Tennessee State University
Cooperative Extension Service

UT Extension

W 305

Hummingbird Gardening In Tennessee

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

Contents

Cover photo by Vickie Henderson. Immature male ruby-throated hummingbird (red-speckled throat) feeding from cardinal flowers (*Lobelia cardinalis*) in late summer.Young males don't start getting their red throats until late summer.

Hummingbird Gardening In Tennessee

Emily Gonzalez, UT/TSU Extension
Marcia L. Davis, UT/TSU Extension Master Gardener

Introduction

Ruby-throated hummingbirds never fail to delight hummingbird enthusiasts who eagerly await the arrival of the first migrants each spring. Ruby-throats winter in southern Mexico and Central America and arrive in Tennessee as early as late March. The tiny ruby-throat is the only hummingbird species to nest in Tennessee. Although many migrant Ruby-throats remain in Tennessee to nest each spring, most are just passing through on the way to more northern breeding areas extending into Canada.

It is not difficult to attract migrating ruby-throats into your yard. The secret is to enhance your yard with flowers and other plantings and to provide several hummingbird basic necessities. Ruby-throats require an abundance of both nectar-bearing flowers and insects for food. They also need water, perches, shelter and nest sites. The sugar and water solution in hummingbird feeders substitutes for nectar from flowers. Feeders can attract hummers into your yard and help the birds meet their very high energy requirements.

photo: Marcia Davis

Adult male ruby-throat with solid red throat.

Habitat

To attract hummingbirds, it's important to understand the key features of their habitat. Ruby-throated hummingbirds often nest in forests and woodlands or near the edges of forests and woodlands during spring in Tennessee. Nest materials include thistle, dandelion down, soft plant fibers, rootlets, tree sap and animal hair. The tiny nest, bound together with spider webs and camouflaged with lichen, is often anchored to the fork of a downward-sloping tree branch with a canopy of leaves above. Nesting ruby-throats are most abundant in Tennessee's bottomland forests near rivers, streams, ravines and other wet areas where insects are more abundant.

Flower nectar and insects are the main foods of ruby-throats. Insects and other small invertebrates make up about 50 percent of the daily diet and up to 75 percent during the nesting season. Wooded areas with lots of leafy vegetation near water usually support more insects than other areas.

If your yard is not near a wooded area, or it lacks small insects and nectar-rich flowers for food, you may not see hummingbirds in your yard during the

nesting season. However, you should be able to attract them during migration with flowers and hummingbird feeders if your neighborhood has enough patches of woods, trees, shrubs, meadows, weeds and nectar-producing flowers. Habitat quality for ruby-throats around your home — including the quantity of food available from flower nectar, hummingbird feeders, and insects — will influence when and how many hummers visit your yard.

photo: Vickie Henderson

Female ruby-throat feeding from 'Million Bells' (*Calibrachoa*)

Ruby-Throated Hummingbird Calendar

Typically, you will attract the most hummers into your yard during midsummer after young hummingbirds fledge and during fall migration when people see large numbers of ruby-throats at nectar-bearing flowers and hummingbird feeders. Fewer hummers are seen in spring.

By understanding the annual activity cycle of ruby-throats, you can create a flower garden emphasizing nectar-bearing hummingbird plants that bloom and attract the most hummers during the two migration periods: spring and midsummer through early fall. These are the two periods when the most hummingbirds will visit your yard, and providing an abundance of nectar during these times will help keep them well fed.

SPRING MIGRATION: Late March Through Mid-May

The earliest spring migrants arrive in Tennessee by late March. Though many people may not see their first hummingbird until about the second week in April, the migrants will continue to pass through until approximately mid-May. The timing of migration is why it is important to put hummingbird feeders up by April 1 each year.

TENNESSEE NESTING SEASON: Early May Through July

Hummingbirds may reuse their old nests the following year. It is important to note that both nests and eggs are protected by federal and state laws and must never be collected. Hummers will begin laying eggs in early May and laying peaks by the second half of the month. By late May there are nests with young nestlings. The young fledglings will start appearing out of the nest by mid-June.

