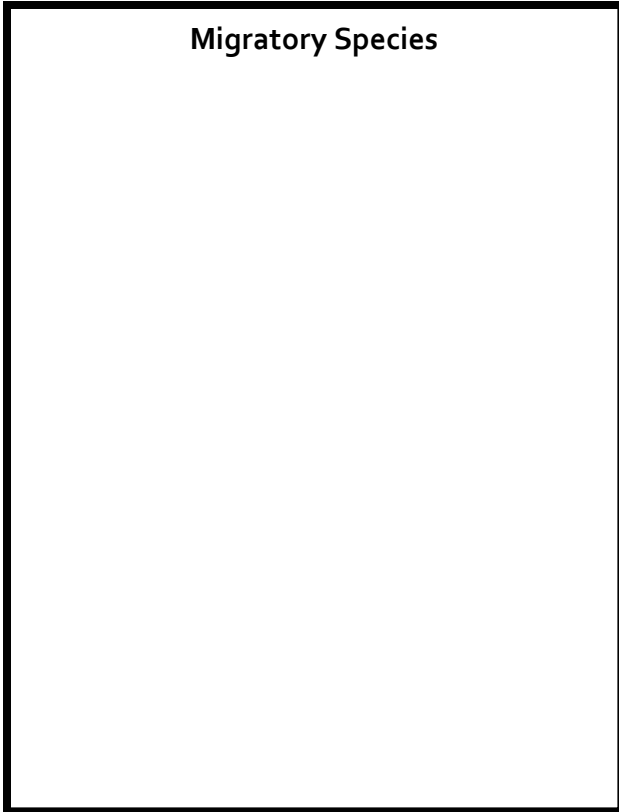
Version 2:

5. Coordinate an interactive guided walk or talk with a local wildlife expert, focused on the migratory species that are found in the local area. Specifically ask the guest speaker to provide examples that demonstrate how the species use the wetlands during their migration, and about how the wetlands are impacted by the surrounding habitats and development. Local experts may be available to speak through local wildlife resource management agencies, educators and researchers at universities, or amateur birding, hunting, or fishing organizations.

EXTENSION

1. Ask students to use media to enhance the profile of their species with video clips or audio clips available on the internet.
2. Ask the students to use technology such as Google Earth to trace the migratory path of their species, either throughout the course of a year or their lifetime.
3. Have students document observations from this lesson and share with another classroom via social media.

Migratory Species



(draw picture on this card)

Migratory Species

Birthplace

Migration Distance

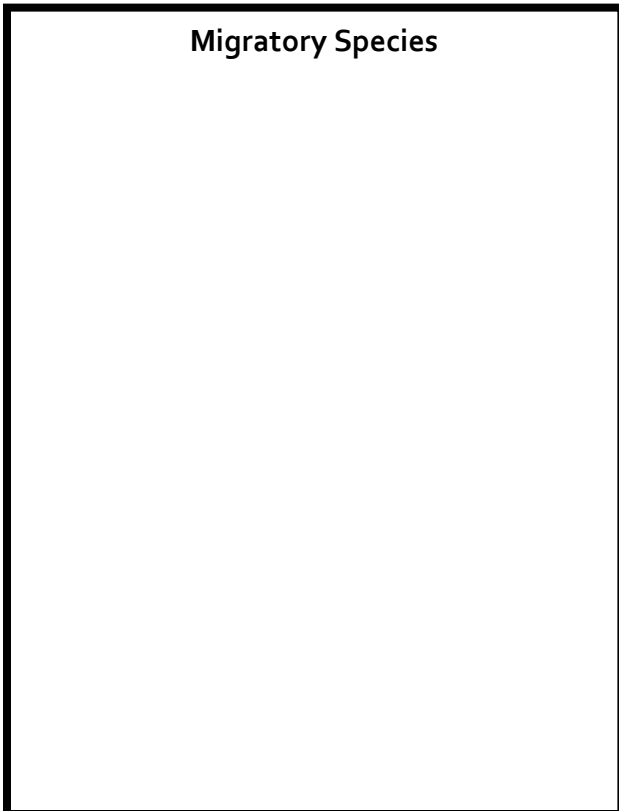
Favorite Habitats

Favorite Foods

Fun Facts

(fold over card and glue/paste to form card)

Migratory Species



(draw picture on this card)

Migratory Species

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