

Bling on the Wing: 12 Months of Flowers for Hummingbirds

Greg Butler, BLA, ATA Email: gregb@drizzle.com

Northwest Flower and Garden Festival 2020

Washington species: Anna's, Rufous, Calliope, Black-Chinned

Anna's: Year-round resident, our largest hummer (4"). Males have bright red/pink gorget, females iridescent green

Rufous: Migrate from Southern U.S./Mexico to Alaska. Smaller than Anna's, about 3-3.5". Males tawny orange with orange gorget, females green with orange highlights. Recently sighted as far east as Florida and as far north as New Brunswick.

Calliope: Primarily found in Eastern WA, occasionally seen on W. slope of Cascades, rare in Puget lowlands. Our smallest hummer, about 2.5-3". Migrates from Central Mexico as far North as Central BC and Alberta. Males have magenta gorget, females green on back with peachy chest.

Black-chinned: primarily found in E Washington, migration pattern similar to Calliope. About same size as Rufous, a bit more slender. Males have black chin/hood with purple gorget, females dull green on back with white chest.

Fun facts: Wings can beat up to 80 x per second; diving speeds of up to 50 mph; horizontal speed up to 35 mph; can fly upside down for short distances. Can go from 35 mph to full stop in 6"; can go into state of torpor in cold weather or when hungry. Best eyesight of any bird; amazing pollinators, flowers don't have to be tubular or red. Can be fiercely territorial (especially Rufous); "hawking" behavior when defending territory, hunting

Diet Primarily nectar, insects, and occasionally sap; females have been observed eating ash during nesting season

Mating: Males perform impressive courtship dives; females do all of the work of nest building, incubation, and feeding young. Females lay 2 (sometimes 1 or 3) bean sized eggs. Eggs incubate for about 3 weeks and chicks are independent about 3 weeks after hatching.

Nests are tiny, about the size of a quarter. Be careful and observant when pruning during nesting season (Feb-July). Nests constructed of spider webs, seed heads, plant fibers, moss, lichen, feathers, fur, hair. Do not provide dryer lint or fur/hair treated with shampoo or insecticide; both substances are harmful to hummers.

Enhancing habitat: Have less lawn, plant a variety of different species; plant in layers. Use native plants. Don't use insecticides. Provide nesting material by leaving plants standing in winter and using "chop and drop" mulching technique.

Water: Hummers get most of their fluids from their diet, but will sip moving water and dew drops from leaves. They enjoy a nice spritz in the mist of sprinklers.

KEEP YOUR CAT INSIDE! Build a catio. Take the Seattle Catio Tour.

Feeders: Consult Seattle Audubon for feeder advice. (I don't do feeders... my garden is my "feeder")

Plant Info: Plant sizes and needs can vary widely within a genus or species. Plant performance will vary depending on site conditions and maintenance. The plant table below provides some general info concerning average 10 year size, Exposure, and Watering.

Winter (*Exceptional Hummer Plants)

Latin Name	Common Name	Size (HxW)	Full Sun	Part Shade	Full Shade	Wet	Avg H2O	Dry
Arbutus menziesii*	Madrona	30' x 20'	✓					✓
Arbutus unedo	Strawberry Tree	10' x 10'	✓	✓			✓	✓
Arctostaphylos columbiana	Hairy Manzanita	8' x 8'	✓					✓
A. x media	Hybrid Manzanita	5' x 5'	✓					✓
Mahonia x media 'Charity'*	Charity Mahonia	10' x 10'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Viburnum bodnantense 'Dawn'*	Dawn Viburnum	8' x 6'	✓	✓			✓	✓
Grevillea victoriae*	Royal Grevillea	6' x 6'	✓					✓
Camellia sasanqua*	Sasanqua Camellia	10' x 10'	✓	✓			✓	✓
Rosmarinus officinalis*	Rosemary	5' x 6'	✓	✓			✓	✓

Spring

Latin Name	Common Name	Size (HxW)	Full Sun	Part Shade	Full Shade	Wet	Avg H2O	Dry
<i>Embothrium coccineum</i> *	Chilean Fire Tree	15' x 30'	✓					✓
<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> *	Oregon Grape	6' x 8'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Mahonia repens</i>	Creeping Oregon Grape	2.5' x 5'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Mahonia nervosa</i>	Low Oregon Grape	2' x 5'		✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Aquilegia sp.</i> *	Columbine	2' x 2'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Dicentra formosa</i>	Western Bleeding Heart	1' x 3'		✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>	Bleeding Heart	2' x 3'		✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Heuchera hybrids</i>	Coral Bells	1.5' x 3'	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Kniphofia hybrids</i> *	Red Hot Poker	3' x 3'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Ribes sanguineum</i> *	Winter Currant	5' x 6'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>	Evergreen Huckleberry	6' x 6'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Summer

Latin Name	Common Name	Size (HxW)	Full Sun	Part Shade	Full Shade	Wet	Avg H2O	Dry
<i>Heptacodium miconioides</i>	Seven-Son Flower	10' x 15'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Lavandula</i> *	Lavender	3' x 3'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> *	Hyssop	2' x 3'	✓				✓	✓
<i>Agastache sp.</i> *	Hummingbird Mint	2' x 3'	✓				✓	✓
<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>	Plumbago, Leadwort	18" x 3'	✓				✓	✓
<i>Zauschneria sp.</i> *	California Fuchsia	1.5' x 5'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Crocosmia sp.</i> *	Montbretia	3' x 4'	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Woodbine Honeysuckle	10' x 10'	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Dierama pulcherrimum</i>	Angel's Fishing Rod	3' x 4'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Lobelia tupa</i> *	Devil's Tobacco	5' x 5'	✓				✓	✓
<i>Nicotiana sp</i>	Flowering Tobacco	2' x 3'	✓				✓	
<i>Begonia boliviensis hybrids</i> *	Firecracker Begonia, etc.	Annual	✓				✓	
<i>Petunia hybrids</i>	Petunia	Annual	✓				✓	
<i>Pelargonium</i>	Geranium	Annual	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Abutilon sp. & hybrids</i> *	Flowering Maple	5' x 5'	✓				✓	

Autumn

Latin Name	Common Name	Size (HxW)	Full Sun	Part Shade	Full Shade	Wet	Avg H2O	Dry
<i>Vitex agnus-castes</i>	Chaste Tree	8' x 8'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Hibiscus syriacus</i> *	Rose of Sharon	8' x 10'	✓	✓			✓	✓
<i>Fuchsia magellanica & hybrids</i> *	Fuchsia	5' x 6'	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>Agapanthus hybrids</i>	Blue Lily of the Nile	3' x 3'	✓				✓	✓
<i>Aster sp.</i>	Aster	3'x3'	✓				✓	
<i>Phaseolus coccineus</i> *	Scarlet Runner Beans	Annual	✓				✓	
<i>Salvia species and hybrids</i>	Sage	2' x 4'	✓				✓	✓

Hummingbird Support Groups/Further Info:

Seattle Audubon
 Cornell Lab of Ornithology/Birds of North America/eBird
 UC Davis Hummingbird Health & Conservation Program
 Western Hummingbird Partnership
 Hummingbird Central
 Hummingbirds.net
 Russell Link, "Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest"

Plant Resources

King County Native Plant Guide
 Washington Native Plant Society
 Great Plant Picks
 Oregon State University Landscape Plants
 MOBOT (Missouri Botanical Garden)
 Far Reaches Farm
 The Desert Northwest Nursery