



© 2008 Journey North
<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/>

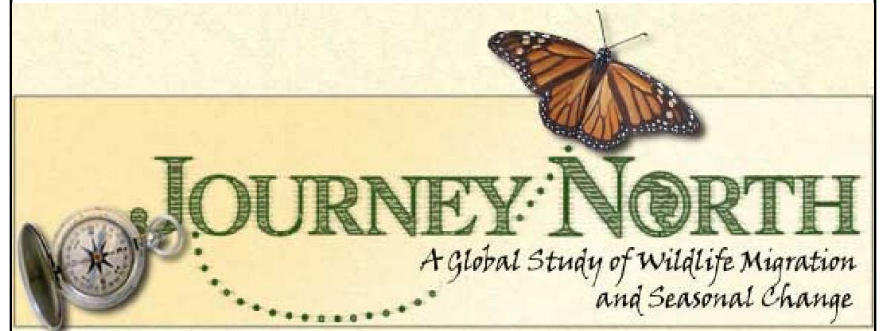


Photo © Wayne Kryduba

A Young Robin's Adventure



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

This baby probably got curious because its siblings had already left the nest. It started hopping and landed in the gutter! (Within 24 hours, all nestlings usually leave a nest. This is when they're between 9 and 16 days old.)



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

Oops! It may *not* have left on purpose. It looks like this baby started sliding and headed down backwards. Baby birds have a natural instinct to flap their wings when they feel air rushing past them. How does that behavior help baby robins survive?



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

If one falls out of a nest — or gutter — its flapping instinct helps it stay upright and land more softly. Some baby birds don't leave the nest until their wings are strong enough to fly to a new place. But baby robins leave long before they can fly well!



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

Did you notice that the baby's spots look like the grass tips? This helps it hide in the mowed lawn! We can't see the robin dad, but he is probably nearby. It's his job to keep track of the baby birds now as they explore their world. The mother robin will prepare the nest for another batch of babies.



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

Before it becomes independent, this baby will spend 10 to 15 days hiding and staying close to dad. After all, it doesn't yet have the skill or strength to fly away from danger or back up to the nest. It seems to be crouching. What's next?



Photo © Wayne Kryduba

The fledgling takes a jump and flaps, but isn't *quite* flying. The baby is building leg and wing strength. It takes time to build the skills to fly, just as it took *you* time to learn to walk! Babies can take short flights a few days after leaving the nest. As their flying improves, dad leads them at night to a roost with other dads and babies. This flocking behavior helps them join their first flock so they can learn from other robins. This baby's adventure is just beginning!