

Love hummingbirds? Here are some ways to attract them so you can enjoy watching them!

Attracting Hummingbirds:

One of Mark Rossi's sculptures is of a hummingbird at an ocotillo flower.

You can watch hummingbirds at home year round if you make your own hummingbird feeder. Here's how:

Materials:

Baby food jar with screw-on lid
Hammer and large nail
Red fingernail polish
1 cup water
1/4 cup sugar
3 feet of string

Directions:

Clean and dry the baby food jar and lid. Make four holes in the lid with the hammer and nail (you may want a grown-up to help you.) Be sure there are no sharp edges around the holes on the lid. Paint the lid top and sides red with the fingernail polish. Paint the outside of the jar with red spots or stripes. Let them dry. (Hummingbirds are attracted to red. They will see the jar and investigate, finding the sweet treat inside.)

Make the nectar. With an adult's help, put the water in a saucepan and boil it a few minutes. Add the sugar to the hot water and stir till dissolved. When it's cool, pour the sugar water into the jar to about $\frac{1}{2}$ full. Screw the lid on tightly. Tie a string securely to the jar's neck. Tie the other end of the string to a tree branch so it hangs in the shade. Give the birds some time. They should find your feeder in a few weeks. Clean and refill the feeder once a week in winter and twice a week the rest of the year. Keep any extra nectar in the refrigerator.



Here are some other quick tips about hummingbirds.



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Quick tip Hummer Guide

Arizona has 17 species of hummingbirds and is known as the "Hummingbird Capital of the U.S."

These sparkling jewels are enjoyed by everyone who observes them. Except for the higher elevations in the winter, Arizona has hummingbirds twelve months a year. Planting nectar plants or feeding with an artificial feeder is an excellent way to attract these tiny birds. If you decide to put out a feeder for hummingbirds chose one that is easy to clean and care for. Any perches or sitting areas on the feeder will attract other types of birds to your feeder. Remember that hummingbirds do not have to sit to feed and these "extras" are not necessary.



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Quick tips

- ① Use a sugar solution of one part table sugar to four parts water for your feeder.
- ② Do not use food coloring in your solution. The food coloring is not necessary to attract the hummingbirds and may not be good for their health.
- ③ Change the solution at least once a week in cool weather and at least twice a week when temperatures exceed 60 degrees F.
- ④ To clean the feeders use a diluted bleach solution of one part bleach to ten parts water. Rinse the disinfected feeders well. It may be a good idea to have extra feeders to put out when you are cleaning the others. This way the hummingbirds won't be scolding you when the feeder is not available to them.
- ⑤ If ants are a problem put a small amount of Vaseline on the hook or wire that the feeder is hanging on.
- ⑥ Make sure there are bee guards over the feeder holes to discourage bees and wasps.

Remember to keep your feeder filled with fresh sugar solution. Once the hummingbirds find the feeder the birds will provide you with hours of enjoyment. You will wonder how you survived without them!!

