

Hummingbird Garden

The magic that hummingbirds create in the garden never fails to enchant young and old alike. From the Rocky Mountains to the Midwest plains, you can attract “hummers” endemic to your area when they migrate to and from their nesting grounds, and while they are nesting (if you are lucky enough to live nearby).

With the purchase of a preplanned hummingbird garden, you are off to a good start. Use the planting plan provided for a hummingbird oasis, or you may want to spread your plants throughout your existing flowerbeds. This will help reduce fighting amongst hummers. Either way, localize color by bunching one color for the best result.

Some other good hummingbird plants are included in the following table. Use a combination of annuals, perennials, vines, shrubs and trees for an effective flowering food source from spring to fall. Hummers learn quickly which yards in the neighborhood cater to their needs, and will continue to return from year to year.

While you wait for your living hummer magnets to grow and bloom, you may want to use other methods to bring those winged jewels into your yard. Hummingbird feeders will help get things going. They supply the type of energy source needed to fuel these flying machines. Their metabolic rate is so high that they must feed almost constantly during the day. A feeder with red on it helps flag them down, and you can add red ribbons to the feeder to attract more attention from the air.

One part sugar and four parts water makes an excellent nectar solution, which should be changed every few days. Do not add red food coloring to your recipe – the red on the feeder is enough. Place the feeder in the open where the hummers can find it because they fly 30-50 feet overhead. If the feeder is under a tree or patio, they may miss it.

Place your feeder by April 15 for the spring migration, and by July 4th for the fall retreat. It is not true that hummers will forget to fly south if you leave the feeder out too late in the fall. Hummers migrate based on internal hormones, and the length of the day (not food availability).

Avoid the use of pesticides as much as possible. Spiders and other small insects are an important part of the hummers regular diet, especially when they are feeding a hungry brood. If the use of pesticides is unavoidable, check with your local garden center experts for help choosing an organic control, and spot treat only those plants in trouble.

Providing for these simple needs will invite hummers to share our landscape where they can entertain us with their fascinating antics and beautiful colors.

The plants listed below are among hummingbird’s favorites. While reds dominate the list, there are plenty of other colors suggested to allow a varied planting. The most important aspect of designing a hummingbird garden is to plan for continuous bloom from spring to fall, ensuring an endless supply of nectar.

Humming Bird Garden Plants

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Latin Name</u>	<u>Annual Biennial Perennial</u>	<u>Bloom Date</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Soil Requirements</u>	<u>Sun/ Shade</u>	<u>Zone</u>
Bee Balm	Monarda Didyma	P	July-August	Red, pink	Not particular	Partial	4-9
Bleeding Heart	Dicentra spectabilis	P	May – June	Rose	Rich, well-drained	Partial	3-9
Butterfly weed	Asclepias tuberosa	P	July-August	Orange	Tolerates most soil; thrives in dry, sandy sites	Full Sun	3-9
Cardinal flower	Lobelia cardinalis	P	July-frost	Red	Moist	Full/Partial	5-9
Carpet bugle	Ajuga reptans	P	May-June	Blue, purple	Moderate Moist, well-drained	Partial sun /shade	4-9
Columbines	Aquilegia spp.	P	May-June	Red, pink, yellow, blue, white	Rich, well-drained	Full/Partial	3-9 depending on species
Coral bells	Heuchera sanguinea	P	June-September	Red	Moist, well-drained	Full/Partial	3-9
Dahlia	Dahlia merckii	A or P (tender bulb)	July – frost	Red, pink orange, yellow, white	Rich, well-drained	Full/Partial	2-10
Delphinium or scarlet larkspur	Delphinium cradinalis	P	June – frost	Red	Rich, well-drained	Full/Partial	6-9
Four O'clock	Mirabilis jalapa	A or P Depending on climate	July – frost	Red, rose, pink, salmon, yellow, white	Tolerates dry soil	Full sun	4-10
Foxglove	Digitalis purpurea	P or B	June –July	Purple, red, rose, cream, white, red	Fertile	Full/Partial	4-9
Fuchsia	Fuchsia Riccartonii	A or P	July-frost	Red	Moderate moist, well-drained	Partial	6-10
Gladiola	Gladiolus spp.	A or P	July-September	Many colors	Fertile	Full sun	
Jewelweed	Impatiens capensis	A	June-frost	Orange	Moist	Partial sun/Shade	5-9
	Impatiens pallida	A	June-frost	Yellow	Moist	Partial sun/Shade	5-9
Nasturtiums	Tropaeolum majus	A	June-frost	Scarlet, orange, yellow, white	Tolerates dry, infertile soil	Full/Partial	
Penstemons or beards tongues	Penstemons spp.	P	June-July	Purple, scarlet, pink, yellow	Acidic	Full/Partial	5-9 depending on species
Petunias	Petunia spp.	A	Early summer-frost	Many colors	Loamy	Full/Partial	

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Phlox	Phlox drummondii Phlox spp.	A P	July- August July-frost	Many colors	Tolerates dry soil	Full/Partial	2-8 depending on species
Red-hot Poker or Tritoma	Kniphofia uvaria	P	July- August	Red, yellow	Moist, sandy	Full sun	6-10
Sage, scarlet	Salvia officinalis	A or P depending on climate	Mid summer	Lavender	Not particular	Full sun	5-10
Snapdragon	Antirrhinum majus	A	June	Red, pink, white	Rich, slight alkaline	Full-Partial	
Spider flower	Cleome spinosa	A	July- September	Rose, pink, white	Any dry soil	Full sun	
Sweet William	Dianthus barbatus	A or B	May-June	Red, maroon, rose, pink, white	Not particular	Full sun	3-8
Tobacco, flowering	Nicotiana alata	A or P	June August	Many colors	Moist, fertile	Full/Partial	Perennial in the South
Zinnias	Zinnia spp.	A	July – frost		Not particular	Full sun	

<u>Vines</u>							
Honeysuckle trumpet	Lonicera sempervirens	P	June-frost	Red	Moist	Full sun	3-9
	Lonicera Neckrotii	P	June-frost	Red and yellow			
Morning Glory	Ipomoea coccinea	A	July-frost	Red	Not too rich	Full sun	3-10
	Ipomoea Purpurea	A	July-frost	Purple to blue			
Scarlet runner bean	Phaseolus coccineus	A or P	July-frost	Red		Full sun	Not frost hardy
Trumpet creeper	Campsis radicans	P	July- September	Orange, red	Rich	Full sun	5-9