Don't worry if you don't see hummingbirds during the month of May. Adult female hummingbirds are busy catching protein-rich insects and may visit feeders less frequently while nesting and feeding nestlings. Unless a hummingbird is maintaining a nesting or feeding territory near your yard, you may not see any hummingbirds during nesting season. You can expect feeder and flower visits to increase after nestlings leave the nest. Nonetheless, keeping your feeder stocked can provide necessary calories during this time.

FALL MIGRATION: Early July Through October

Fall migration is when you will see the most hummingbirds. The population is greatest in late summer because of the addition of recently hatched young birds. Each successful nest usually produces two young hummers.

Hummingbirds must constantly replenish their fat reserves during migration. They feed heavily on flower nectar and sugar water from feeders as they continue on their journey. Planting a garden with lots of nectar-rich hummingbird favorites that bloom during this period will attract migrants.

photo: Vickie Henderson

Ruby-throat feeding on Lantana

In contrast to spring when migrating hummers pass through an area quickly because they're in a hurry to get to the breeding grounds, fall migration is more leisurely and stretched out over a longer period of time. This means better hummingbird watching with more birds. Migrant hummer numbers often peak between mid-August and early September in Tennessee.

WINTER: November Through Late March

Every winter, a few hummingbirds nesting in the western U.S. and Canada show up in Tennessee and other southeastern states. Most are rufous hummingbirds, but rarer possibilities include black-chinned, Allen's, Anna's, Calliope, and broad-tailed hummingbirds. Only rarely does a winter hummer turn out to be a ruby-throat. Winter hummers often select yards with late-blooming, nectar-bearing flowers such as salvias and lots of evergreen trees and shrubs that provide winter cover for insects and for wintering hummers.

Importance of Insect Food

Creating and maintaining good ruby-throat habitat involves encouraging insects to live in your yard. Ruby-throat food includes mosquitoes, spiders, gnats, fruit flies, small bees, larvae, aphids and insect eggs. Small soft-bodied insects provide hummers with protein not available from flower nectar.

Ruby-throats eat small insects that are attracted to flowers and they also explore plant foliage to glean insects from leaf and bark surfaces. In early spring, hummingbirds eat insects attracted to sap from wells drilled in trees by yellow-bellied sapsuckers. Hummers also act like flycatchers and snatch small insects out of midair.

You can encourage insects to live in your yard by establishing an un-mowed, natural area with tall grasses and self-established plants to attract insects. Almost any type of foliage provides a home for insects, so if you want hummingbirds, fill your yard with plants. Purple coneflowers and bee balm both produce nectar that attracts many small insects suitable for hummingbird food. Trees with mushy, rotting fruit attract many different insect-eating birds. Hummers may defend feeding territories around fruit trees, like crabapples, when lots of small insects are attracted to the rotting fruit.

Another way to attract hummingbirds is to use a homemade fruit fly feeder. Stock a wide-mouthed plastic jug — opening to the side — with pieces of banana, cantaloupe and scraps of other fruits, and place it within sight of a hummingbird feeder. Hummers will fly in to pick off tiny fruit flies or other insects feeding on the rotting fruit.

One of the most important things you can do to provide insect food for hummingbirds and to keep birds healthy is to avoid unnecessary use of pesticides. Besides killing beneficial insects and other invertebrates used for food by hummers and many other birds, broad-spectrum pesticides might sicken birds that eat poisoned insects.

Importance of Flower Nectar Food

Flowers favored by hummingbirds share characteristic colors and shapes. Many hummingbird-pollinated plants have red flowers. In addition to red, hummingbirds are also attracted to purple, hot pink, orange, blue, as well as white and yellow. Many of the tubular and trumpet-shaped flowers that hold more nectar than other flowers are irresistible to hummers. The birds hover while inserting long bills and tongues into the throats of tubular flowers to reach the nectar. Pollination occurs after pollen rubs off onto a hummingbird's head and is carried by the hummer to other flowers of the same species. Both plants and hummingbirds benefit from this age-old relationship.

