

## Guide to Hummingbird Feeders and Flowers

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**LATE APRIL to EARLY MAY IS PERFECT to PUT OUT the HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS!** It may seem a bit early but think again. Hummingbirds are arriving from their wintering grounds as far away as Costa Rica. They are hungry but there is little for them to eat!

**A good hummingbird feeder** should have lots of **red parts**. That eliminates the need for controversial and harmful red dye. Hummingbird nectar can be made by mixing a  $\frac{1}{4}$  **cup of sugar with a cup of boiled then cooled water**.

Buy inexpensive feeders so you can **put out several**.

**The more you place, the more activity you will have!** Hummingbirds do not like to share. Each male will try to claim several feeders and will only allow his mates to drink. Naturally, you'll want a few feeders at your favorite windows. Also consider placing feeders throughout the garden, and even in the woods if you have a wooded lot. Feeders in trees and shrubbery will encourage females to nest on your property.

**Feeders should be washed with hot water weekly.** Water should be changed frequently. Little birds can get sick from bad water!

**THINK RED!** The right flowers are a magnet for hummers. Hummingbirds prefer red, orange and yellow tubular flowers. For instant habitat-on-the-deck, consider potted tropical hibiscus. Tropical hibiscus can be brought inside for the winter. Trumpet creeper vine and native coral honeysuckle are great to grow on trellises and fences. Also consider native perennial flowers such as Turk's-cap lily, columbine, coral bells, scarlet bee balm, bergamot, cardinal flower and milkweed. One of the best annual flowers is Cuphea David Verity which blooms all summer. For shrubbery, consider azalea, rose of Sharon, and blueberry.

**JUST FOR FUN!** Hummers are so attracted to red that they will check out people wearing red hats and shirts. They will also check out floral prints like Hawaiian shirts. Look for hummingbird nests, tiny cups made of spider web and lichen! Nests are the ultimate reward for a hummingbird lovers hard work!

Hummingbirds start migrating south in late August and September. It is a good idea to leave the feeders out until late October. Be sure to thoroughly clean your feeders with hot sudsy water so they are ready for next **EARTH DAY!**

