

Migration of petroleum

With regard to the behavior of petroleum, and/or gas in the subsurface. This table presents some summary ideas about the nature of the migration of petroleum. “migration” is the natural movement of oil

	<i>Traditional (and perhaps present) aura</i>	<i>Driving mechanism</i>	<i>Distance</i>	<i>Relevance to</i>		
				<i>con- ven- tional petroleum</i>	<i>tar sands</i>	<i>shale gas, tight gas, & tight oil</i>
<i>Primary</i> (migration out of source rock stratum)	Mysterious	<i>Pressure-driven</i>	Short-distance (at most the thickness of one source-rock stratum)	Essential	Essential	Mostly irrelevant (?)
<i>Secondary</i> (migration from source rock stratum to (final) trap)	Readily explained	Buoyancy-driven	Meters to hundreds of kilometers	Essential (at some scale)	Essential (at some scale)	Irrelevant
<i>Tertiary</i> (migration from spilling or leaking trap to Earth-surface seep)	Rarely defined or mentioned	Buoyancy-driven	Meters to hundreds of kilometers (?)	Lamented	Impossible Impossible (and this may help explain the abundance of unconventional petroleum)	