

# ATTRACTING HUMMINGBIRDS TO YOUR BACKYARD



Male Rufous - P. Coxon

There are two species of hummingbirds on Vancouver Island: **Anna's** and **Rufous**. To attract these living jewels, add a hummingbird feeder or plant native plants like red flowering currant, red hot poker, and crocosmia to your yard.

Hummingbirds use nectar from flowers and feeders for energy and carbohydrates, and get their necessary nutrients from tree sap, soft bodied insects, larvae, spiders, and small flying insects. Set out some ripe fruit and watch the hummingbirds feed

off the fruit flies it attracts.

## SUGAR WATER RECIPE

### **1 PART WHITE TABLE SUGAR TO 3 OR 4 PARTS WATER**

When preparing the sugar water, bring the water to a boil before turning the heat off and adding the sugar. Do not keep boiling the water as the sugar will dissolve. Let the nectar cool before filling feeders, and store the leftover nectar in your fridge for up to two weeks.

**DO NOT** use red food colouring, molasses, honey, brown sugar, or any sugar or additives that colour the solution. They contain enzymes that can be harmful. It is necessary to clean the feeder and change the solution every **5 or 7 days** during cooler weather (under 20°C) and every **2-3 days** during 20°+ weather.

If you are using a heater to keep the nectar from freezing, make sure to change it every **3 days** as the heat causes it to ferment faster. The sugar water will ferment and grow mold if left in the feeder for longer periods of time, so make sure to clean it often. Clean using a **1 to 9 ratio of bleach solution or 1 to 2 industrial white vinegar** then rinse with water. Avoid soaps that can leave residue behind.

## The Backyard Wildbird & Nature Store

6314 Metral Drive, Nanaimo BC

250-390-3669 | Toll Free 1-888-808-BIRD[2473]

thebackyard@shaw.ca

thebackyard.ca | thebirdstore.blogspot.com

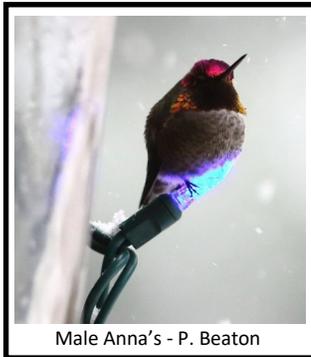


## RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD

Rufous hummingbirds are commonly seen during the spring and summer on Vancouver Island. They arrive in March from Central Mexico, and after nesting the males begin to leave in July with the females and juveniles leaving shortly after to begin their journey back. Identify these birds by the male's rufous (reddish-brown) body with a white patch on the chest, just under the 'gorget' (their brilliant red throat, flashed to attract mates or show aggression). The female is green with a white or silver-gray underside, brilliant red throat patch (underside only), and rufous colouring in the under wing and tail base. The female's tail is round, with white spots and some rufous colouring. Immature Rufous look like the female and can be distinguished by their uncertain, curious behavior and lack of red throat patch.



## ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD



Anna's hummingbirds are a non-migratory species that are seen year-round on Vancouver Island. As the Anna's population expanded, they moved north along the coast from Southern California until arriving on Vancouver Island in the early 70s.

The males have a rose-red crown and gorget, green back, and white underside. The females are green on the back and head with a white under-side and a small red marking at their throat. The Anna's were first spotted in the 1970s in the Stephenson Point area.

Anna's hummingbirds are now frequent visitors to feeders in Nanaimo and all over Vancouver Island and nest year-round during favourable weather.

