**Migration - an ecological point of view**

Something natural, which we share with many other animals. Whales that swim huge distances to seek food, to mate or to feed their calves. Reindeer that move between the forest land in the winter, to the calving land up in the mountains, in the summer. Birds that move between different continents, to find places to lay their eggs and incubate their young.

**Why not stay at the same place?**

To **optimize life opportunities**. To take advantage of different living conditions. There is competition for resources in nature and then we have to move.

The Silver Tern breeds in Sweden and moves to Antarctica in August. Next spring it will return to Sweden again. 96000 kilometers, round trip. **It's a migratory bird!** Many die along the way…

Other birds move shorter distances and some remain. They adapt to a harsh winter climate. Thicker plumage, eat what is found in the winter; seeds or small insects that hide under the bark of the trees. They are called **resident birds**. Many die of starvation or cold.

In nature, there is **competition** everywhere. Competition for food, place, a territory. A territory is able to host a certain number of individuals of the same species. This is called **carrying capacity**. A territory is an area that can be considered as e.g. the bird's own and which it defends. For a short time.

If there are too many in the same area, the **carrying capacity** is not enough and then the weakest die - or in the worst case, the entire population. Or they move to another area. They're migrating! **Over time**, the territories are changing, the boundaries are changing and the populations within the territories are changing. There is no everlasting, homogenous population of specific species. That’s essential to the idea of evolution itself.

**How many people are there on earth?** 10, 4 billion (2021) How much carrying capacity does the earth have? Is there room for all of us?

Yes, in fact, the earth can accommodate even more people than now. Depending on how we live! Now we live in a way that is not sustainable. Right now we need many more globes for it to last long term. Another question is that there are more than us humans on earth. Other species that also want to live here. **We must get along!**

Some parts of the earth are hit harder than others. It is no longer possible to live there. Then we migrate. It's completely natural, to optimize living conditions. But the alternatives are limited and they are becoming fewer and fewer - the bigger the human population becomes. And we **compete for resources**. We tend to protect our territories more and more aggressively. There is a myth that certain areas, or territories, belongs to certain groups or that certain groups are… special and never changing. As with birds and other animals, we as a human population are changing all the time and that´s the way it has been during all history. 10000 years ago, there were no humans in Sweden. **We are all migrants or descendants to them**!

The conclusion is that **we must adapt to the earth's carrying capacity, to each other – and to all other living creatures on this planet – or die**. We have no other place to migrate to. When Africa becomes increasingly uninhabitable and there are more and more people there - then they have no choice but to migrate. Like the Silver Tern and all the other migrants on earth, they must find new habitats in order to survive!