Other important factors in flower selection by hummers include nectar concentration, nectar volume and corolla (flower tube) length. Nectar consists mainly of sugar, water and salts. Hummers seem to show a preference for flowers with a nectar concentration of 20-30 percent, ample nectar supplies, and flowers with longer corollas (i.e., tubular shaped) to ensure that competition for nectar from other pollinators is limited. By choosing flowers that are limited to other pollinators, such as bees, hummingbirds can maximize the amount of nectar they collect with each energy intensive visit.

Many different nectar-bearing flowers attract hummers. However, you don't need to plant vast varieties of flowering plants. The goal is to provide a constant supply of nectar-bearing flowers from early spring through late fall. Get started by focusing on some easy-to-grow plants that are best suited for your growing conditions. Consider plants native to Tennessee that produce a lot of nectar, such as jewelweed and trumpet creeper. Hummingbirds seem to remember locations of flower gardens and feeders, often returning to highly rewarding locations the following year.

Different Flowers for Different Seasons — The Hummingbird Gardener's Calendar

EARLY SPRING

When ruby-throated hummingbirds first arrive in early spring, welcome them with native wildflowers. By including native plants in your garden, you will observe the mutually beneficial association that has existed between hummingbirds and Tennessee's native plants for hundreds of years. Perennials like wild columbine and wild blue phlox are early spring favorites. Plant columbine with its drooping pendants of red-orange and yellow, as well as pink tubular flowers

in a rock garden or semi-shaded area. Wild blue phlox is lovely when it spreads throughout a moist, shaded garden. Early blooming crossvines and yellow Carolina jessamine are ideal on a trellis, arbor or post. Flowering quince and azaleas also attract hummers. Another option is a small native tree, *Aesculus pavia* (red buckeye). Red buckeye is covered with red tubular flowers that hummingbirds depend on for nectar as they migrate north each spring.

When the hummers first return it's too early to plant annuals due to danger of frost. However, a hanging basket with brilliant red fuchsia or a cascading mass of red petunia-shaped Million Bells (*Calibrachoa*) along with a red hummingbird feeder will attract attention. If the planters are hung so that they are visible from above it will encourage hummers to check out your yard. Just bring hanging baskets indoors when the temperature drops too low.

LATE SPRING TO EARLY SUMMER

Late April is the time to plant a variety of ornamental annuals to provide a succession of nectar-rich flowers to support hummingbirds from spring until late fall. Imagine your yard from above, a bird's eye view as a hummer would see it, and create a target of bright red color to draw them in like a beacon.

Hummingbirds seem to associate the color red with nectar-rich food sources. Indian pink is a red and yellow option for shady areas. Lantana, especially in shades of red, coral, pink, orange and yellow, is a favorite for sunny areas.

Consider accenting the garden with window boxes, hanging baskets and large flower pots. Fill them with brightly colored petunias, fuchsias and geraniums. Try coral honeysuckle on a lamppost or mailbox. This plant will provide copious amounts of tubular coral trumpets that may bloom from mid-spring to fall. Favorite spring wildflowers include penstemons and pinks. Hummers also love the red or pink star-clustered flowers of pentas.

photo: Marcia Davis

Trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

SUMMER

Summer is the season for hummingbird vines. Both cypress vine and cardinal climber provide an abundance of small, tubular, red flowers. Plant them in a hanging basket or on a trellis, or let them cascade over the railing of a deck or a wall. Orange trumpet creeper, the classic hummingbird vine, is another excellent choice.

A bed of bee balm is a must for an open sunny area. Each red flower head is a mass of tiny, nectar-bearing tubes. Butterfly bush in shades of purple, lilac, white or yellow is a favorite for its long-lasting flowers. It also attracts butterflies, as do many of the hummingbird plants. Include a showy hibiscus, spreading mounds of verbena, or tall graceful lilies.

photo: Vickie Henderson

Ruby-throat feeding on pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*)

Even a small, sunny apartment balcony or porch has enough space for a hummingbird garden. Blanket a railing with cypress vine, cover a trellis with mandevilla, add a few hanging baskets, and put out a large container of lantana. Don't forget the hummingbird feeder.

