

play MIGRATION NATION

Can you lead your flock safely south for the winter?



You started without enough energy. Fly back to the STAGING GROUNDS and fatten up!

Your information helps conserve flying energy. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

Reflective stickers save your flock from smashing into house windows. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

Logging has destroyed your traditional feeding and resting habitat. There is no cover. Fly BACK ONE space.

At last, a wildlife sanctuary for rest and food. Move AHEAD THREE spaces.

Oh, oh. Duck hunters! Fly BACK ONE space and land out of range.

Your flock is ambushed by predators. You escape by flying BACK TWO spaces.

Your flock is joined by another, and there is strength in numbers. Fly AHEAD TWO spaces.

A Pacific storm blows you off course and onto the Central route. MISS A TURN to rest. Next turn, begin heading inland.

Your flock narrowly avoids a collision with an airplane. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

You land your flock by a clean pond and take advantage of the fresh food and water. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

Office workers leave lights on at night. Members of your flock hit the windows. Fly BACK TWO spaces.

A new housing development has left you no place to land. Fly BACK TWO spaces.

You spot a rooftop garden on the top of a skyscraper and land your flock to rest and eat. Fly AHEAD TWO spaces.

Dogs on the beach prevent you from feeding. Fly BACK THREE spaces.

You are sucked into wind turbines and half your flock dies. Fly BACK FOUR spaces.

Your flock arrives at a stop-over site and discovers it is now a protected sanctuary. You are safe to rest and feed. Fly AHEAD THREE spaces.

You catch a railroad on the home stretch. Fly AHEAD THREE spaces.

Yikes! Your stop-over is now a golf course! Fly BACK ONE space.

You catch a thermal column of rising hot air, allowing you to soar with ease. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTRE

You are attacked by a neighbourhood cat while feeding at a backyard feeder. Go to the WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTRE.

Forest fire! You must fly inland to escape. Some flock members are lost in the fire. MISS A TURN. Fly toward the PACIFIC FLYWAY next turn.

You remember a shortcut through a mountain pass. Lead your flock AHEAD ONE space.

Your flock begins its descent to a favourite stop-over site, only to discover it has been replaced by a mall! You must search for a new safe place to rest. Fly BACK ONE space.

Just as your flock is timing, you spot a field to rest in. Fly AHEAD ONE space.

As your flock is landing, you spot a farmer spraying pesticides and your flock gets sick. Fly BACK FIVE spaces.



Hopscotch Habitats: Backyard Beacons for Wildlife

Do you know who your neighbours are?

Not only do we share our neighbourhoods with people, we also share them with wild animals and plants. If you live in the middle of a big city like Vancouver or Victoria, you might not think so, but it's true. Raccoons, skunks, squirrels, coyotes, eagles, hawks and many other bird species, as well as insects, all share space with people. The presence of a variety of trees, plants, birds, insects and other wildlife is a good sign that the environment is healthy, and it also makes our neighbourhoods more interesting and enjoyable.

In cities, the "concrete jungle" – buildings, roads and parking lots – often keeps plants and animals apart, making it difficult for wildlife to find food, shelter and breeding opportunities. Travel from one natural area to another can even be difficult for animals and plants in rural areas if their natural habitat has been replaced by farm and grazing land that offers limited choices for food and shelter.

Creating "hopscotch habitats" is a way we can help wildlife in our neighbourhoods.

If there are enough small natural green spots where wildlife can find food, water and safe shelter, they can "hop" from spot to spot. We can do our part by making our own yards and schools part of the hopscotch habitat for animals.

Bees and Butterflies - Our Best Friends!

Besides making honey, bees are the reason we have blueberries, strawberries, peaches, apples – almost all our fruits and vegetables. Both bees and butterflies are pollinators. They help plants reproduce by transferring pollen from one plant to another, fertilizing the flowers so fruit or vegetables can grow. Mysteriously, honeybees are disappearing at an alarming rate.

