

Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds are astounding creatures. They have five main requirements: nectar, water, supplemental food, shelter and nesting sites.

Nectar is obtained from various plants, by having an array of plants that bloom at different times ensuring a year-round food supply (see next page for plant list).

Water can be provided with sprinklers or misters. However, it is not critically important as long as there is some water source for the hummingbirds in your neighborhood.

Supplemental food or hummingbird feeders come in an array of styles and types. Homemade sugar solutions or store bought solutions can both be used, however it is important to NEVER USE honey or artificial sweeteners, as they can cause severe problems for the hummingbird's system. In general a hummingbird feeder should be large (to provide the most food with the least refills), easy-to-clean, sturdy, and attractive to hummingbirds. Hummingbird feeders that are clear are also nice because you can see if the mixture has spoiled or if there is mold growing in the feeder.

Clustering several feeders together discourages competition and hoarding, so many birds can feed at once.

Shelter can be provided in the way of evergreen trees and shrubs. They provide a place to hide from predators and the heat. In addition, most hummingbirds prefer to nest in trees, especially evergreens.

You can also provide nesting materials like cotton, small soft feathers and lichens by placing them in an old, clean suet feeder and allow the hummingbirds to pick and choose what they need.

When choosing plants it's important to decide how much time and space you're going to dedicate to your hummingbird garden. When laying-out your hummingbird garden decide whether you want to see them from your house.

Hummingbird Feeder Solution:

¼ Cup Granulated Sugar

1 Cup Water

Mix the ingredients in a saucepan and boil for three minutes. Refrigerate the solution. Do not increase the sugar-to-water ratio – it is based on the average ratio found in plants that the bird frequents. Please note that it is also important to periodically sanitize (wash thoroughly with a water and weak bleach solution) in order to keep the feeder clean and disease-free.

Plants for Hummingbirds

Annuals:

Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias*)
Cigar Flower (*Cuphea*)
Delphinium
Four'O'Clocks (*Mirabilis*)
Kalachoe
Kangaroo Paw (*Angiozanthos*)
Lady's Eardrops (*Fuchsia*)
Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia*)
Million Bells (*Calibrachoa*)
Monkey Flower (*Mimulus*)
Salvia
Snapdragon
Zinnia

Perennials:

Agapanthus (Lily of the Nile)
Agastache (Hyssop)
Alcea (Hollyhock)
Alstromeria (Peruvian Lily)
Canna (Canna Lily)
Crocsmia
Delphinium
Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)(S)
Dierama (Angel's Fishing Rod)
Digitalis (Foxglove)
Epimedium (Bishop's Hat)
Gladiolus
Hemerocallis (Daylily)
Heuchera (Coral Bells)
Hosta
Iris
Kniphofia (Red Hot Poker)
Liatris (Gayfeather)
Lobelia
Monarda (Bee balm)
Penstemon (Beard tongue)
Phygelius (Cape Fuchsia)
Rubus
Salvia
Saponaria (Soapwort)
Silene
Stachy (Lamb's Ear)

Shrubs & Vines:

Abelia
Arctostaphylos (Kinnikinnick)
Ceanothus (California Lilac)
Ceratostigma (Plumbago)
Clematis
Elaeagnus
Escallonia
Fuchsia
Hibiscus
Lonicera (Honeysuckle)
Mahonia (Oregon Grape)
Opuntia (Prickly Pear)
Rhododendron (S)
Ribes (Currant, Gooseberry)
Symphoricarpos (Snowberry)
Syringia (Common Lilac)
Viburnum