LATE SUMMER INTO FALL

The greatest numbers of hummingbirds are usually observed in late summer and early fall. They feed heavily and "tank up" in preparation for fall migration, which takes some on a nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico to wintering grounds. Masses of cardinal flowers and butterfly weed are favorite wildflowers for late summer and early fall. Lantana and marigolds also persist during this time as they are drought-tolerant heat-lovers in Tennessee and are growing with a full spread. Choose the brightly colored orange and red varieties to attract the most attention from hummers. In shady moist areas, patches of *Impatiens capensis*, (orange Jewelweed) a native wildflower, have been known to attract hummers in droves.

photo: Marcia Davis

Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*)

Salvias are a must for any hummingbird garden. *Salvia coccinea* has several cultivars including hummingbird favorites 'Coral Nymph' and 'Lady in Red.' Plant it in spring from a potted plant and enjoy the blooms throughout summer and even into fall, if deadheaded. Autumn sage and pineapple sage, with their scented leaves, bloom in spring as well as into fall. Mexican bush sage, with its very unusual purple velvety spikes, is another late bloomer. Anise sage is another fall-flowering favorite.

photo: Marcia Davis

Anise sage (*Salvia guaranitica*)

WINTER HUMMINGBIRDS

Most ruby-throated hummingbirds leave Tennessee by late October, but every fall a few rufous hummingbirds arrive in Tennessee and spend part or all of the winter here. Late-blooming salvias and other flowers provide nectar for these hummers until the first killing frost; then hummingbird feeders and insects will support the birds until they depart.

Hummingbird Feeders

While nectar-rich flowers that also attract insects are a preferred food source for hummingbirds, hummingbird feeders have their role in the garden. A hummingbird feeder filled with a solution of sugar and water is a substitute for nectar from flowers when flowers are scarce or food competition is high. By supplementing a hummer's natural diet of nectar and insects, properly maintained feeders help hummers meet their very high energy requirements, especially during peak migration periods.

The standard recipe for hummingbird feeders mimics the preferred range of nectar solution found in favorite hummingbird flowers (between 20 and 30 percent). This sugar-water solution is made of 1 cup white cane sugar dissolved in 4 cups of water. Use room temperature water and stir well. Heating or boiling the water is not necessary. Using red dye might attract the birds but

is not necessary and may even be harmful. Store extra sugar-water in the refrigerator, but always let it reach room temperature before serving it to hummers.

Hummingbird feeders require maintenance. When temperatures exceed 90 degrees, the solution must be changed every two days. Higher temperatures encourage spoilage and growth of black mold that may sicken birds, so do not offer more than will be eaten in a few days. Place feeders in the shade of trees and under eaves. Remember to rinse feeders in plain water and clean as necessary every time you change the nectar.

Photo: Billie Cantwell

Choose easy-to-clean feeders that discourage bees from reaching sugar-water.

Most problems with hummingbird feeders are easy to prevent if you take care not to allow any nectar to get on the outside of the feeder, which can attract unwanted insects. Prior to purchase, be sure to investigate which feeders do not leak and buy feeders that are easy to take apart and clean. After filling or after strong winds that may cause feeders to swing and slosh, wipe feeders with a wet paper towel. You also can choose feeders that do not have yellow flowers, a favorite color for bees. Ant guards filled with water or feeders with built-in ant moats solve ant problems as long as feeders are not in direct contact with plants. Consult your local bird supply store to find a suitable feeder for hummers.

Water, Perches, Shelter and Safety in the Garden

In addition to flowers, insects and a hummingbird feeder, hummers will look for a few other things in your yard. All birds need water and hummers are no exception. Hummingbirds get most drinking water from nectar, but they also need water to bathe. Hummers bathe in very shallow water, about 1/4-inch deep, in small birdbaths and shallow pans. They also bathe by flying back and forth through a very fine spray produced by a mister or garden hose. After a rain, they like to leaf bathe by squirming around in small pools of water remaining on the surfaces of large leaves. For this reason, incorporate plants with large broad leaves shaped to hold a little water. Make sure you wet the leaves with a hose during dry spells.

