Moose travel to escape trouble as weather gets warmer

Lee Kantar is a moose biologist. Moose are large animals that live in the cold. They are part of the deer family. Their thick fur keeps them warm. Over the years, Kantar saw many young moose die. Scientists believe that the cause is climate change. Climate change is happening as the planet becomes warmer. To face this, animals have to change how they live.

As the planet warms up, moose are getting sick. Insects that hurt them are spreading. Winter ticks, for example, stick to the moose’s bodies. They then feed on their blood. This makes the moose sick and weak.

Because of this, half of the moose in Maine die before they reach 2 years old. In Minnesota, they have almost all disappeared.

Scientist Is Hopeful About Moose

But there is still hope. When the climate gets warmer, more plants will grow. When plants grow farther north, moose move there to eat. Kantar sees this as a good sign. He thinks that moose will live on.
Many Alaskans saw these moose come up to their villages. It was not clear why, though. Ken Tape studies plants and animals in Alaska. He says that only a few things can cause animals to act differently. The cause is usually climate change, he said. Thanks to his team of scientists, Tape showed that this was true.

Plants are spreading all around the North Pole. Moose will follow these plants wherever they grow. The moose are moving north in Alaska, Canada and Russia.

But will traveling north be enough to save them? The dangers in the south might be too much to escape. Even so, scientists believe that moose still have a chance.

**Birds In North Could Have Less Food**

In the south, moose are dying because of other animals. For example, white-tailed deer are bringing illnesses with them. They are also bringing ticks and worms.

When they move north, moose also cause problems for other animals. They need to eat certain plants. A bird called the ptarmigan needs to eat the same ones. These birds might disappear because they have less to eat.

The predators of the ptarmigan would disappear, too. The red fox and lynx need to hunt this bird. If they have no birds to eat, these animals cannot live.

Tape is worried because scientists do not know how these animals' behavior will change. The problem is that it is hard to know for sure.