

About Audubon Texas

Audubon Texas is the state branch of the National Audubon Society. For 100 years Audubon Texas has been dedicated to conserving and restoring natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

Visit Audubon online for more information and tips on creating a bird-friendly community.

www.tx.audubon.org

Audubon Texas

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Bird Feeding Basics

Audubon Guide to Feeding Hummingbirds



Found only in the Americas, hummingbirds are winged wonders. They have the highest metabolism of any warm-blooded animal, can hover in place with ease, and many migrate thousands of miles between Canada and Central America. By providing food sources you can enjoy hummingbirds in your own yard and help them find the resources they need to raise their young and complete their migrations.

Quick Tips

Attracting Hummingbirds to Your Yard

All hummingbirds rely on a diet of nectar and small insects. Hummingbirds forage primarily on tube-shaped flowers and tend to have a preference for red, orange, and pink/purple blooms. When selecting plants for your garden, choose a selection of species that will provide blooms from spring through fall to support hummingbirds through migration and breeding seasons.

Hummingbird nectar feeders are a good option if you have nowhere to grow plants, or as a supplement to blooms.



Selecting a Feeder

Hummingbird feeders can be an excellent way to supplement nectar from flowers. There are a variety of shapes and designs available. Picking one with red on it can encourage hummingbirds to investigate it.

SAUCER-SHAPED

These are easy to clean and usually have an “ant moat” to prevent insects from getting in.



BOTTLE-SHAPED

One of the most common designs, the bottle-shaped design makes it easy to see when nectar is low.



SINGLE-PORT

Feeders can also come in a single-port design.



A Recipe for Success: Make Your Own Nectar

You don't have to buy nectar from the store—it's very easy to make at home.

**Mix: 1 part white, granulated sugar
4 parts hot water**

Extra nectar can be refrigerated for later use.

Avoid adding any red dye to your nectar; the red on your feeder (or even a red ribbon) will attract the birds.

Keep Visiting Hummingbirds Safe

CLEAN FEEDERS REGULARLY

Be sure to change the nectar in your feeders regularly; in hot weather, it can spoil quickly and may need to be changed daily. Wash your feeders with hot, soapy water and rinse thoroughly.

REDUCE WINDOW COLLISION RISK WITH FEEDER PLACEMENT

Collision with glass is the number two human-related cause of death to birds in the US. Placing feeders within 3 feet of windows or more than 30 feet away can reduce the risk that birds will fly into window glass.

KEEP CATS INDOORS

Hummingbirds may be nimble and fast, but even they can fall prey to cats. Predation by feral and free-roaming cats is the number one human-related cause of death to birds in the US. If you are feeding birds of any kind in your yard, keep your cats indoors; it's good for their health and safety, too.

Native Texas Flowers for Hummingbirds

Providing native plants for hummingbirds is the best way to feed them with both the insects and nectar they require. When you garden with plants native to your region, you are providing food and shelter for a wide diversity of insects, birds, and other wildlife.

SELECTED TEXAS NECTAR PLANTS

Cardinal Flower (*Lovelia cardinalis*)

Flame Acanthus (*Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii*)

Texas Lantana (*Lantana urticoides*)

Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus drummondii*)

Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*)

Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*)

Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)

Lemon Beebalm (*Monarda citriodora*)

Spotted Beebalm (*Monarda punctata*)

Indian Mallow (*Abutilon fruticosum*)

Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*)

Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

Autumn Sage (*Salvia gregii*)