

ELF NOTES

Environmental Learning for the Future - Vermont Institute of Natural Science
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Winter Birdlife

Birds that stay north in winter or come south from the arctic tundra are the ones that can live off the available food sources such as seeds and nuts and hibernating insects.

By setting up feeders or going to where there are wild food supplies, you can see what kinds of birds are around for the winter and observe their behavior.

After snowfall is a good time to make a survey of the number and kinds of birds that nested and raised their young last spring and summer.

Nests with their horizontal surfaces catch snow and are easily spotted among leafless branches.

CYCLES

FLY AWAY OR STAY?

The seasonal movement of birds from one area to another for the purposes of feeding and reproducing is called migration. Some birds migrate only short distances, some don't migrate at all, but many fly thousands of miles each year. The migration patterns and distances traveled vary with species.

Birds migrate from northern areas to places where there are more adequate food supplies, longer daylight hours for foraging for food, and less need to expend energy to stay warm.

Birds that migrate face risks along the way such as bad weather, high winds and fog; becoming prey to predators; or falling victim to changes in their stopover or destination places.

Some species of birds, such as the black-capped chickadee, ruffed grouse, and blue jay, have adaptations that allow them to survive the challenges of northern winters.

ELF NEWS

