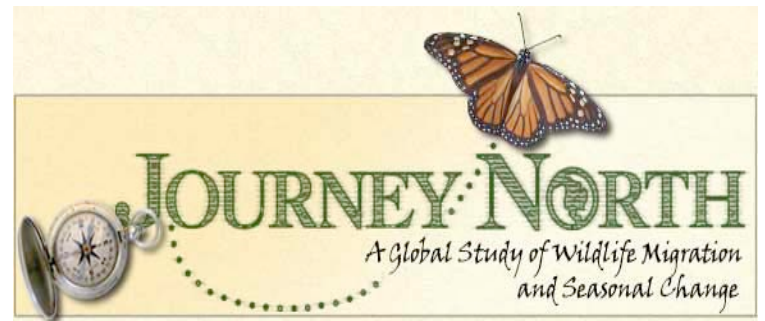




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Winter: Where Are Our Robins?

by Jane Duden



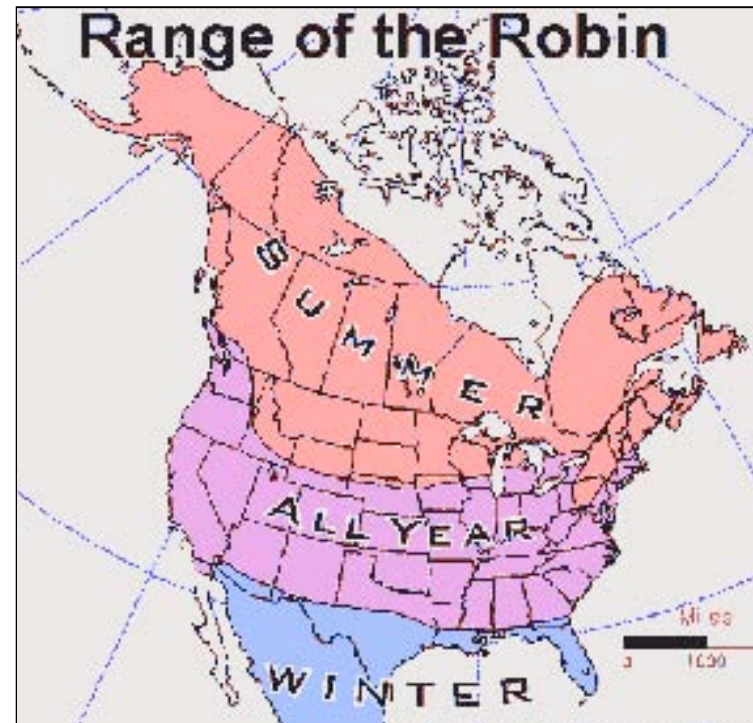
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Where are Robins in Winter?

This is an American Robin. Robins are signs of spring, so why is this robin in snow? It's because robins live some places in summer. They live some places in winter. They live some places all year round—even in snow!

Most robins in the far north must **migrate** south to find food in winter. Some fly very far. Other robins don't go so far. Robins can live in cold places as long as they have food.

What do robins do in winter? You will find out in these pages. You can learn more—and report the robins you see—on the Internet at Journey North.



©Macalester College Dept. of Geography

Robins Are in Many Places

This map shows the **range** of American robins, or where these birds are found. Do you live in the robins' summer, range, or all year range?

Texas is in the winter range. A Texan was surprised to see robins in January. Robins arrive in Texas in November or December. They stay until they eat up all of the berries. Then they leave in search of more. A lot of berries keeps robins there longer.



©Photo R. Westmoreland

Winter Robins are Feeding

Winter is an important feeding time for robins. Males must eat enough to stay strong and reach the **nesting areas** early. Then they can claim and defend the best territories. They can attract females. Female robins must arrive healthy enough to lay eggs and raise the young of the next generation.

Winter robins go where food is. They will stay until it's gone. Then they move in search of more. Their winter foods are berries, other fruits, and seeds. They find them on shrubs, trees, and vines. Do you see the berries on the tree above?



©Photo Fran Ludwig

Winter Robins are Flocking

Robins hang out together in winter. Sometimes 1,000 robins are in a flock! They fly and feed and **roost** (perch to sleep at night) in flocks.

In summer, robins drive other robins off their territory. They need all the space and food for their own babies. Robins do not flock in summer.



©Photo Gerry Stewart

Winter Robins are Flying

Winter is a season to feast and frolic. Robins are sociable. They don't mind being close to other birds when they have no territories to defend or babies to feed. They fly around a lot.

As winter ends, the days grow longer. Then robins get restless. It is time to find a summer breeding territory where they will mate and raise babies. They fly north in spring when the food chain comes back to life. Are you watching for robins on the move?



©Photo Becky Stanton

What Do You Think?

- Robins love baths! They bathe more than most birds—twice a day. Why?
- Robin migration depends a lot on the weather. Weather varies each year, so the timing of migration varies too. When will your robins return this year?
- Robins need worms for their babies. Is robin migration timed with earthworms showing up?
- Do robins find worms by sight or by sound? How could you find out?

Come to Journey North's Internet site. Track the robins. Discover the facts!