



OHS YOUTH NEWSLETTER

By, For, and About Youth & Animal Welfare
Ohlone Humane Society Youth & Family



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Witnessing the Magic of Fall Migration

by Makayla A, 16 years

As the cool autumn air settles in and daylight diminishes, it's easy to find yourself gazing up at the sky more frequently, searching for that unmistakable sign of fall—the migration of animals. It's truly fascinating to observe how nature prepares for winter, as birds, butterflies, and other creatures embark on journeys that can span thousands of miles. This phenomenon reminds many of our deep connection to the rhythms of Earth.

During this season, millions of animals are on the move, adhering to ancient migration routes in search of warmer climates and plentiful food sources. It's a time of survival, showcasing their remarkable endurance, and if you pay close attention, you can witness some of this wonder right in your own backyard.

Why Do Animals Migrate?

At its essence, migration is about survival. Animals travel to find food and better living conditions as winter approaches. As fall arrives, resources become limited in colder regions, prompting many species—such as birds, butterflies, and even some mammals—to take to the skies or land, following their innate instincts.

Take the monarch butterflies, for instance. Each year, they embark on an incredible journey from Canada and the United States to Mexico. It's amazing to think that these delicate creatures, weighing less than a paperclip, can cover distances of up to 3,000 miles! Then there are the birds, like Canada geese, forming those iconic V-shaped formations in the sky, conserving energy as they migrate south. They truly have the migration process down to an art.

The Challenges They Face

While migration may appear to be a graceful ballet in the sky or a smooth journey across the land, it is fraught with difficulties. Animals encounter numerous challenges—severe weather, fatigue, and increasingly, the effects of human development. Roads, urban areas, and pollution complicate their search for essential resources, and climate change is reshaping their traditional pathways.

Experiencing Migration in Your Own Backyard

One of the aspects that fascinates scientists about fall migration is how easily accessible it is for all of us to observe. You don't need to be a globe-trotter to witness this event. Right now, in local parks and even in your own neighborhood, migratory animals are stopping to refuel before continuing their travels. It's the perfect opportunity to grab a beverage, find a peaceful spot, and simply observe.

Canada geese are a favorite species for citizen science tracking. Their loud honking and the sight of them flying in perfect formation southward for the winter inspire reports of their travels relayed to other citizens along their migration path. If you're fortunate, you might also spot smaller, brightly colored birds like warblers or robins taking brief pauses in trees along their journey. Check out [Project Feederwatch](#).

The monarch butterflies, with their delicate wings, often rest on flower patches or tree branches, offering us a fleeting glimpse of their remarkable journey. It's humbling to consider how these tiny creatures accomplish something so monumental. View their progress at [JourneyNorth](#)

While migration is undoubtedly inspiring, it also serves as a reminder that many of these species are confronting greater challenges than ever before. The world is changing, and these changes are complicating their journeys. However, there are steps we can take to help.

[Check out the Audubon bird migration website to track your favorite species!](#)

Animal News & Community Service Opportunities

[OHS Youth Volunteering Opportunities—see new Service Projects](#)
[Fremont Nature Learning Center Garden](#)



Helping Animals in your Community by Makayla A.

- Create a Pet Food Pantry – Set up a small donation box for neighbors to drop off extra pet food and supplies, then distribute them to families in need.
- Organize a Neighborhood Dog Walk – Gather pet owners for a group walk, where you can share tips on responsible pet care and help socialize local dogs.
- Set Up a Bird Feeder Station – Place bird feeders in your yard or neighborhood to provide food and shelter for local birds.
- Make DIY Pet Toys – Create simple toys like knotted rope chews or sock toys and donate them to local shelters.
- Build Small Animal Shelters – Use simple materials like cardboard boxes or wood to create shelters for stray cats or small wildlife during cold or rainy weather.
- Host a Pet Safety Workshop – Teach kids and families basic pet care and safety tips, like what to do if they find an injured animal.

Helping animals in your community is fun and rewarding! From building cozy shelters to hosting dog walks, you can make a big difference for local pets and wildlife while meeting fellow animal lovers. Small acts of kindness make your community a happier place for everyone! 🐾❤️



Interested in writing an article or sharing original animal art for the OHS Youth Newsletter?

Tell us your thoughts on animal issues.
What are your observations about migration in your area?
Draw a picture or take an original photo of a community animal in its local habitat.

Share an original nature poem.
Contact youth@ohlonehumanesociety.org for more info about community service hours for participation in the newsletter.