

Special facts: Bird migration

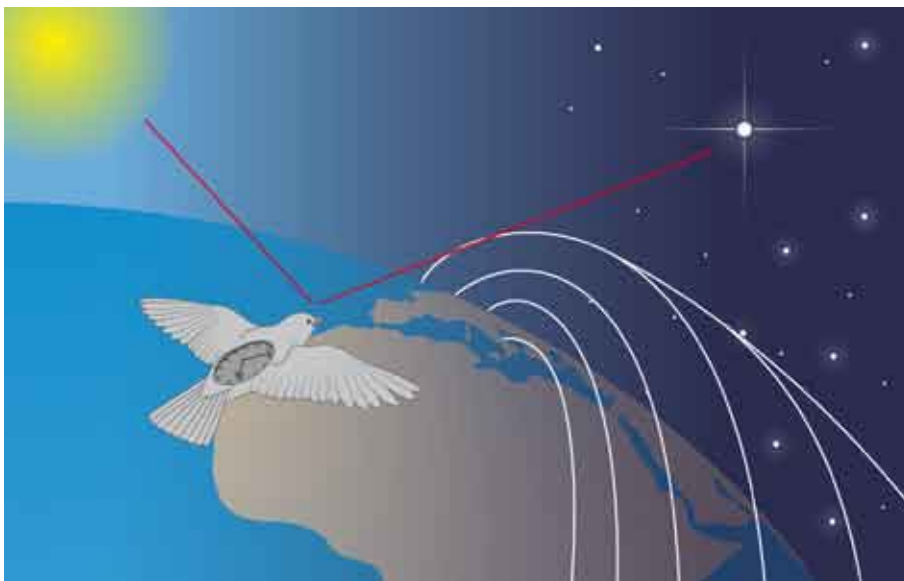


Alpine swifts are migratory birds, which means that they fly to regions in Africa or India by the end of September. They usually come back in March or April.

Bird migration has to do with the change of the seasons and with the amount of food which is available. In winter, there aren't many insects around where we live and so alpine swifts need to fly south to warmer regions.

In the south, where there are no real winters, there's always more or less the same amount of food available. So why don't alpine swifts stay in Africa all the time? They come into the northern summer to breed because days are longer here and the food supply is richer. This is better for breeding and feeding their young.

How birds find their way is a mystery. Even after being taken thousands of miles away, migratory birds can still fly home quickly to their nests. The specific routes may be genetically programmed or learned. They also use the sun and the stars as their compass and remember landmarks – big things that they can see on the ground. Their body registers magnetic fields like a compass needle and they also use their sense of smell.



bird migration Vogelzug