

WHY DO *SWAINSON'S THRUSHES* MAKE A SEPARATE MIGRATION FOR MOLTING?

What is molt migration?

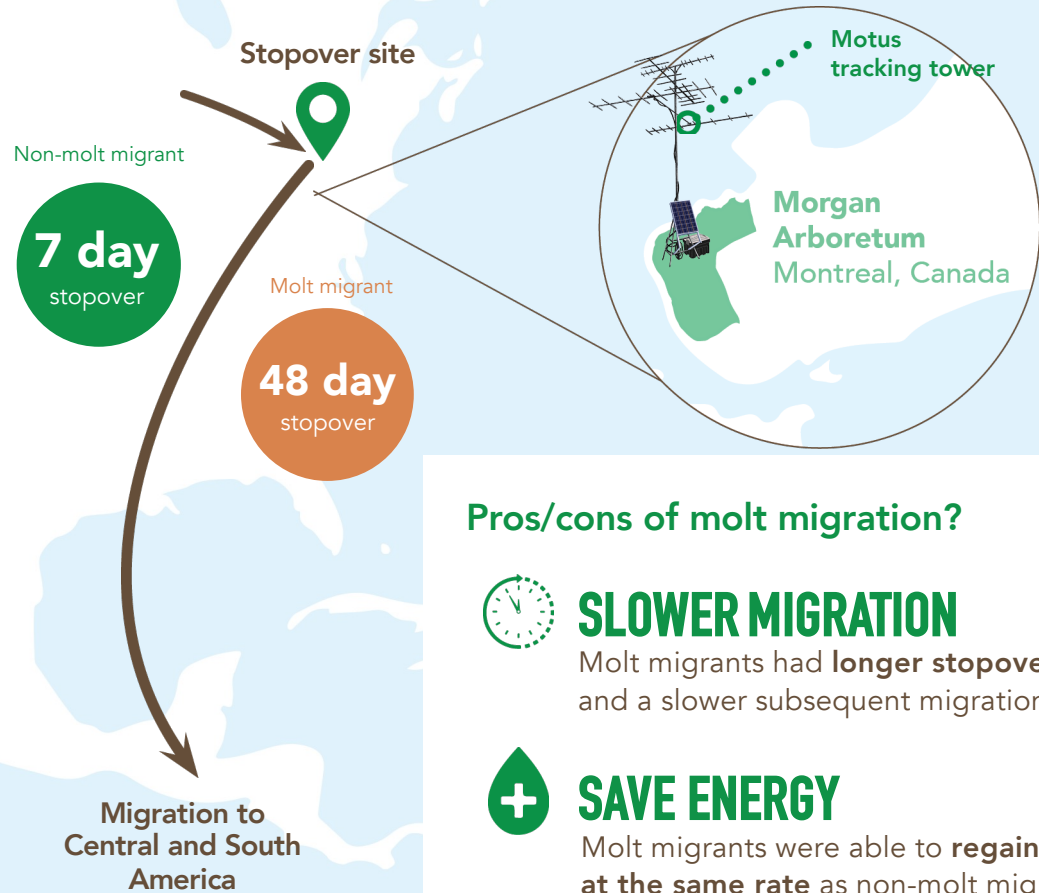
After breeding, many birds molt (i.e. replace) their flight feathers in preparation for migration. Since growing new feathers requires a lot of energy, it is usually done during a rest period after breeding and before migration.

Molt migrants, however, make a separate migration from their breeding grounds to a new location to molt. These locations may offer extra food or relief from predators.

Nanotag attached to bird and detected by Motus tracking towers



Swainson's Thrush
(*Catharus ustulatus*)



Pros/cons of molt migration?



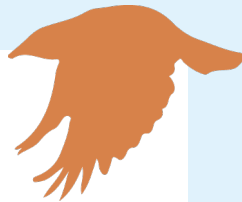
SLOWER MIGRATION

Molt migrants had **longer stopovers** and a slower subsequent migration.



SAVE ENERGY

Molt migrants were able to **regain energy at the same rate** as non-molt migrants, despite being **less active**.



We found that molt migrants use their Montreal stopover to trade time for energy.

In addition, this study highlights the conservation importance of Grand Parc de l'Ouest. Molt migrants spend 1-2 months here, during a vulnerable stage of their annual migration. Planting berry bushes, providing cover in yards, and keeping cats indoors can help these visitors stay safe.

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