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## Evergreen Hummingbirds – Evergreen Audubon

4-5 minutes

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Broad-tailed Hummingbird (c) Bill Schmoker

This year hummingbirds arrived along the Front Range earlier than perhaps ever before. Our most common, the **Broad-tailed Hummers** started showing up in mid-March (almost a month earlier than we used to expect them), and our less common **Black-chinned Hummers** started appearing in early April. Two other species occur in the Evergreen area, the Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds. Both of these have a somewhat racetrack migration, initially heading northward up the Pacific Coast, breeding to the northwest of us, and only showing up here

as they commence their southward migration around the beginning of July. At that time the **Rufous Hummers** become quite common and aggressive at our feeders. The **Calliope Hummers** (North America's smallest breeding bird), on the other hand, are only occasionally seen.

Here in Evergreen it is easy to attract hummingbirds to your yard with both feeders and flowers (see list below). With feeders simply make a 1:4 white sugar to water mix, don't add any food color, and then make sure to clean your feeders regularly. Extra mix can just be refrigerated. The color red is a big attractant, so having red feeders helps, and you can even put up red flagging if you're impatient for results. Also, try and have feeders with some sort of bee guard on them to help frustrate the Hymenoptera. Finally, don't worry about having to take your feeders down in the fall, the birds will migrate when they need to regardless of what food resources are available.

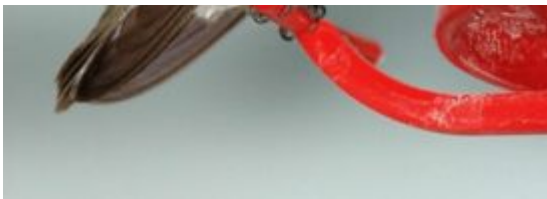


Rufous Hummingbird (c) Bill Schmoker

### **Cool Hummer Facts:**

- 328 Species – All in W Hemisphere!
- 2nd largest family of birds
- 21 species enter the US
- Flap wings 55 times per second
- Hover, fly backwards, and sideways
- Can rotate entire wing
- From over 17,000 ft in the Andes down to sea-level
- Desert to rain forest to cloud forest, and everything in between
- Tongue unzips to capture nectar
- They “lap” at a rate of 13x per second
- They can remember every flower they have visited, and how long it will take a flower to refill
- When hummingbirds sleep they go into a hibernation-like state called torpor to conserve energy
- Heart rate over 1200 bpm; Drops to 50-180 in torpor
- Body temperature 107 °F; can drop to 70 °F in torpor
- Hummingbird flight muscles are 22-34% of total body weight
- Rufous Hummers migrate over 4,000 miles, round trip





Calliope Hummingbird (c) Bill Schmoker

So, have fun with your hummingbirds this summer! You're sure to see the Broad-tail and Rufous Hummers, and with a bit of perseverance you'll hopefully see the less common Black-chinned and Calliope Hummers. Female hummers can be tricky to identify, but don't get discouraged, you don't have to identify everything, just enjoy them. Oh, and by the way, there are about five other hummingbird species that show up occasionally in Colorado: Ruby-throated, Blue-throated, Anna's, Magnificent, and Costa's, so you might want to keep an eye out for them as well. Oh, boy!

## Some Plants for the Evergreen Hummers

### PERENNIALS

1. Spotted Gayfeather – *Liatris punctata*
2. Colorado Columbine – *Aquilegia coerulea*
3. Delphinium – *D. nuttallianum* and *D. geyeri* – cultivars, can be annuals; Butterfly Delphinium (*Delphinium grandiflorum*) can be P/A
4. Paintbrush – *Castilleja integra* (seeds or plants)
5. Penstemons – *Penstemon barbatus*, *P. secundiflorus*, *P. virens*, *P. strictus*; also *P. procerus*, *P. nitidus*, *P. pinifolius*, *P. bridgesii*
6. Gilia / Ipomopsis – *Ipomopsis aggregata*
7. Four-o'clock – *Mirabilis multiflora*, and cultivar *M. jalapa* (“Jingles

– *mixed*”)

8. Lobelia – *Lobelia cardinalis*, and cultivars
9. Horse Mint / Bee Balm / Bergomat – *Monarda fistulosa*, *M. didyma*, and cultivars
10. Coral Bells – *Heuchera sanguinea* and cultivars
11. Giant Hyssop – *Agastache foeniculum* and cultivars

### ANNUALS

Rocky Mountain Beeplant (Cleome) *Peritoma serrulata*, *Petunias*

VINES – *Lonicera heckrottii*, *L. sempervirens* (Trumpet Honeysuckle), *Campsis radicans* (Trumpetvine), *Clematis paniculata*

SHRUBS / TREES – Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), *Weiglea florida*, Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*), Wax Currant (*Ribes cereum*), Buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*), Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), Roses

Use the Aster/Daisy family to provide tiny bugs as a food resource.