

## Trees, Shrubs & Vines Contribute to a Happy Hummingbird Habitat

Using lichens and spider webs, hummingbirds build tiny nests on horizontal tree limbs 10'-30' above the ground and under over-hanging branches for protection from rain and direct sunlight. Nests are located near a reliable food supply of nectar-bearing flowers and insects. Baby birds are fed exclusively insects. Females often nest in the same site year after year, sometimes building on top of their old nests. Select trees, shrubs and vines that provide both desirable nesting habitat and preferred blooms to attract these amazing birds.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Hummingbirds can see the color red from 3/4 of mile!  
With wings that flap up to 90 times per second and heart rates that exceed 1,200 beats per minute, hummingbirds depend on calorie-rich nectar for fuel-consuming their own body weight in nectar each day.

#### Glossy Abelia *Abelia x grandiflora*

Multi-stemmed 4'-6' shrub with arching branches of glossy foliage covered with clusters of pale pink, bell-shaped flowers from late summer to fall in sun to part shade. Cultivars include 'Rose Creek', 'Sunrise', and 'Kaleidoscope,' all with interesting foliage colors. East Asia, Evergreen, Perennial

**Weigela** *Weigela florida* Spreading-to-upright, 3'-6' shrub grows in full sun or part shade; deep pink to ruby red, bell-to funnel-shaped flowers late spring to early summer. Cultivars include 'Red Prince' with re-bloom in late summer; 'Rubridor'; and compact 'Tango' with yellow-throated, red flowers. East Asia, Deciduous, Perennial

#### Witch Hazel *Hamamelis virginian*

Tree grows 15'-20' in full sun to part shade providing nesting sites as well as stem-hugging clusters of fragrant, yellow flowers tinged with orange or red in fall to feed late migrating hummingbirds. Cultivars include compact 'Little Suzie' and red-flowered 'Mohonk Red.' **NATIVE**, Deciduous, Perennial

**Wright's Texas Firecracker** *Anisacanthus wrightii* orange-red, tube-shaped flowers in mid-summer attract hummingbirds to this southwest native. Dieback in our Zone 7a/8b winters keeps this fast-growing, drought-tolerant shrub 3'-5.' Mexico, Deciduous, Perennial

**Bottlebrush Buckeye** *Aesculus parviflora* Multi-stemmed shrub forming a 12' tall by 15' wide mass with branches from the ground that produce 1'-2' panicles of creamy white, long-lasting blooms late spring to early summer. **NATIVE**, Deciduous, Perennial

**Flowering Quince** *Chaenomeles speciosa* Rounded, spreading 3'-10' shrub grows in full sun or part shade, flowering late winter to early spring. Compact cultivars 'Scarlet Storm' and 'Pink Storm' are thornless with double flowers resembling camellias. East Asia, Deciduous, Perennial

#### Resources:

Native Plants for Hummingbirds [www.ncsu.edu/goingnative/howto/design/wildneed/humbird.html](http://www.ncsu.edu/goingnative/howto/design/wildneed/humbird.html)  
The Hummingbird Project [www.rubythroat.org/RTHUMain.html](http://www.rubythroat.org/RTHUMain.html)  
Backyards for Birds [content.ces.ncsu.edu/managing-backyards-and-other-urban-habitats-for-birds.pdf](http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/managing-backyards-and-other-urban-habitats-for-birds.pdf)

### Got GARDEN Questions? Get Answers

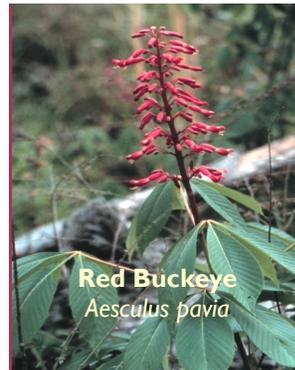
The more you know, the more you can grow  
*all about growing & gardening in the Southeast*  
Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardener Volunteers  
[mastergardenersmecklenburg.org](http://mastergardenersmecklenburg.org)



Extension  
Master  
Gardener

Mecklenburg  
County

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



Red Buckeye  
*Aesculus pavia*

Handsome, small tree (10'-20') produces large, upright panicles of showy red flowers in early spring to feed early migrators. **NATIVE** Deciduous, Perennial

#### Carolina Jessamine *Gelsemium sempervirens*

This 20' long, twining vine is covered with glossy, evergreen leaves and waxy, trumpet-shaped yellow flowers from late winter to spring offering an early nectar source for returning hummingbirds. **NATIVE**, Evergreen, Perennial

#### Coral Honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens*

Tolerant of light conditions from sun to shade, this twining vine offers a profusion of long, tubular red flowers favored by hummingbirds from early spring to fall. (Don't confuse this well-behaved native with Japanese honeysuckle, *L. japonica*, an invasive that chokes out native vegetation!) **NATIVE**, Semi-evergreen, Perennial

