



How the Milky Way was Created

Long ago when the world was new, we are told that the ducks, geese, and other birds and animals were going through their first winter on Mother Earth. During the time when the trees shed their leaves and the air grew colder, the ducks and geese noticed the sun was lower in the southern sky, so they decided to fly towards the south to get closer the sun and the warmth once the colder air began to set in.

This plan proved to be difficult as the birds didn't think about the sun's movement from East to West across the sky. As a result, the birds would start off in the morning heading southeast and by evening they would find they were flying southwest. Not only that, but when they left at different times, they would be scattered all throughout the southern skies! This caused families and partners to get separated and lost to each other!

In the spring, when the sun started to warm the northern mating areas, the birds would fly north to try find their mating grounds as the south grew too hot for them to lay their eggs without them heating up and not hatching.

Once again, the birds would fly towards the north, keeping the sun in their sights, and as before they would be scattered across the north, losing family and friends!

Meanwhile, Trickster had been observing what was happening and decided this wouldn't do. He was getting tired of seeing the birds scattering everywhere, making it nearly impossible to guess where they'd end up in the summer months when he liked to hunt them for food. He decided he needed to do something about this.

He thought about this for some time before coming up with a plan. He decided he needed to have some sort of path for the birds to follow so they wouldn't get lost and scattered everywhere. It was getting colder out, and the first snowfall had dumped a heavy blanket of fresh glistening snow on the ground. He already saw some birds beginning to head south not really knowing which way to go other than towards the sun.

Trickster transformed himself into a huge goose and told all the other birds to follow the path he was going to lay out for them.



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He grabbed a huge load of fresh snow and began to fly toward the south, being careful to evenly spread out the fresh snow in a path across the night sky for the birds to follow. The snow was laid out across the sky in a sparkling path and the birds were able to follow it easily.

Trickster made sure the path was high enough across the sky so that it would be laid out there forever for the birds to use as their path year after year.

We are told that even today that path is laid out across the sky in a powdery, glistening trail to guide the birds when they fly south in the fall and return north in the spring. We see the trail on clear nights as what is now called the Milky Way.

Ekosi Maka