Scientists suspect the bees may be getting a virus, but they don't know why. The loss of bees has the world's farmers worried because bees pollinate a third of all the fruits and vegetables.

Your action! Never harm a honeybee or bumblebee, and protect their hives.

Creating Your Own Hopscotch Habitat

A "hopscotch habitat" is a safe place where wildlife can stop for food, water and shelter. Here are some tips for making your backyard (or even your balcony) wildlife-friendly:

- ✓ Plant native trees, shrubs and flowers – they're better for animals. Trees such as mountain ash, hawthorn and crabapple, for example, have berries and fruit well into the winter.
- ✓ Provide several types of year-round shelter to attract a variety of animals. Dense shrubs will provide homes for small birds. Stone walls or rock piles may attract snakes. Evergreen trees welcome squirrels, woodpeckers, crows and other high-nesters. Flowering plants such as phlox, clover, thistle, nettle, milkweed, goldenrod, vetch and sorrel will provide nectar for butterflies and a place for them to lay their eggs.
- ✓ Put out water. Even just a pie pan with an inch or two of water in it will attract a variety of wildlife.
- ✓ Use natural alternatives to pesticides and herbicides or pull out weeds and pick off bugs by hand. Remember, spiders, ladybugs, snakes and dragonflies are your friends – they eat unwanted bugs.
- ✓ Keep your cat indoors – especially in the early morning and just before dark when birds and other wildlife are most likely to come out and feed (cats are natural predators and won't hesitate to attack feeding and nesting birds).

Resources: The Naturescape BC website has great info on how to create a wildlife garden:
<http://www.hctf.ca/nature.htm>

Night Flyers Migrate Through Your Yard and School

Did you know that every spring and fall, millions of song birds migrate half way around the world? Hummingbirds, swallows, sparrows and warblers are examples of song birds that hopscotch across the globe moving south to warmer climates in the winter and back north in the summer. Most often they travel at night so you don't see them. Along the way they need to eat, drink and rest. That's why creating and preserving green areas is so important.

Honeybees are why we have most fruits and vegetables



bee wasp

Know Your Bees!

Many people needlessly fear honeybees and bumblebees, thinking they will sting. Yet, bees are gentle creatures who rarely sting, preferring to just mind their own "bees-ness" and go from flower to flower. It is more common for people to be stung by wasps (or yellow jackets) and hornets, who tend to be more aggressive and hang around at picnics and barbecues trying to fly off with your food!

A great neighbourhood green street.

DISCOVER WHO LIVES IN THE FOREST

Hey, Mom, we'll take the lower trail and meet you at the big tree.

Let's see if we can find clues about what animals live in the forest.

When you go through the forest, you might not see too many animals apart from squirrels, a few bird species and lots of insects. That's because larger mammals are active at first light (when you're still in bed) and at dusk. Yet, you might see signs of all kinds of animals.

Yuck! Some dog pooped right on the path.

Wait a minute. It looks like a long fur ball. I bet that's coyote scat.

Hey, Fin, I found some brown fur on this thorn bush. I wonder what animal it belongs to.

It's too high for a raccoon or a coyote. I bet it's deer fur.

You can recognize coyote scat (the scientific name for poop) by all the undigested hair, small bones, seeds and sometimes bits of plastic in it. Coyotes also tend to poop in the middle of pathways and sidewalks to mark their territory. Dogs usually poop off to the side of trails.



JACQUIE PEARCE

Deer move almost silently through forests, making narrow trails that connect to grassy areas. If scared, deer will jump through hedges or brambles, leaving fur on the thorns. Deer like to graze in open meadows and seek shelter in the forest.

Hey, someone has been chopping down these trees!

And that someone is a beaver.



Living in lakes, marshes and creeks, beavers gnaw down trees with their huge teeth. Beavers fall the trees toward the water. Then they chew the trunk and branches into smaller pieces. Beavers are well known for building dams out of branches. Look for a beaver's lodge (house) – a large dome made out of sticks.

Whoa! Look at those deep scratches on that tree!

