



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 08/21/09

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Hummingbirds Prepare to Head South in Late Summer

Carmel Indiana – They may be the [world's smallest birds](#), but beginning in August, millions of hummingbirds will be making a big trip to Mexico and Central America. This annual journey is part of an instinctive migration pattern that they have followed for hundreds of years. For many, this trip includes a trans-gulf, non-stop flight that takes approximately 18 – 22 hours and covers 500 to 600 miles.

Bird enthusiasts can expect to see waves of hummingbirds visiting their feeders during this time. At the peak of migration, bird banding studies indicate that, with very few exceptions, the hummingbirds that visit feeders on any given late-summer day are completely replaced by new migrants within 24 hours.

To estimate the number of hummingbirds using your feeders, multiply times five. For example, if you see 10 individual hummingbirds at your feeder at one time, you have about 50 passing through your yard that day.

Hummingbirds feed on flower nectar, insects and sugar-water solution placed in specially designed feeders. Despite popular belief, hummingbirds do not suck up nectar with their bills. They actually lap it up with their tongues, drawing nectar from its source up and into their mouths almost 12 times a second. You can watch this remarkable tongue in action with a Wild Birds Unlimited [window hummingbird feeder](#). These feeders feature a transparent bottom that allows you to see a hummingbird's long tongue and rapid lapping action.

A high-calorie diet is important to sustain these very active birds and to build fat reserve for their migratory trip. Hummingbirds possess the fastest metabolism of any warm-blooded animal on the planet, consuming up to twice their body weight in nectar every day.

The color red is a visual cue that lets hummingbirds know food is available. The bird feeding specialists at Wild Birds Unlimited recommend not adding red food coloring to nectar. Instead, pour the clear nectar into a red-colored feeder to attract these amazing birds.

Wild Birds Unlimited is part of the original and largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding and nature specialty stores with more than 275 locations throughout the United States and Canada. Wild Birds Unlimited specializes in bringing people and nature together with bird feeding and nature products, expert advice and educational events. Visit the Web site, and shop online at www.wbu.com.

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