Because their feet are so tiny, hummers require plants with small branches for perching while they rest and scan for small insects. Branches about the thickness of an old-fashioned wire coat hanger are ideal. Shrubs with many thin branches, such as forsythia and butterfly bush, and trees with many tiny bare twigs are used as perch sites. Hummers often have a favorite perch they use repeatedly.

Evergreen trees and shrubs provide hummingbirds with shelter from wind and rain, roosting sites, and protection from predators. Good cover is a basic requirement for all birds. When creating a landscape, include evergreens to enhance habitat for ruby-throats.

Reducing hazards in your yard also can help protect hummingbirds. Outdoor domestic cats and some dogs may kill low-flying hummingbirds. If you have outdoor cats, you can plant hummingbird plants in hanging baskets instead of planting them in the ground to protect the hummers while they feed.

Hummers and other birds mistake landscapes reflected in windows for the real world. They may fly to reflections of plants, hit the glass, and suffer injuries or die. For this reason, do not place hanging baskets and containers planted with hummingbird flowers in locations where they create reflections in windows.

If you provide a good combination of their basic requirements, hummers will likely remember the location of your home and return the following year. Be sure to include some of Tennessee's native, nectar-rich, perennial wildflowers and shrubs, especially plants with many small flowers. Providing these kinds of flowers in your landscape will provide food for many years and encourage hummingbirds to visit your garden each season.

References

Articles

Garrison, J. S. E. & Gass, C. L. (1998). Response of a traplining hummingbird to changes in nectar availability. Behavioral Ecology (pp. 714-725).

Heyneman, A. J. (1983). Optimal sugar concentrations of floral nectars. Dependence on sugar intake efficiency and foraging costs. Oecologia (pp. 198-213).

Miller, R. S. & Miller, R. E. (1971). Feeding activity and color preference of ruby-throated hummingbirds. The Condor (pp. 309-313).

Roth, S. (2008, September/October). Hummingbird favorites. Fine Gardening (pp. 44-48).

Internet Website Resources

American Bird Conservancy
http://www.abcbirds.org
Cats indoors, pesticides, herbicides

Fine Gardening
http://www.finegardening.com
Plant database

Hummer/Bird Study Group
http://www.hummingbirdsplus.org
Hummingbirds, winter hummingbird banding

Hummingbirds.net
http://www.hummingbirds.net
Hummingbirds, migration maps, species profiles, frequently asked questions

Hummingbird Society
http://www.hummingbirdsociety.org
Dedicated to international understanding and conservation of hummingbirds

Lady Bird Johnson Center
http://www.wildflower.org
Promotes cultivation and conservation of native plants, provides publications, information on sources of wildflower seeds and nursery stock.

Missouri Botanical Garden
http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org
Plant database

USDA PLANTS Database
plants.usda.gov/java/

Books

Barnes, Thomas G. (1999). Gardening for the Birds. University Press of Kentucky.

Carman, Jack B. (2001). Wildflowers of Tennessee. Highland Rim Press.

Day, Susan, & Rovansek, Ron, & Griggs, Jack (2003). The Wildlife Gardener's Guide to Hummingbirds and Songbirds from the Tropics: A Cornell Bird Library Guide. HarperCollins Publishers.

Hunter, Margie (2002). Gardening with the Native Plants of Tennessee: The Spirit of Place. University of Tennessee Press.

Newfield, Nancy L., & Nielsen, Barbara (1996). Hummingbird Gardens: Attracting Nature's Jewels to Your Backyard. Houghton Mifflin.

Nicholson, Charles P. (1997). Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Tennessee. University of Tennessee Press.

Sargent, Robert (1999). Wild Bird Guides: Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Stackpole Books.