#### Crossvine *Bignonia capreolata*

Given full sun and LOTS of space, this vigorous, climbing vine reaches 50' with 2" long, showy, orange-red, trumpet-shaped flowers spring through summer; cultivars include 'Tangerine Beauty' with a yellow throat and re-blooming 'Shalimar Red.' **NATIVE**, Semi-evergreen, Perennial

#### Lablab or Hyacinth Bean *Dolichos lablab*

This beautiful climber in the pea family produces brilliantly colored flowers all summer IF immature pods are harvested promptly. Africa, Annual

#### Scarlet Runner Bean *Phaseolus coccineus*

Twining vine that produces red flowers against heart-shaped foliage. This rapid climber feeds humans as well as hummingbirds. Keep harvesting the delicious, young pods for a continuous supply of nectar-rich blooms through summer. Central America, Annual



# Attracting HUMMINGBIRDS to Your Yard

**Ruby-throated hummingbirds**, (*Archilochus colubris*) are the only species of hummingbird that breeds in North Carolina, and returns in early spring. Instinctively drawn to red, orange and pink, hummingbirds also seek out long, tubular blooms specifically evolved to suit their long beaks and tongues.

**Spread masses of blooming plants throughout your landscape** – hummingbirds are attracted to large clusters of red-hued flowers **plus** by separating the plant groupings, the food-supply competition among these extremely territorial little birds is reduced. Once in your yard, hummingbirds expand their menu to dine on nectar and pollen from other flowers as well as insects.

**Herbaceous perennials** die back to the ground in winter and regrow from their roots each spring returning to your garden bigger and better each year for the hummingbirds' enjoyment and your delight. By offering blooms that attract hummingbirds, several native perennials have evolved to be pollinated primarily by these birds. When planning your plantings, consider using native species which also contribute to an environmentally healthy landscape. Whether native or introduced, select a variety of perennials that flower from March to October and thrive in our USDA Hardiness Zones 7b/8a when planted in the right place.



**Fire Pink** *Silene virginica*

A shade lover that blooms with clusters of crimson flowers in late spring. This low-growing **NATIVE** is adapted to moist, well-drained soil.



**Bee Balm** *Monarda didyma* and other *Monarda* species and cultivars Tall **NATIVE** that loves full sun to part shade and blooms throughout the summer. Cut this mint family member by half after it blooms to promote re-bloom.

**Beard Tongue** *Penstemon* species and cultivars Late spring to early summer bloomers, these **NATIVES** like full sun and re-bloom when deadheaded after first flush of flowers. *Penstemon digitalis* cultivars include 'Husker's Red,' 'Garnet,' and 'Ruby.' Other varieties include: Eastern smooth (*P. laevigatus*) and Small's (*P. smallii*) beard tongue.

**Cardinal Flower** *Lobelia cardinalis* With spikes of red blooms from mid to late summer, this stunning 3-4' tall **NATIVE** thrives in moist soil with full sun and provides a favored late summer food source for hummingbirds.

**Canada lily** *Lilium canadense* Magnificent **NATIVE** lily with as many as 16-20 beautiful, nodding flowers in red, orange, or yellow on one plant in summer, preferring moist conditions in full sun or part shade.

**Coral Bells** *Heuchera americana* and *H. villosa* hybrids Another **NATIVE** plant for filtered shade offering a variety of foliage colors. Bloom time for various cultivars ranges from spring to fall.

**Eastern Columbine** *Aquilegia Canadensis* In part sun, tubular red and yellow flowers in early spring attract the early birds. This **NATIVE** blooms for several weeks and if the seed heads are left on, it slowly colonizes.

**Garden Phlox** *Phlox paniculata* and cultivars Easy to grow in full sun; deadheading promotes re-blooming. The tall flower heads of this **NATIVE** and its cultivars are a summer food source for hummers.

**Indian Pink** *Spigelia marilandica* Tubular flowers of this shade-growing **NATIVE** are crimson with a bright yellow lining. Blooming midspring to early summer, this perennial self-seeds to create clumps of nectar-rich blooms easily found by hummingbirds scouting for food sources.

**Maltese Cross** *Lychnis chalconica* Clumps of 2-3' tall stalks with clusters of red-orange flowers bloom in summer in full sun.

**Salvias** *Salvia guarantica*, *S. macrophylla*, and *S. greggii* Wonderful perennials that bloom profusely all summer long in full sun, especially shrubby *S. greggii* cultivars, which bloom to frost. *S. guarantica* cultivars include 'Argentine Skies' and 'Black and Blue.'



## Keys to attracting & keeping hummingbirds

- Grow a variety of herbaceous perennials & shrubs
- To bloom at different times - from early spring through fall
- Use a variety of these plants spread throughout different areas of your landscape
- Create a garden with nesting habitat & a variety of nectar-rich flowers

You'll invite the return of these delightful birds to your yard year after year.

For more information on the plants listed here, visit: [www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/)

## Ask A Master Gardener Horticulture Help Desk

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