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Do you hear that? No ... No one's invading your yard. But with a little encouragement, you can persuade a few feathered friends to stop by. While hummingbirds are some of the most fascinating and flashy fliers out there, they are also the most misunderstood. Unlike other birds (who forage for seeds and insects), hummingbirds feast solely on flower nectar. Due to their fickle tastes and strict dietary regimen, hummingbirds rely on the kindness of strangers when they're in the midst of migration. Here are a few ways you can transform your yard into a charming hummingbird habitat.

Grow a Hummingbird Garden

Draw hummingbirds to your yard with bold blooms that contain little to no fragrance. Why? Well, hummingbirds actually feed by sight rather than smell. When they notice bright and vibrant hues, they will deviate from their regular routes in search of sustenance. Pique hummingbirds' interest by incorporating sage, zinnia, morning glory, azalea, petunia, canna and/or hosta varieties in your garden this year. With these bright flowers, your yard will be filled with happy hummingbirds in no time.

Add Alluring Feeders

If your outdoor space is limited, you can also attract hummingbirds with a few feeders full of synthetic nectar. When placed near natural shelter (trees and shrubbery) or close to a growing garden, hummingbirds will swoop in and inspect the feeders for themselves. Most hummingbirds favor feeders that contain the color red. Due to this instinctual attraction, most dish-style feeders are equipped with red perches and most bottle-style feeders feature shades of red. Once the hummingbirds are comfortable and captivated, they'll happily extract nectar from the feeding ports.

Make Homemade Nectar

While artificial nectar is safe to serve hummingbirds, you can also create your own. It's actually pretty easy. First, bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Then, add 1 cup of white granulated sugar to the solution and stir until all of the sugar has dissolved. Once the nectar is cool, place it in the fridge so it can chill overnight. It's that simple!

TIP: Don't add any honey, molasses or syrup to your homemade nectar. These sweet supplements are just too heavy for hummingbirds to digest. Instead of providing hummingbirds with the necessary nutrients, these sugary additions actually dehydrate hummingbirds.

Keeping Clean

Did you know that hummingbirds can consume up to 50% of their weight in nectar each day?Because these small birds have high metabolisms, they tend to visit areas that include crisp and clean birdfeeders. That's why you should clean and refill your feeders every 3-4 days. With the use of hot water and a bottlebrush, you can easily remove harmful contaminants that threaten hummingbirds' livelihoods.

Article by: Marisa Christiano
Information for reference only. Items and availability may vary.

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