Stokes, Donald, & Stokes, Lillian (1989). The Hummingbird Book: The Complete Guide to Attracting, Identifying, and Enjoying Hummingbirds. Little, Brown and Company.

Williamson, Sheri L. (2000). Attracting and Feeding Hummingbirds. T. F. H. Publications.

Williamson, Sheri L. (2001). Hummingbirds of North America. Peterson Field Guides. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Hummingbird Plant List For Tennessee

About the Plant List

Readers of the Knoxville News Sentinel's Birdlife column, birdwatchers, members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society across the state, and gardeners were asked to share information about favorite hummingbird plants that grow in Tennessee. The Tennessee hummingbird plant list was compiled by Meredith Clebsch, Marcia Davis, Emily Gonzalez and Terumi Saito Watson and was edited by Emily Gonzalez and Carol Reese, Ph.D. While these plant lists are not exhaustive, they do contain many of the favorite plants visited by the ruby-throated hummingbird in Tennessee that are available to the home gardener (See Appendix A and B). We listed colors that are commonly available; however, depending on the species other colors may be available as well. Some of the genera listed contain multiple species that would be visited by hummingbirds and do well in our area; in that case we listed the genus name followed by species (spp). We also recognized that many wildlife gardeners try to create what they consider "native habitat," so we also listed specific native species that we would recommend. As proper soil is the foundation for healthy plants, we took extra effort to list conditions that would be favored by each species rather than just tolerated, although many of these plants will grow in a variety of conditions. We referenced the USDA PLANTS database in an attempt to use the "standard" nomenclature for these plants.

Appendix A. Favorite Flowering Plants for Hummingbirds in Tennessee

A=Annual
P=Perennial
SP = Spring
S = Summer
F = Fall
Lav = Lavender
PP = Purple
R = Red
P = Pink
W = White
Y=Yellow
O=Orange
Separate flower colors are indicated by (,)
Aggregate colors are indicated by (/)
◯ = Full Sun
◑ = Part Sun
● = Shade

Plant	Common Name	Color(s)	Season	Habit	Native	A/P	Light	Preferred Soil Conditions
Aesculus pavia	Red buckeye	R	SP	Tree	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained fertile soil
***Agastache* 'Desert Sunrise'**	Hummingbird mint	P,R,O	S	Forb	No	P	◯	dry to moist, fertile, well-drained soil
Antirrhinum majus	Snapdragon	R,P,PP,O	S	Forb	No	P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Aquilegia canadensis	Wild columbine	R,P,Y	SP	Forb	Yes	P	◑	moist, well-drained loam
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly weed	O	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯	dry to moist, poor to average, well-drained soil
Bignonia capreolata	Crossvine	R,Y,O	SP	Vine	Yes	P	◯ ◑ ●	moist, well-drained soil
Buddleia davidii	Butterfly bush	O,PP,W, Y	S	Shrub	No	P	◯	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Calibrachoa 'Million Bells'	'Million Bells'	P, Y, PP, W,O, R	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯	moist, well-drained soil
Campanula persicafolia	Peachleaf bellflower	B	S	Forb	No	P	◑	moist, well-drained soil
Campsis radicans	Trumpet creeper	R,O	S	Vine	Yes	P	◯ ◑	poor to average, dry to moist soil
Canna generalis	Canna lily	R,O,Y	SP,S	Forb	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
Chaenomeles spp.	Flowering quince	R,P,W	SP	Shrub	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Cleome hassleriana	Spider flower	P,PP,W	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Cuphea ignea	Firecracker plant	R	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Epilobium angustifolium	Fireweed	P	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
***Fuchsia* spp**	Fuchsia	P/PP, R/PP	S	Forb	No	A	◑	moist, well-drained fertile loam
Gelsemium sempervirens	Carolina jessamine	Y	SP	Vine	Yes	P	◯ ◑ ●	moist, well-drained loam
Glandularia canadensis	Verbena, rose mock vervain	PP,P	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Hemerocallis fulva	Daylily	R,O,Y	S	Forb	No	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Heuchera sanguinea	Coralbells	R	SP	Forb	No	P	◑ ●	moist, well-drained loam
***Hibiscus* spp**	Hibiscus (hardy)	R,P,PP,Y,W	S	Shrub	No	P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Hibiscus syriacus	Rose of Sharon	R,P,W,PP	S	Shrub	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
***Hosta* spp**	Hosta	W,Lav	S	Forb	No	P	◑ ●	moist, well-drained loam
Impatiens capensis	Jewelweed	O,Y	S,F	Forb	Yes	A	◑ ●	moist to wet, clay or loam
Ipomoea quamoclit	Cypress vine	R	S,F	Vine	No	A	◯ ◑ ●	moist, well-drained soil
Ipomoea x multifida	Cardinal climber	R	S,F	Vine	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Kniphofia uvaria	Red-hot poker	R,O	SP	Forb	No	P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Lantana spp	Lantana	R,O,P,Y	SP,S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Lilium superbum	Turk's-cap lily	O	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist to wet, well-drained loam
Lobelia cardinalis	Cardinal flower	R	S,F	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist to wet, well-drained loam
Lobelia siphilitica	Great blue lobelia	B	S	Forb	Yes	P	◑	moist to wet, well-drained loam
Lonicera sempervirens	Trumpet honeysuckle	R	SP,S,F	Vine	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
Mandevilla	Mandevilla	P	S,F	Vine	No	A/P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Monarda didyma	Bee balm	R	S,F	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist to wet loam