It must have been something big and strong. A bear?

Bears will bite, leave claw marks and rub their fur on trees to signal other bears. If you see scratches and strands of black fur on a tree, you're in bear country. Time to head out!



Not so fast, Fin. Those are coyote tracks! See how they are in a tight row.

Kat's right. A coyote walks by placing his hind feet in the footprints left by his front feet. This makes the set of tracks narrow. Dogs put their feet beside their last track, making wider, overlapping tracks. With dog tracks, you can see all four paw marks. With coyotes, it looks like they have only two feet like a person.

Look at these hair balls. They look like huge butterfly cocoons.

And I think I know who they belong to!



Owls perch in tall trees to survey their surroundings. What Kat found are "owl pellets." Owls cough up these hair-covered pellets which are full of bones of prey. If you find owl pellets, look up. You might see an owl staring down at you.

OK, Kat, I recognize these tracks. A dog ran through the mud along the creek.

Mom, you'll never guess all the animals we found on our trek.

Yeah, bears have been passing through!

That's odd. We never saw any wildlife.

Nature trek challenge!

To celebrate **Canada's 150th birthday**, your family can explore Canada's national parks for **FREE!** But you can also explore local parks to discover nature's wonders.

Having a theme for your hike can make a walk in the woods an adventure. See if you can squeeze in **four nature missions** this summer!

1 Frog find

From massive bullfrogs to endangered leopard frogs, B.C. is home to 13 species of frogs and toads. You often find frogs sunning themselves on pond shorelines, on logs or peeking from amongst lily pads.

Ponds, ditches and bogs are great places to find frogs. Sneak up quietly or you'll send them diving deep into the water to hide. Google "**B.C. frogs**" to find frog images and the different croak sounds they make.

2 Insect investigation

You can find all kinds of insect "wildlife" in your backyard or nearby park. How many insects do you know?

As a start, see if you can find these 10 common bugs: earwig, grasshopper, honeybee, cricket, centipede, dragonfly, sowbug, aphid, ladybug and spittlebug. Google "**native B.C. insects**" to find photos.

Nature hike tips!

The early morning hiker gets the picture. By mid-day, when it is hot, many birds and mammals are resting in their hiding places.

Be a jungle ninja! Be patient and quiet as you move through the forest. Forest residents dart away from noisy people.

Safety first! Have fun but keep clear of cliffs and fast-moving water. Also, keep out of bear and cougar country.

Hike with a buddy. Tell parents exactly where you are going and when you plan to be home. In case you get lost, rescuers need to know where to search.

Leave only footprints. Don't remove flowers, berries and things like abandoned bees' nests from the forest. They are part of the ecosystem. Plus, other visitors after you can also "discover" them.

Trek gear checklist:

- ☐ Backpack with water, snacks, hat, sunscreen and sunglasses
- ☐ Sturdy, comfortable shoes
- ☐ Magnifying glass and small notebook
- ☐ Camera and binoculars
- ☐ Whistle (in case you get lost), compass and flashlight
- ☐ Cell phone (fully charged)
- ☐ Small first-aid kit and bug repellent

3 Shoreline search

At low tide, sea water traps in pools on rocky shores. These tidal pools teem with sea creatures. You can peer into the pools and see shore crabs, limpets, anemones [a-nem-on-ees], sea stars, urchins, sea palms, barnacles, chitons [kyte-ons] and sometimes even octopuses.

Tread cautiously, being careful not to crush mussels or barnacles clinging to tidal pool edges – everything is alive. You might even see an oyster catcher – a crow-sized black bird with a long orange beak – looking for little crabs or prying open limpets.

4 Bird trek

How many species of birds can you name? Most people know only a few, yet there are hundreds of different species in B.C. On this trek, try to find at least 20 different species.

One of the best ways to spot birds is to listen first. Then slowly turn to the sound. Search with your eyes before using your binoculars. To help identify each bird, take note of the size and shape. Look for special feather colours, the shape of the beak and markings on the chest and back.

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