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### hummingbird

Most birds that visit our back yards have it easy. Homeowners set up seed and suet feeders along with the occasional bird bath. Food and drink are just a flap and hop away.

On the other hand (or feather), hummingbirds spend most of their day looking for food. Up, down, side to side, to and fro, hummingbirds exert lots of energy zipping from one flower to another in search for nectar. They like red flowers, a color that bees have trouble seeing. They prefer the tubular kind as well.

Hummingbirds have excellent memories, and remember every flower they've visited. That's a lot of flowers because the hummingbird needs to consume more than its body weight. And a lot of pollination, thanks to their heads that rub against a flower's stamens and pistils, collecting and depositing pollen at each flowerery stop. Though tiny (the average hummingbird weighs less than a nickel), this hard working bird plays a big role in the home garden and landscape at large.

Get on their flower memory map and try planting some of these hummingbird favorites:

Ribes (Currant), Mimulus (Sticky Monkey flower), Penstemon (Beard Tongue), Antirrhinum (Snapdragon), Salvia (Sage), Zauschneria (CA Fuschia)

#### Fun Facts:

Hummingbirds have very weak feet and are rarely ever seen walking about. They are the only bird, though, that can fly backwards, and sometimes upside down!

A hummingbird's immune system depends on the pollen proteins found in flower nectar, so it cannot survive on the nectar feeders that we put out.

*Information pulled from: Las Pilitas Nursery and other*

*Right from top to bottom: Anna's Hummingbird and Salvia leucantha, Allen's Hummingbird, Allen's Hummingbird*



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of gap used for paintings

