

## Hummingbird Profile

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Hummingbirds are the world's smallest birds, averaging 3-1/2" from head to tail. They have beautiful, shiny plumage and incredible flying abilities. New England Colonists gave them their name after the sound of their flight.

Hummingbirds beat their wings 60-80 times per second during flight. They must consume about 2/3 of their body weight each day to keep their busy pace. Hummingbirds are found only in the Western Hemisphere. They make up the second largest family of birds.



### Interesting Facts:

- Location:** Most hummingbirds live in the tropics of Central and South America; 16 different species exist in North America.
- Migration:** In winter, most hummingbirds leave, migrating to warmer lands with flowers and insects.
- Nesting:** The average hummingbird nest is 1-1/2" round. It is lined with plant fibers and held together with spider webs. Eggs are 1/2" long, and they hatch in 15-22 days. Young birds start leaving the nest around 3 to 4 weeks of age.
- Diet:** Hummingbirds eat nectar from flowers or the sugar-water from the feeders we set out for them. They also eat insects for the protein. They catch insects in mid-air while flying.

**Size:** Hummingbirds range from 2-1/2" to 8-1/2". The smallest is the Cuban Bee Hummingbird. This little bird is only 2-1/2" long. The largest hummer is the Giant Hummingbird, measuring 8-1/2" long.

**Special Characteristics:** Hummingbirds can fly right, left, up, down, backwards, and even upside down. While other birds get their flight power from the downstroke of their wings only, hummingbirds have strength on the up-stroke, as well. Hummingbirds fly so much that their feet are poorly developed. They can barely walk at all.

**Attract Them:** You can attract hummingbirds to your yard by planting red flowers and putting up a hummingbird feeder. Tie some red ribbons to the pole where the feeder hangs; this will catch their eye. Hummingbirds also love a feather mister or birdbath.

**Life Span:** 5 to 6 years.