



# J&L Garden Center

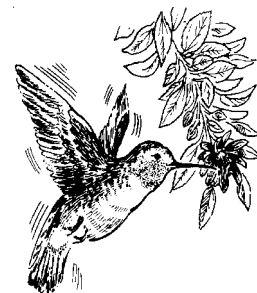
The All Season Gift  
and Garden Center

620 North 500 West Bountiful, Utah 292-0421

[www.JLGardenCenter.com](http://www.JLGardenCenter.com)

## Hummingbirds and Feeders

Hummingbirds are perhaps the most unique and fascinating birds to watch. There are more than 320 species of hummingbirds but only a handful of species are found in North America. Hummingbirds will migrate from Southern Alaska to Mexico, a distance of 2000 miles. Other hummingbirds will migrate from Canada to Mexico, crossing the Gulf of Mexico - a nonstop flight of 500 miles. Hummingbirds are approximately 3.5 inches long and weigh about 1/9 of an ounce. They are truly fascinating creatures.



**Hummingbirds eat two types of food:** nectar from flowers; and tiny insects and spiders.



A hummingbird's diet includes a wide variety of insects, they really are not picky eaters. Hummingbirds are very effective in helping to reduce insect populations naturally.



A hummingbird's diet also includes a variety of nectars from many different plants. Many of the flowers that attract hummingbirds are trumpet shaped, or tube shaped, and are in the red and orange shades. However, hummingbirds love pink bee balm blossoms and yellow honeysuckle flowers.

The sugar water you fill your hummingbird feeders should only be a supplement to the hummingbird's diet. Hummingbirds need to find and eat natural foods to obtain all the nutrients they need.

When buying a commercial hummingbird nectar mix you do not have to buy one with a red dye. The red color is supposed to attract hummingbirds more readily, but hummingbirds are smart birds and they will find your feeder on their own. Clear hummingbird nectars are just not as easy to find.

**DO NOT use honey in your feeder!** Honey ferments rapidly and can kill hummingbirds. It also contains a bacteria that can cause a fatal disease in birds. Red food coloring is not needed to attract hummingbirds. The red food coloring may actually coat the hummingbird's tongue and impede its abil-

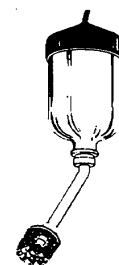


ity to lap up nectar. Commercial nectars do not have a problem with the red dye.

Every time you re-fill your feeder, flush it with hot tap water. A bottle brush can be very useful to help keep your feeder clean. **Do not use soap.** Soap can remain in the feeder even after rinsing and it can make the hummingbird sick, or even kill it. Discard any unused sugar water left in the feeder and refill it with fresh sugar water. When temperatures are over 80 degrees, clean and refill the feeder every three or four days.

At least once a month, clean each feeder thoroughly with a solution of bleach and water. Soak the feeder in this solution for about one hour, then clean it with a bottle brush. Rinse with water, and let it air dry completely before refilling.

Hummingbird feeders vary in size and shape but they should all provide the same thing. They should attract hummingbirds and provide a sugar-water solution for the hummingbird to drink. Put your hummingbird feeders in a shady place, where you can see them easily. Take your hummingbird feeder down mid-September, so you don't confuse hummingbirds into staying longer than they should. Hummingbirds need to migrate south for the winter. If they stay north too long they will not make it south soon enough and they may die.



Ants may be attracted to your feeder. To help avoid this, buy a dripless feeder. If your 'dripless' feeder drips anyway, try boiling your feeder in plain water for one or two minutes. The boiling water will sometimes stop

the capillary action of the water; *it will make it stop dripping*. You can also make an ant repellent by using vegetable oil. Soak a pipe cleaner in vegetable oil and then wrap it around the wire attached to your feeder, or you can cover the entire wire in petroleum jelly. Ants do not like to cross oily or wet surfaces.

Bees, wasps, and yellow jackets are also attracted to hummingbird feeders. Try using a hummingbird feeder with a bee guard.

It is best to get a feeder with a perch, so that the hummingbird can rest while eating. It requires a lot more energy for hummingbirds to hover than it does for them to fly. Also, it is fun to watch the hummingbirds sit still.

Feeders that can accommodate several birds at one time are best, even though hummingbirds can, at times, be very territorial. You may notice that one bird takes over the control of a feeder and chases all the other hummingbirds away. That hummingbird may spend all his time defending the hummingbird feeder and never take time to drink from it. If that is the case in your yard, you may want to hang up another hummingbird feeder several feet away. One hummingbird cannot control two feeders at once, so, all the hummingbirds can eat freely without any one of them taking control.

If you want to learn more about hummingbirds, you may want to buy a book and a hummingbird feeder, you'll be amazed by these little birds. Ortho has an excellent book entitled **"How to Attract Hummingbirds and Butterflies"**.



## Recipe For Artificial Nectar

Use one part ordinary White Sugar to four parts water.

Boil the water for several minutes.

Boiling kills and deters many pathogens from growing in the feeder.

Measure the water after boiling. If you measure first, before you boil, some of the water will boil away. The proportions may not be correct.

Stir in the sugar while the water is still hot.

Let the water cool before filling the feeder.

Store unused nectar in the refrigerator.

This mixture closely matches the sucrose content (about 21%) of the flowers Hummingbirds are attracted to.

## Plants that Attract Hummingbirds

Trumpet Vines

Morning Glory Vines

Japanese Honeysuckle Vines

Flowering Quince

Weigela Shrubs

Butterfly Bush

Mimosa Trees

Alyssum

Bee Balm

Candytuft

Canna

Catnip

Chrysanthemums

Columbine

Coneflower

Coreopsis

Corn

Daisies

Dandelions

Daylilies

Four-O-Clocks

Foxglove

Fuchsia

Heliotrope

Hosta

Impatiens

Indian Blanket Flower

Lupine

Mint

Penstemon

Pincushion Flower

Petunias

Red Salvia

Scabiosa

Snapdragons

Sunflowers

Sage

Thyme

Valerian

Verbena

Violets

Veronica

Yarrow

Yucca

Zinnia