



## HUMMINGBIRD FACTS AND HAND FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS

### BASIC FACTS ABOUT HUMMINGBIRDS

Hummingbirds are small, colorful birds with iridescent feathers. Their name comes from the fact that they flap their wings so fast (about 80 times per second) that they make a humming noise. Hummingbirds can fly right, left, up, down, backward, and even upside down. They are also able to hover by flapping their wings in a figure-8 pattern. They have a specialized long and tapered bill that is used to obtain nectar from the center of long, tubular flowers. The hummingbird's feet are used for perching only and are not used for hopping or walking.

### MIGRATION

Each year, hummingbirds embark on two migrations – one north and one south. These migratory journeys, which can span hundreds or thousands of miles, require extensive preparation and a shocking amount of energy from these small birds - the smallest in the world. Their spring migration north, from South America and Mexico up to Canada, is a solitary journey with the goal of getting to their breeding grounds early enough to claim the best feeding territories. With that sort of pressure, this hummingbird migration can begin as early as February in Mexico and finish in mid-May in Canada and Alaska.

The fall southern hummingbird migration follows a similar timeframe. Hummingbirds can set out as early as late July, and the last stragglers will cross the southern U.S. border by late October. It's this amazing cycle of hummingbird migration that can also bring a sudden swarm of activity to your hummingbird feeders. If you have a well-maintained hummingbird feeder, expect plenty of new visitors as they try to boost their energy before the next stage of their journey.

### POPULATION

It is difficult to estimate population numbers since many different species are spanning a large geographic area

### RANGE

Hummingbirds are found only in the Western Hemisphere, from southeastern Alaska to southern Chile, although most live in the tropics. There are more than 300 species of hummingbirds, 12 of which summer in North America and winter in tropical areas.

### DIET

Hummingbirds primarily eat flower nectar, tree sap, insects, and pollen. The hummingbird's fast breathing rate, rapid heartbeat, and high body temperature require that they eat often. They also need an enormous amount of food each day. Hummingbirds have a long tongue which they use to lick their food at a rate of up to 13 licks per second.

### BEHAVIOR

Like other birds, hummingbirds communicate via visual displays. Hummingbirds are very territorial and have been observed chasing each other and even larger birds such as hawks away from their territories.

### REPRODUCTION

Gestation: 13-22 days.

Clutch size: Between 1-3 eggs.

The young start to fly in 18 to 30 days.

SOURCES:

<https://defenders.org/hummingbirds/basic-facts>  
<https://www.perkypet.com/advice/bird-watching/hummingbird-migration/migration-facts>

# HAND FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS



1. Remove petals and fill with fresh nectar or fill with a syringe through the hole in the center of the petals. Store-bought or homemade nectar is acceptable. Red dye is not necessary and should not be used.
2. Attract hummingbirds to your yard by placing the Hummingbird Ring in a visible location. Place it in a small glass, shot glass or small flower pot filled with sand or dirt. Also, you can use one of our Hummingbird Trainers which are available on our website. Place your Hummingbird Ring in the vicinity of other nectar feeders or hummingbird friendly flowers.
3. Keep the nectar fresh and the Hummingbird Ring clean and full. Change the nectar in ALL feeders every 3-5 days to maintain a healthy hummingbird population. If the nectar appears cloudy, or you see black residue (mold) change immediately. Change more often in warmer weather. The Hummingbird Ring is top rack dishwasher safe.
4. Once the hummingbirds start feeding from the Hummingbird Ring, continue to keep it clean and full. The more they use the Hummingbird Ring, the more comfortable they will become.
5. After the hummingbirds are used to the Hummingbird Ring, you can start to introduce yourself. Start by sitting in the vicinity of the Hummingbird Ring while they feed, so they get used to feeding around you.
6. After they become more comfortable with you and the Hummingbird Ring, it is time to start hand feeding them. You can remove your hanging feeders, so the hummingbirds only come to the Hummingbird Ring, but it is not necessary.
7. Place the Hummingbird Ring on your finger and sit in the vicinity where the hummingbirds have been feeding from it. Sit very still and be patient. The hummingbirds will typically check you and the Hummingbird Ring out before they come into feed.
8. Spend as much time as possible getting them used to you and the Hummingbird Ring. With a little diligence and patience, they will come. Then enjoy observing this amazing creature close up. HAVE FUN!

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