

Mapping Migration

Chimney Swift
Chaetura pelagica

Neotropical migrants are birds that spend the spring and summer in Canada and the United States to breed, and travel down to Mexico, Central America and South America to spend the winter months. This migratory behaviour is mainly driven by seasonal changes, food abundance, and space required for nesting.

Chimney Swifts are Neotropical migrants. They arrive in Canada in April, nest and raise young until August, roost and flock up in late summer and begin their fall migration to return to their wintering grounds in the Amazon Basin of Peru in South America.

Let's look at North and South America from a birds-eye view!



Materials:

- Map
- Crayons or coloured pencils

Activity Instructions:

1. Find North America and identify the countries
2. Find South America and identify the countries
3. Find Central America and identify the countries
4. Find your location in Canada. Mark this spot with a star using a colored pencil.
5. Find Peru in South America. Mark a big star on the Peru-Brazil border.

Many migrating birds prefer to travel over land so they can stopover to roost at night. Draw the migration patterns using the common Chimney Swift migration routes below:

6. Your house or school – Mexico – Honduras – Nicaragua – Panama – Columbia – Brazil – Peru
7. Your house or school – Florida – Cuba – Haiti – Venezuela – Brazil – Peru

Migration is an amazing feat attempted by millions of birds twice each year! See how far Chimney Swifts travel!

8. Using the scale on the bottom left corner of the map, estimate the distance Chimney Swifts must travel to get from the breeding grounds at your house or school to their wintering grounds in South America



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