

For more information on
Texas hummingbirds:

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/hummingbirds/

or contact the Texas Hummingbird Roundup at

Texas Hummingbird Roundup
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

For more ideas on
hummingbird gardening:

Hummingbirds of Texas by Cliff Shackelford,
Madge Lindsay and Mark Klym or
Texas Wildscapes; Gardening for Wildlife
by Kelly Bender.

These books should be available in most
book stores and libraries.

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscapes/



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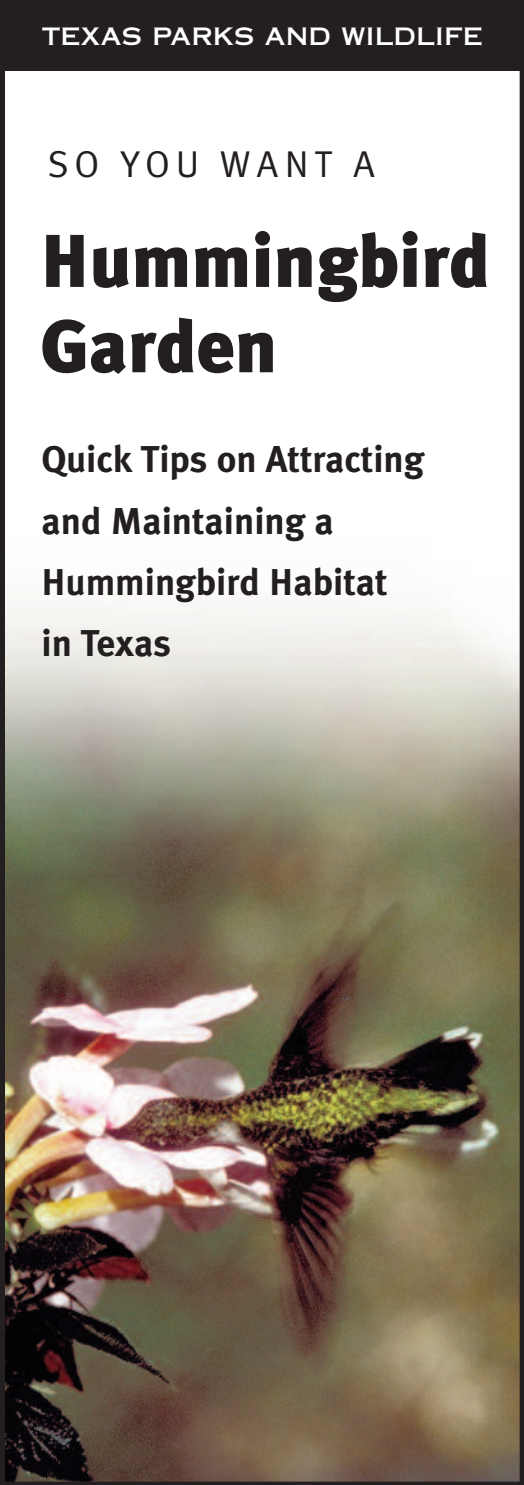
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TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

SO YOU WANT A

Hummingbird
Garden

Quick Tips on Attracting
and Maintaining a
Hummingbird Habitat
in Texas



Why a Garden?

- Feeders alone do not provide the needs of the birds
- Gardens are more likely to result in a diverse population with greater density
- Gardens provide resources necessary not only for hummingbirds, but for other wildlife species as well
- Gardens provide an aesthetic and recreational opportunity for us

What is a Hummingbird
Garden?

A hummingbird garden is going to provide the shelter, food, water and space needs of the birds. It will include mature trees, shrubs and bushes, perennial and annual wildflowers, vines and other plants that are especially attractive to these birds. Nectar producing plants are only part of the picture – insect sheltering plants will also be critical. Water sources will also be important.

Feeders

Feeders do have a place in this garden, but not as the central focus. They should be used to:

- Supplement plants that provide food resources
- Position the birds in areas for easy viewing
- Attract the birds to less used portions of the garden

Texas Hummingbirds

The more common twelve:

Buff-bellied Hummingbird
Blue-throated Hummingbird
Broad-billed Hummingbird
Magnificent Hummingbird
Lucifer Hummingbird
Anna’s Hummingbird
Black-chinned Hummingbird
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Calliope Hummingbird
Broad-tailed Hummingbird
Rufous Hummingbird
Allen’s Hummingbird

The other Texas six:

These are rare species and should be recorded and documented whenever seen.

