Study Questions to “Splendid Fliers”


*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. Are you curious about wild things? Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

**Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback?** How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what’s alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

**Find these stories and more online** at [www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists).

**Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!**

Prepared by Jack Judkins, Curriculum Connections Minnesota
**“Splendid Fliers” Study Questions**


1. How long do eastern bluebird nestlings stay in the nest?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

2. Why did the young bluebird join the flock of migrating songbirds?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

3. What was his winter destination?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

4. Minnesota birds fly south in winter mainly to find warmer weather. True False (Explain your choice)
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

5. Fish-eating migrants include _______________ and _______________. They are looking for places with _______________.

6. What makes Minnesota such a good place for migrating birds to spend the summer?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

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*Image: Splendid Fliers by May Rose*
7. List several changes in its environment that tell a bird it will soon be time to migrate: 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

8. How does a bird’s body change before it migrates? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

9. Purple martins travel a long way to their winter home. Where do they go? 

____________________________________________________________________

10. Some species of migrating birds fly at night. Why? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

11. Describe weather conditions that might cause migrating birds to change their travel plans? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

12. What is the range of altitude (in feet) that migrating birds fly? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

13. It takes Baltimore orioles from _______ to _______ weeks to reach their winter homes in ________________________, ________________________, or ________________________. 

14. What does the map on pages 40-41 tell you about Minnesota’s migrating birds? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

15. Explain how birds know which direction to fly when they migrate. 

____________________________________________________________________

16. Of every 10 migrating waterfowl, how many will use the Mississippi as a navigational aid? 

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Challenge: If an eastern bluebird flies at an average speed of 25 mph, how long will its journey from St. Paul, Minnesota to Branson, Missouri take?

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment

Name ___________________________________ Period _____ Date _____________

1. Why should bird feeders be located near trees and bushes?
   A. Birds can hunt for insects.
   B. It's cooler in the shade.
   C. Birds can hide from predators
   D. A and C

2. House cats kill an estimated ________________ birds each year.
   A. one thousand
   B. two billion
   C. one million
   D. one billion

3. Chickadees are year-round residents of Minnesota.
   A. true
   B. false

4. Red-winged black bird males and females migrate together.
   A. true
   B. false

5. A bird’s body fat may increase by as much as ___________ before it migrates.
   A. 10%
   B. 35%
   C. 50%
   D. none of the above
**Student Study Guide: Vocabulary**

**calorie** a measurement of the amount of energy in food

**Gulf Coast** refers to the Gulf of Mexico

**habitat** natural environment where an animal or plant lives

**instinct** behavior that animals do not learn, but are born with

**magnetic field** energy created by electric currents in Earth’s core

**predictable** expected, especially on the basis of previous events

**predator** animal that kills and eats other animals

**seasonal migrant** an animal that moves from one area to another when seasons change

**solo** something done alone
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>What is a <strong>MEASUREMENT OF THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY IN FOOD</strong>?</th>
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