

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## TO “SONGS OF SPRING”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, March–April 2020, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*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!*

## “SONGS OF SPRING” STUDY QUESTIONS

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### 1. NAME SIX KINDS OF AMERICAN BLACKBIRDS.

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### 2. NAME FOUR TRAITS THAT AMERICAN BLACKBIRDS SHARE.

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### 3. TRUE OR FALSE: Female red-winged blackbirds have epaulets.

### 4. WHICH OF THESE IS AN ADVANTAGE OF DIVIDING HABITATS INTO TERRITORIES:

- a. It helps make sure there is a good food supply.
- b. It lets the male easily notice threats.
- c. It reduces the spread of disease.
- d. a. and b.
- e. All of the above.

### 5. HOW BIG IS A RED-WING'S TERRITORY?

- a. The size of a football field
- b. The size of 30 football fields
- c. It depends on the location
- d. They don't have territories.

**6. WHAT IS A SONG SPREAD?**

- a. The amount of territory a male red-wing defends
- b. The act of spreading wings and displaying epaulets
- c. The distance a male red-wing's song carries
- d. The length of time a male red-wing's song lasts

**7. MATCH THE NUMBER TO THE TRAIT IT GOES WITH:**

number of red-wing territories an acre of wetland can support	12
number of eggs in a single nest	14
number of days it takes an egg to hatch	3-4
number of miles red-wings might fly in winter to find food	30
number of days after hatching that a chick is ready to fly	50

**8. HOW DO MALE RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS DEVELOP THEIR SONG?**

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**9. WHAT DO RED-WINGS FEED THEIR YOUNG?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. WHAT ANIMALS EAT RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD NESTLINGS?**

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**11. WHY DO RED-WINGS HIDE WHEN THEY ARE MOLTING?**

- a. They can't protect themselves from harm by flying away
- b. To protect their young from predators
- c. Because they are embarrassed that they don't have feathers
- d. To stay warm

**12. WHAT DO RED-WINGS EAT?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**CHALLENGE: IF A MALE REDWING SINGS 300 TIMES PER HOUR, ON AVERAGE HOW MANY SECONDS PASS IN BETWEEN THE BEGINNING OF TWO SONGS?**

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# MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. HOW DOES THE SPRING MIGRATION OF FEMALE RED-WINGS DIFFER FROM THAT OF MALE RED-WINGS?

- a. Females seem to return to the same place every year.
- b. Females may arrive while there is still snow on the ground.
- c. Females arrive in Minnesota later than males.
- d. Females follow flyways.

## 2. HOW DOES SINGING AND DISPLAYING HIS EPAULETS HELP A MALE REDWING SURVIVE AND REPRODUCE? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. NAME THREE WAYS RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS USE THEIR SONG. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4. PUT THESE EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF A RED-WING CHICK IN ORDER:

The chick is ready to fly

The chick's eyes open

The chick learns to find its own food

The chick starts hopping around and stretching its wings

The chick hatches

## 5. HOW DOES FLOCKING HELP RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS SURVIVE? \_\_\_\_\_

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## STUDENT STUDY GUIDE: VOCABULARY CARDS

Cut along horizontal lines, fold in the middle and tape or staple. Blanks are provided to allow you or your students to add new words or phrases

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When an animal has a  
**BLAZE**  
on its body, it has

**A BODY MARKING**  
is known as a

FOLD

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**A GROUP OF ANIMALS  
THAT LIVE TOGETHER**  
is known as

**A COLONY**  
is

FOLD

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If you have  
**AN EPAULET,**  
you have

**A DECORATION WORN ON  
THE SHOULDER**  
is known as

FOLD

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When blackbirds  
**MOB SOMETHING,**  
they

To  
**FORM A CROWD  
AROUND SOMETHING**  
is to

FOLD

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When an animal  
**MOVES ABOUT WATCHING AN  
AREA FOR DANGER**  
it

When an animal  
**PATROLS AN AREA**  
it

FOLD

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**A ROOST**

is

FOLD

Another name for

**A PLACE TO REST**

is

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**THE AREA AN ANIMAL  
LIVES IN AND DEFENDS**

is known as its

FOLD

A

**TERRITORY**

is

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FOLD

FOLD

FOLD

FOLD

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