

Landscaping Tip: Gardening to Attract Hummingbirds



Instead of making the winter trip to Mexico, the ruby-throated hummingbird (pictured here) often stays in South Florida and can be spotted year round. To successfully attract hummingbirds to your yard, you must garden for them.

Hummingbirds are about three inches in size, weigh as little as a penny and feed every 10 to 15 minutes from dawn to dusk. Nesting hummingbirds need nectar from March through September. Providing more than one flower garden will allow several territorial hummingbirds to feed simultaneously.

The following are some trees, shrubs, perennials and vines that grow in South Florida and provide food for hummingbirds. All these plants have red, orange or pink tubular flowers that grow singularly or in drooping clusters. These flowers hold large amounts of nectar. One hummingbird may need nectar from hundreds of blossoms every day to maintain its body weight.

Geiger tree



bottlebrush tree



shrimp plant (Justicia spp.)



firebush (*Hamelia patens*)



firespike (*Odontonema stricta*)



Some other plants that attract hummingbirds are coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), tropical sage (*Salvia coccinea*) and coral bean (*Erythrina herbacea*).

You can see some of these plants at Mounts Botanical Garden, 531 North Military Trail, West Palm Beach. The garden is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.