

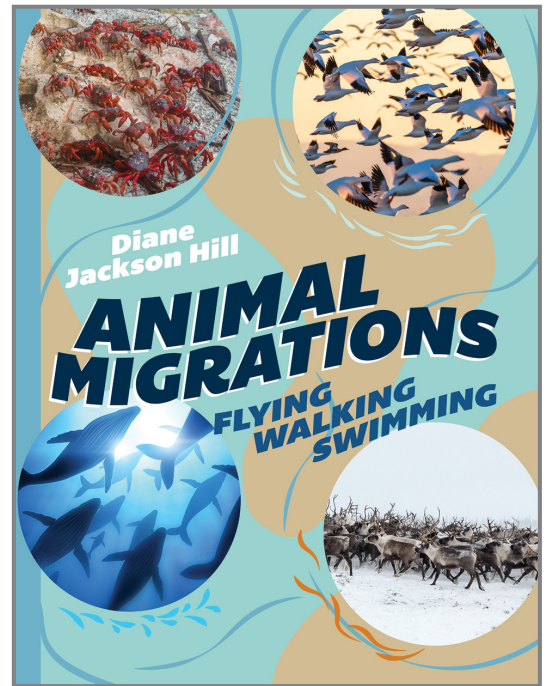
Animal Migrations: Flying, Walking, Swimming

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid to Upper Primary



SYNOPSIS

A reindeer treks a continent under unimaginable weather extremes. One tiny bird flies non-stop for nine days, while another flies from the North to South Pole (and back!) every year. A whale swims through the oceans of a hemisphere.

Animal Migrations: Flying, Walking, Swimming offers a fascinating insight into the what, where, why and how of these incredible journeys of survival. It explores the migrations of mammals, birds, insects, fish, reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans and aquatic microorganisms. Discover exceptional and unusual journeys, their effect on our world, and how we can help these migrating animals.

The remarkable adventures covered in *Animal Migrations* show strength, determination, inbuilt knowledge and the importance of community across global connections.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diane Jackson Hill is a retired primary school teacher who is passionate about connecting children to the beauty of our incredible world. She is also the author of *Windcatcher: Migration of the Short-tailed Shearwater*, which won a CBCA Notable Award and a Whitley Award.

STUDY NOTES

- Many animals that migrate do so in groups. Read pp 8 and 9 of *Animal Migrations*. Ask the students if they consider humans to be naturally social animals, and if they think of us as migratory. Do we humans have 'safety in numbers' as well?
- Read pp 15–16, and note on a whiteboard the statistics on how far Porcupine Caribou, wildebeests and Bearded Pigs travel. Using a recognisable local map to depict how far smaller distances might be, of 1 to 10 kilometres, invite students to relate the distance the animals might walk in a year to distances they might cover, such as from home to school.
- Many animals, like whales, travel long distances to eat lots of food in one place, and then long distances to give birth in another. Read Chapter Three for more examples. Why might these animals move so far for two different activities?
- Share the map on p 27 with the students and ask them what they notice about the bird flight pathways. Discuss why most of them move on a north-to-south direction, and less on an east-to-west direction. Ask the students how they think birds might be able to cover such enormous distances, compared with other migrating animals.

- Discuss with students the different ways they might find their way from one place to another. Use the word navigation, and invite them to share ways they might navigate in an unknown environment before reading Chapter Five. Who has used a map? A compass? Satellite navigation?
- Discuss with students whether their pets migrate. Then ask them how these animals might spread around the world to different countries. Expand this into a conversation about how animals, such as cane toads or rabbits, ‘accidentally’ migrate, and then read pp 39–40 to continue the discussion.
- Read pp 50–51, and discuss with students the various ways migrating animals might help plants ‘migrate’ as well. Suggest how this might be a problem in weed management.
- Read pp 10–11. Ask the students about the kinds of stories the pictographs etched into the rocks might be telling. How might the images be considered types of words? Is it a form of language, art or both?
- Read pp 56–59, and discuss with students how an event from 7000 years ago became a story about the land that is still told today. How did the land influence the culture, diet and storytelling of the Gunditjmarra people? Read pp 60 and 61, and compare their way of life with that of the Loucheux tribe in the Arctic and the coastal Kwakiutl people in Canada.
- Discuss with students how humans might interrupt the movements of animals across large distances. Point out there’s more than physical barriers to movement—animals can be distracted, have their food sources removed or be scared away. Read Chapter Nine and then ask what kinds of consequences impeded migrations might have on our society.
- Read Chapter 10, and continue the above discussion in coming up with solutions to some of the most significant obstacles and hazards humans pose to migrating animals.
- Ask students to choose a migrating animal. It might be one they discovered in *Migrating Animals*. Direct them to online or physical resources to research as much as they can about their animal’s migration, noting routes, distances and special facts. Use this information to come up with a board game based on their animal’s migration. Help them come up with ideas by suggesting other games they might base it on, such as Snakes and Ladders. They can use dice, make cards, or apply any other creative techniques that might illustrate their game and make it fun to play. Ask them to include a ‘How to play’ list of instructions with their game. Once students have completed the task, set aside a few hours in an afternoon where everybody plays their games.
- Discuss the concepts of personification and anthropomorphisation with the class, emphasising how we as humans relate to things by imagining they were like us. Ask the students to choose a migrating animal and to write a diary of a season in migration. How might they express themselves? What might they already know? Are they following other animals, following a magnetic sense, or simply following their noses?
- Read Chapter 10 together with the class before starting this activity. Pay special attention to p 71, asking different students to read aloud the ways we can assist various animals to ensure their migrations aren’t disturbed. Invite students to work in groups of five. Ask them to designate the following town committee roles to individuals in their group:
 - Mayor: The person responsible for overseeing tasks given to each individual in the group, and determining if their ideas are good enough to write down.
 - Waste collector: The person responsible for waste removal, bins and recycling.
 - Town planner: The person responsible for determining what can happen in different parts of the town, such as where new houses go, where roads and parks can be built, and which areas can have shops or factories.
 - Media advisor: The person responsible for writing up short messages the town committee wants the public to know.
 - Parks officer: The person responsible for looking after wildlife reserves, and ensuring parks and beaches are clean and tidy.
 - Once everybody has a role, the mayor can run a town committee meeting to discuss how to make the town as safe and welcoming as possible for migrating animals. Discuss how each person might be able to do something to make each point on p 71 a reality. How might they achieve this?