Appendix A. Favorite Flowering Plants for Hummingbirds in Tennessee (continued)

A=Annual SP = Spring Lav = Lavender P = Pink Y=Yellow Separate flower colors are indicated by (,) ◯ = Full Sun

P=Perennial S = Summer PP = Purple W = White O=Orange Aggregate colors are indicated by (/) ◑ = Part Sun

F = Fall R = Red ● = Shade

Plant	Common Name	Color(s)	Season	Habit	Native	A/P	Light	Preferred Soil Conditions
Monarda fistulosa	Wild bergamot	P,Lav	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Nicotiana alata	Flowering tobacco	R,P,W	S	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
Pelargonium	Geranium	R,O,P,PP	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Penstemon smallii	Small's beardtongue	PP	SP	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained loam
Pentas lanceolata **'New Look Red'**	Egyptian star clusters	R	SP,S	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
Petunia	Petunia	R,P,PP,W	SP,S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Phaseolus coccineus	Scarlet runner bean	R	S	Vine	No	A	◯	moist, well-drained soil
Phlox divaricata	Wild blue phlox	B,Lav	SP	Forb	Yes	P	◑ ●	moist, well-drained loam
Phlox paniculata	Summer phlox	R,P,W,PP	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained fertile soil
Physostegia virginiana	Obedient plant	P,W	S,F	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Platycodon grandiflorum	Balloon flower	PP	S	Forb	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Rhododendron calendulaceum	Flame azalea (east TN)	O,Y,R	SP	Shrub	Yes	P	◑	moist, acidic, well-drained loam
Rhododendron canescens	Mountain azalea (east TN)	P,W	SP	Shrub	Yes	P	◑	moist, acidic, well-drained loam
Rhododendron catawbiense	Catawba rhododendron (east TN)	PP	SP	Shrub	Yes	P	◑	moist, acidic, well-drained loam
Rhododendron **spp**	Rhododendron (east TN)		SP	Shrub		P	◑	moist, acidic, well-drained loam
Ribes odoratum	Golden currant	Y	SP	Shrub	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained loam
Salvia greggii	Autumn sage	PP,P	S,F	Forb	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Salvia coccinea	Blood sage, Texas sage	R	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Salvia elegans	Pineapple sage	R	F	Forb	No	A/P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Salvia farinacea	Mealy-cup sage	B,PP	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Salvia guaranitica	Anise sage	B	S,F	Forb	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Salvia leucantha	Mexican bush sage	PP,W	S,F	Forb	No	P	◯	moist, well-drained soil
Salvia splendens	Scarlet sage	R	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, well-drained soil
Silene caroliniana	Sticky catchfly, Carolina pinks	P	SP	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Silene regia	Royal catchfly	R	S	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Silene virginica	Fire pink	R	SP	Forb	Yes	P	◯ ◑	dry to moist, well-drained clay soil
Spigelia marilandica	Indian pink	R,Y	SP,S	Forb	Yes	P	◑ ●	moist, well-drained loam
Tithonia rotundifolia	Mexican sunflower	O	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯	dry to moist, well-drained soil
Tropaeolum majus	Nasturtium	O,Y,R	S,F	Forb	No	A	◯ ◑	moist, poor to average, well-drained soil
Vitex agnus-castus	Lilac chaste tree, chaste tree	Lav	S	Tree	No	P	◯	moist, well-drained loam
Weigela **spp**	Weigela	R,P	SP,S	Shrub	No	P	◯ ◑	moist, fertile, well-drained soil
Wisteria frutescens	American wisteria	Lav	SP	Vine	Yes	P	◯	moist, slightly acidic, well-drained loam

