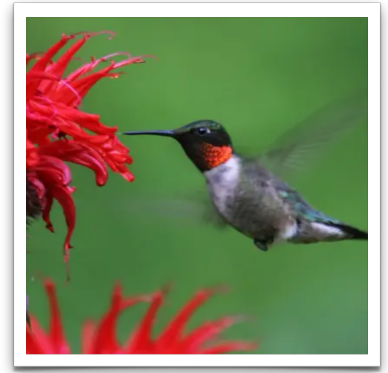


Gardening To Attract & Best Feeding Practices

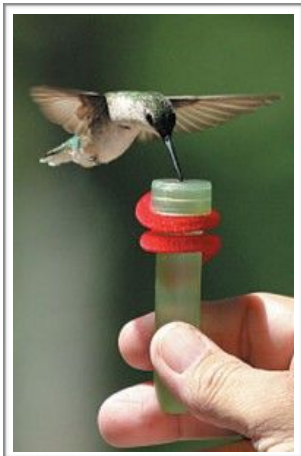
Ruby-throated Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds are most attracted to plants with flowers that are red, orange or pink, and tubular in shape. Consider displaying flowers in hanging baskets, planters, and window boxes, as well as in the ground to attract hummers. Color of planter as well as color of garden art, patio furniture and patio umbrella can help lure hummingbirds to your area.



Homemade Nectar Recipe and Best Practices for Feeding RTHBs

1. Choose RED feeders that are easy to clean.
2. Add table sugar to water in a 1:4 ratio. For example add 1/4 cup sugar to one cup water. Stir. Do NOT add honey or any other sweetener. Do NOT add food coloring.
3. Bring to a boil on stove or in microwave. Some sources say very hot tap water can be used without boiling.
4. Cool. Nectar can be stored in refrigerator for about two weeks.
5. When filling feeders, put in just the amount of home made nectar the hummingbirds will eat in a few days. Feeders should be emptied and cleaned every two days with mild soap and water especially during warm/hot weather. A small hand feeder should be emptied and cleaned every day. Some sources suggest cleaning only with a mild vinegar and water solution while sources suggest cleaning only with water. Kits for cleaning baby bottles (can be purchased from 'dollar store') are great cleaning tools for feeders.
6. Do not use petroleum products (petroleum jelly/Vaseline) on feeders. Do not use pesticides or insecticides as insects are an important food source for hummingbirds.



Hand-feeding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds

This feeder was designed by naturalists at Lake Hope State Park in McArthur, Ohio. It consists of a plastic floral tube and a bright red chenille stem (AKA "pipe cleaner") wrapped around the top of the tube.

Since 1995, visitors to Lake Hope have had the opportunity to hand-feed ruby-throated hummingbirds. Each Spring, the naturalists put out multiple sugar water feeders. When hummingbird traffic starts to increase, they take away the feeders and replace them with hand feeders. Next, the naturalists sit very still holding the hand feeders till the birds start to feed from them. When the hummers are "trained" to eat from the small hand feeders, visitors holding hand feeders are allowed into the area. A visitor simply needs to sit still holding a hand feeder and within minutes they will have a hummingbird sipping from the hand feeder inches from his/her face.

Here are the steps of you want to try hand-feeding at home:

1. Attract hummingbirds by offering several sugar water feeders. See recipe for home made nectar, above.
2. As the traffic around your feeding area increases, begin spending time in the area so the hummingbirds get used to you. Even if you seem to scare them off at first, be patient. They will come back.
3. Once they get used to your presence, hold one of the large feeders in your hand. If you are patient, the hummers should start feeding from the one you're holding.
4. Remove the large feeders. You can now prop the small hand feeder in a cup or another small container or sit very still while holding it.

Examples of Plants That Attract RTHBs

Annuals

Cypress Vine/Hummingbird Vine/Cardinal Vine *Ipomoea quamoclit*
Flowering Tobacco *Nicotiana*
Fuchsia
Impatiens
Lantana
Million Bells, Superbells *Callibrachoa*
Morning Glory *Ipomoea*
Petunia
Salvia

Perennials

Beardtongue *Penstemon*, Native
Bee Balm Natives include Scarlet Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*) and
Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)
Cardinal Flower *Lobelia cardinalis*, Native
Carolina Jessamine Vine *Gelsemium sempervirens*; Native, excellent nectar source
Columbine, Native
Coral Honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens*; Native, excellent nectar source
Garden Phlox, Native
Hyssop, Hummingbird Mint *Agastache*, Native
Passion Vine/Maypop *Passiflora incarnata*, Native
Red Hot Poker/Torch Lily *Kniphofia uvaria*
Salvia some, such as *Salvia greggii*, are native

Shrubs

Abelia, Native
Azalea, some are native
Buddleia Butterfly Bush Be sure to select sterile/non-invasive cultivars
Weigela

Resources

Operation RubyThroat www.rubythroat.org

NC State www.ncsu.edu Search: Ruby throated hummingbird

Audubon North Carolina nc.audubon.org Search: Ruby-throated hummingbird



Scan to watch a video about hand-feeding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at Lake Hope State Park, McArthur, Ohio