Green Violet-ear
Green-breasted Mango
White-eared Hummingbird
Berylline Hummingbird
Violet-crowned Hummingbird
Costa’s Hummingbird

Providing Shelter for Hummingbirds

Learn from the birds:
A quick look at the natural history of hummingbirds cannot help but impress on the student that these are mountain birds. The most diverse location in the world for hummingbird species is the mountainous regions of Ecuador and Peru. This tells us that these birds probably originated in this location. The best way to provide habitat for any animal is to provide settings that resemble where they are found in nature.

Hummingbirds need shelter. Mature trees that develop a canopy over much of the garden are going to be important. Some open sky is needed for escape, but after a short run in open sky these birds do retreat to a tree or shrub.

Beneath the trees, shrubs for perching, to provide food and in some cases for nesting, will be important. This is often a significant part of the garden that is forgotten – the only shrubs you will see in many hummingbird gardens are those intended to provide food for the birds. A good selection of diverse bushes for both shelter and food purposes is vital to a diverse, dense population of hummingbirds.

Shelter: Trees, shrubs and bushes strategically placed to allow some open sky

Food Resources for Hummingbirds

Remember, while sugar is important to these birds, it is not the only food resource. We need to provide for not only their energy needs, but vitamins, minerals, protein and other nutrients as well. This is done with a carefully planned and maintained garden.

A good hummingbird garden will include:

- Nectar producing plants designed for hummingbird attraction
 - Plants with trumpet shaped flowers usually oriented horizontal or downward
- Insect attracting plants
 - Plants with large, flat flower heads usually oriented vertical or near so
 - These are generally yellow or blue in color

Bloom season is important. In Texas it is possible to have hummingbirds year-round, so you should aim to have plants in bloom as long as possible. In the northern reaches this becomes more difficult because of frost, but careful selection can extend the hummingbird season by weeks. Try to select plants with overlapping bloom periods so that there is always something in bloom.

Plant a food source: Nectar producers and insect attractors

Shelter Trees and Shrubs

Pecans	Prairie flame leaf sumac
Oaks	Evergreen sumac
Elms	Possum haw
Cedar	Agarita
Pines	Yaupon holly
Mountain laurel	

Selection Tips

- Think native
- Remember the needs of the plant and the space available
- Always plant in mid to late fall or early winter for best results through the summer

Please avoid:

Chinese tallow	Pyracantha	Chinaberry
Ligustrum	Nandina	

Selected Food Plants for Texas Hummingbirds

Any native sage such as autumn sage (<i>Salvia gregii</i>)	Texas lantana (<i>Lantana urticoides</i>)
Trumpet vine	Turk’s cap
Cross vine	Yellow bells
Coral honeysuckle	Flame acanthus
	Native hibiscus

Layout Tips

- Try to provide food at multiple levels of the garden
- Plant islands of color
- Be sure to have plants with overlapping bloom periods in each garden

Please avoid:

Japanese honeysuckle

Water for Hummingbirds

All wildlife, including hummingbirds, require water. With hummingbirds there may be some concerns that are not addressed by the average bird bath or the wildlife water dish.

You must consider:

- **Depth** – most bird baths are too deep for hummingbirds
- **Slope** – you do not want steep sided containers since they are difficult for an animal to exit

Moving water is much more attractive to wildlife than is still water.

Get the water moving by:

- In bird baths, install a “water wiggler” device that vibrates in the tank creating a ripple
- In bird baths, installing a dripper to create a constant supply and to create a ripple
- In ponds, by circulating the water through a pump and falls
- In the garden, using a mister to create fine particles of water through which the birds fly and drink
- In the garden, by providing moisture on the leaves of plants (left after irrigation) for birds to drink and bathe in

Water:

- Should be fresh
- Should be moving
- Needs to be shallow
- Needs to be useable