

Hummingbird Season

By: Melinda Sperl

It's Hummingbird season again so get those feeders ready! The best way to attract them is to supply plenty of natural nectar sources like red tubular plants, as this tends to keep them there longer.

Some examples are Russelia, Hibiscus, any Cuphea, Hamelia Patens (aka Hummingbird bush), Shrimp Plant and Salvia. Red tubular flowers are thought to be the best to attract hummingbirds but they love Yellow Bells (esperanza) and Duranta too.

Deeper foliage in your yard is good for keeping the predators like cats and other birds away from the nest. Duranta are thorny plants making them one of the favorites for nesting.

Hummers are very territorial birds so mid-sized trees like Crapees and Redbuds are good for them to perch on to spy for interlopers and predators.

Hanging feeders are a popular way of enticing the hummingbirds into your yard or closer to windows. You can buy the nectar or make your own by mixing 4 parts boiling water with 1 part sugar. Do not add food coloring as this is harmful to the hummingbirds. Mix together until sugar dissolves, let it cool and fill your feeder. If hummers are in the area they will find it. Get ready to duck!

They will usually come to the same house year after year while on their migratory path with some even staying the winter. If you don't have many this year keep putting the feeders out each year and they should build each year.

Happy Gardening!

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