

Re: Oh Canada, the Loons are suppose to fly south, not NORTH!

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- *From:* "the extraterrestrial" <[mockingbirdstl@xxxxxxx](mailto:mockingbirdstl@xxxxxxx)>
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Reverse migration is a phenomenon in bird migration. Although some large birds such as swans learn migration routes from their parents, in most small species, such as passerines, the route is genetically programmed, and young birds can innately navigate to their wintering area.

Sometimes this programming goes wrong, and the young bird, in its first autumn, migrates on a route 180o from the correct route. This is shown in the diagram, where the breeding range of a hypothetical Asian species is shown in yellow. The correct migration route to the wintering grounds in south east Asia is indicated in red.

If a bird sets off in the opposite direction, shown by the orange arrow, it will end up in Western Europe instead of South East Asia. This is a mechanism that leads to birds such as Pallas's Warbler turning up thousands of kilometres from where they should be. Keith Vinicombe suggested that birds from east of Lake Baikal in Siberia (circled) could not occur in western Europe because the migration routes were too north-south.

Most of these lost young birds perish in unsuitable wintering grounds, but there is some evidence that a few survive, and either re-orient in successive winters, or even return to the same area.

An article in *British Birds* by James Gilroy and Alexander Lees in September 2003 suggested that misorientation occurs in random directions, but differential survival in different directions combined with asymmetric observer coverage leads to the observed distribution of vagrants. Although "reverse migration" per se may occur, it is unable to explain the occurrence in Europe in autumn of Asian vagrants that winter in East Africa, or the rarity of many southern European species in the UK that winter in West Africa. Furthermore there is little evidence for reverse migration in North America where there is more uniform observer coverage.

\*\*\*\*that's not totally true, isolated reports of reverse migration in north america are commonplace, but usually only report one or two birds in a given incident. what they don't see in NA is large numbers or

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flocks of reverse migrants.

the extraterrestrial wrote:

chuck, I'll try tomorrow to post some detailed information on the loon.

but it might interest you to know that occasionally with migratory birds the bird flies the wrong direction. it's thought to be due to CNS or genetic abnormalities, they don't really understand it. birds migrate according to poorly understood mechanisms related to sunlight, star positions, and the earth's magnetic field.

and birds are quite a bit different from mammals in terms of the organization of the cerebral cortex, so it's hard to relate to exactly what is going on...they're sort of in their own CNS realm.

so what you get in reverse migration is for example a warbler that flies north for the winter instead of south to the caribbean.

those birds typically aren't going to survive..LMAO..they'll either freeze to death, starve to death, or fall prey to a year-round resident raptor looking for easy pickings.

4man12 wrote:

lol, on da phone wit da stark raving lunatic.