Appendix B. Additional Native Flowering Plants for Hummingbirds in Tennessee

Plant	Common Name	Habit
Agastache nepetoides	Yellow giant hyssop	Forb
Agastache scrophulariifolia	Purple giant hyssop	Forb
Castilleja coccinea	Scarlet Indian paintbrush	Forb
Ceanothus americanus	New Jersey tea	Shrub
Cercis canadensis	Eastern redbud	Tree
Chelone glabra	White turtlehead	Forb
Chelone lyonii	Pink turtlehead	Forb
Chelone obliqua	Red turtlehead	Forb
Crataegus mollis	Downy hawthorn	Tree
Crataegus phaenopyrum	Washington hawthorn	Tree
Delphinium carolinianum	Carolina larkspur	Forb
Dicentra canadensis	Squirrel corn	Forb
Dicentra cucullaria	Dutchman's breeches	Forb
Dicentra eximia	Turkey corn, wild bleeding heart	Forb
Eupatorium maculatum	Joe Pye weed	Forb
Heuchera villosa	Hairy alumroot	Forb
Hibiscus laevis	Halberd leaf rosemallow	Forb
Hibiscus moscheutos	Crimsoneyed rosemallow	Forb
Iris cristata	Dwarf crested iris	Forb
Iris fulva	Copper iris	Forb
Iris versicolor	Harlequin blueflag	Forb
Iris virginica	Virginia iris	Forb
Kalmia latifolia (east TN)	Mountain laurel	Shrub
Liatris spicata	Dense blazing star	Forb
Liatris pycnocostachya	Prairie blazing star	Forb
Liatrus aspera	Tall blazing star	Forb
Lilium canadense	Canada lily	Forb
Lilium philadelphicum	Wood lily	Forb
Liriodendron tulipfera	Tuliptree, yellow-poplar	Tree
Mertensia virginica	Virginia bluebells	Forb
Monarda media	Purple bergamot	Forb
Mondarda punctata	Spotted bee balm	Forb
Oxydendrum arboreum	Sourwood	Tree
Penstemon canescens	Eastern gray beardtongue	Forb
Phlox drummondii	Annual phlox	Forb
Phlox glaberrima	Smooth phlox	Forb
Phlox maculata	Wild sweetwilliam	Forb
Polygonatum biflorum	Smooth Solomon's seal	Forb
Rhododendron periclymenoides	Pink azalea (east TN)	Shrub
Robinia pseudoacacia	Black locust	Tree
Salix nigra	Black willow	Tree
Salvia urticifolis	Nettleleaf sage	Forb
Silene rotundifolia	Roundleaf catchfly	Forb
Tilia americana	American basswood	Tree
Verbena hastata	Swamp verbena	Forb
Vernonio noveboracensis	New York ironweed	Forb

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE
INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

ag.tennessee.edu

W 304 02/14 14-0081