



# Phenology and Climate Change: Lesson 2

## Timing of Bird Migration

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<b>Grade Level</b>	9th – 12th Grade
<b>Subject</b>	Science
<b>Course</b>	Biology I, Biology II, Environmental Science

### Essential Question

How do bird activity and migration change seasonally? Why is understanding the timing of seasonal bird activity and migration important?

### Summary

#### Snapshot

**Engage**

Students examine a model of migration timing of several species of Warblers.

**Explore**

Students explore a model of species-specific bird migration patterns.

**Explain**

Students investigate the life history of birds and connect their annual cycle to changes in migration timing.

**Extend**

Students continue investigating the model of bird migration, identifying patterns over time and among species.

**Evaluate**

## Standards

*Next Generation Science Standards (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12)*

**HS-LS2-2:** Use mathematical representations to support and revise explanations based on evidence about factors affecting biodiversity and populations in ecosystems of different scales.

**HS-LS4-4:** Construct an explanation based on evidence for how natural selection leads to adaptation of populations.

## Materials

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# Engage

Go to **slide #**. Tell students that in this lesson they are going to look at birds and their migration. Begin by asking students to explain some ways birds and insects are related. Specifically, you are helping students connect the previous lesson to the activities in which they are about to engage. After asking for student ideas, show them the rest of the slide to provide context for the birds they will be investigating.

Go to **slide #**. Students will now explore the “Warbler Arrival” page of the [Shiny app](#). Give them some time to explore the data and ask them to use the [I Notice, I Wonder](#) strategy as they play with the model. If you are using a Driving Question Board (DQB), have students record their questions on sticky notes. If students need help finding a starting place, consider un-hiding **slide #** and suggesting some focus areas:

- Pick one or more species and change the capture threshold to see how day of year patterns change (bottom graph).
- Pick one or more species and see how the capture % changes across different decades (top graph).
- Pick one of the graphs to look at, and compare two or more species by looking at their data individually.

## Teacher's Note: Understanding the Graphs

Before turning students loose to freely investigate the data set, take time to walk them through how to interpret the graphs the model will generate. As part of this explanation, it is important to point out that the y-axis on the Arrival Date graph will change depending on the parameters they select. A detailed explanation can be found in the **Warbler Arrival Guide** handout or “Read Me!!” tab.

After the students have had time to make some observations (I notice) and ask questions, bring the class together to discuss their findings. First, ask for volunteers to share out what they noticed and guide them to share their observations in terms of patterns. Then move on to student questions (I wonder), adding them to the class list or Driving Question Board.

## Teacher's Note: Guiding Questions

- Are there any species that show evidence of changing arrival times? If so, are they coming sooner or later and what is your evidence?
- How is warbler arrival changing over time, in general?
- What factors might impact birds’ migration arrival time?

## Explore

Following the discussion of bird arrival, students should direct their attention to the “Aerial Insectivore Migration” page of the Shiny app. Make sure students understand which variables they can change, before turning them loose to answer the following question: “Which species tends to be the earliest to complete its northward migration?” For simplicity, they only need to use one map for this exercise, though they are welcome to use both. The students can ignore the measurements in the data table below the maps for now.

### Teacher's Note: Aerial Insectivore Migration Model

This model resembles the Leafhopper Migration model with a few key differences:

- It does not show temperature or detailed state-specific data.
- Every year has data.

After students have had time to figure out which species “gets to the north first,” ask each group to share out how they reached their conclusion. They should conclude that Tree Swallows tend to be the earliest arrivals north. Some groups may come to a different answer, depending on what data they explored within the model, but this is okay provided they can justify it.

Next, ask students to brainstorm some factors that would affect the timing of birds’ migration north. Depending on your class, you can either do this informally, or have students turn their speculations into questions for the Driving Question Board. Encourage them to think about biotic and abiotic factors and to be specific. For example, if they offer climate change as an answer, probe them for what aspect of climate change they think is affecting birds (e.g., warmer spring temperatures). If they struggle to come up with ideas, prompt them to think about some of the factors that affected insects as a place to start.

# Explain

Next, place students in groups of 3-4, if they are not already, to learn about of the bird species from the data they just explored. There are 10 bird species available for exploration, and each group should select/be assigned to one. Go to **slide #** and provide students with the **Lesson 2 Explain handout**. Direct students to visit the [All About Birds Guide](#) website and read over the Life History of their selected species. They can explore whatever details they want beyond that, including returning to the Shiny app to make more detailed notes about their bird's range. Additionally, students should investigate some of the factors they brainstormed at the end of the Explore. These can be assigned to different groups, or students can explore whichever they are specifically interested in learning about.

## Teacher's Note: Further research

Under the "Life History" tab of the All About Birds Guide there is a link on the left sidebar that says "Learn more at Birds of the World." If students click on the link it will take them to a significantly more detailed overview of their bird. Depending on time and student interest, you might direct students to read the Historical Changes to the Distribution (under the Distribution heading), Movements and Migration, and Breeding. This overview is written at a higher reading level with more scientific vocabulary, so be aware that it is likely to challenge some students.

Go to **slides #-#**. These cover basic bird life history as it relates to migration, including the annual cycle. Ask student groups to share out what they learned about their species' life histories. Continue to **slides #-#**. These slides provide an overview of some common ways bird data is collected. Detailed information and explanations are provided in the notes section of these slides.

Return students attention to their Shiny observations. Lead them in a discussion to connect life history with the patterns they identified in the data.

## Teacher's Note: Guiding Questions

- How might bird life history explain the patterns you observed?
- Why might would arriving earlier or later to their breeding location be a impact birds' reproductive success?
- How does bird migration differ from insect migration?
- What is the relationship between insect activity/arrival and bird migration?

Take a few minutes to review the DQB and add new concepts to the Big Ideas list before continuing to the next activity.

## Extend

Students should select a bird species for Map 1 and compare the arrival timing for the species across several different years, making note about any trends or patterns they see in the data. Next they should repeat this process for a different species on Map 2, looking again for trends and patterns in this data set. After making their initial observations of the data, students are free to compare the maps in whatever way they want in order to gather more observations. This may include comparing the same species for two different years, comparing two species across the same year(s), or examining more species. Encourage students to make specific observations related to latitude, timing, etc. If there are relevant DQB questions for students to explore with this model, have the class attempt to answer these as well.

Students should record their findings using a modified [Window Notes](#) format, with the following “windows”: *trends within a year, trends between years, trends between species, and other interesting trends.*

### Teacher's Note

If students are struggling to identify trends or patterns across the data, encourage them to start small with simple comparisons. A good starting place would be to examine a single year on both maps, comparing two species with very similar ranges and/or two species with very different ranges.

Have students share out some of their findings from the Shiny app activity and discuss the significance of these results.

### Teacher's Note: Guiding Questions

- What patterns or trends did you observe within a single year? Between years?
- What patterns or trends did you observe between multiple species?
- Which species tends to be the earliest to complete its northward migration?
- Is there evidence for changes in migratory timing among these species?
- How does this data set compare to the leaf hopper data set (e.g., strengths and weaknesses)?

# Evaluate

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## Resources

- Birds, Bugs, and Phenology [https://aeroecology.shinyapps.io/Birds\\_Bugs\\_and\\_Phenology/](https://aeroecology.shinyapps.io/Birds_Bugs_and_Phenology/)
- All About Birds Guide <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/>
- Birds of the World <https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/home>
- How I Know It strategy <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/144>
- I Notice, I Wonder strategy <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180>
- Window Notes strategy <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/189>