

7. A Murmuration of Starlings

'Murmuration' is the collective noun for a flock of starlings, but is also used to describe one of the most spectacular phenomena in the natural world. Quite how massive flocks of starlings move together with such grace and ease, as though choreographed from above, is as bewildering as it is beautiful. Although it would appear that hundreds, perhaps even thousands of birds can move as one in this way, it is not yet known what causes the momentary collective 'decision' to move suddenly in an entirely different direction, instantaneously followed by the others.

When shoals of fish coordinate their movements in a similar fashion they are said to be 'schooling'.

Mark Tanner

Molto cantabile e leggerissimo ♩ = 76

mp

Ped.

sim.

5 1 4 5

5 3 1

5 4 3 2 1

3-4

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