



**CREATE A
 HUMMINGBIRD AND
 BUTTERFLY HABITAT IN THE
 DESERT SOUTHWEST**



Precautions



Pesticides kill caterpillars, destroying our next generation of butterflies. Hummingbirds eat small insects that are contaminated with pesticides.

Resource References

C. Shackelford, M. Lindsay & C. Klym, Hummingbirds of Texas, Texas A&M University Press, 2009

R. Warner, Butterflies of West Texas Parks and Preserves, Texas Tech University Press, 2002

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/> and search for hummingbirds

National Wildlife Federation, <http://www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife/create.cfm>

Checklist of the Chihuahuan Desert Butterflies of the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez Region, <http://museum.utep.edu/chih/chklist/butterfly/butterfly.htm>



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Hummingbirds in El Paso

Commonly Reported
 Black-chinned Hummingbird
 Rufous Hummingbird
 Anna's Hummingbird
 Calliope Hummingbird
 Broad-tailed Hummingbird

Occasionally Reported
 Blue-throated Hummingbird
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
 Violet-crowned Hummingbird
 White-eared Hummingbird
 Broad-billed Hummingbird
 Magnificent Hummingbird
 Lucifer Hummingbird

Most Common Butterfly Families in West Texas

- Swallowtails
- Whites
- Sulphurs
- Hairstreaks
- Blues
- Metalmarks
- Snouts
- Fritillaries
- True Brushfoots
- Admirals and Relatives
- Leafwings
- Emperors
- Satyr
- Monarchs
- Skippers

Each family has many species. Over 80 distinct species have been seen frequently in El Paso.

Contact the El Paso County Master Gardeners at **915-566-1276** or **elpasomg@ag.tamu.edu** for native plants that attract hummers and butterflies and detailed information on our local butterfly and hummingbird species.

CREATE AN URBAN HABITAT

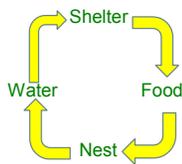
Why Create a Hummingbird/ Butterfly Habitat?

- It provides safe habitats to preserve species threatened by habitat destruction.
- It is environmentally sound and brings plants and wildlife back to urban areas.
- It encourages use of native plants.
- KIDS LOVE THEM!

Why a Garden?

- Feeders alone do not provide the complete needs of the birds or butterflies.
- Gardens are more likely to result in a diverse population of birds and butterflies with greater density.
- Gardens provide resources for other wildlife species as well.
- Gardens provide an aesthetic and recreational opportunity for us.

Habitat Needs.



Location.

“But what if I live in an apartment?” Habitats can be as modest as potted plants on a patio or balcony (with supplemental feeders) or can occupy several acres. Habitats should be sheltered from high winds, provide both shade and sun and an open space to fly! Provide nectar-producing plants and a water source. Include insect-attracting plants, as Hummers eat small bugs and beetles.

Attracting Hummingbirds Requires. . .

- Unobstructed area to fly freely.
- Islands of blooming shrubs – approach from several sides as hummingbirds are territorial.
- Masses of red tubular flowers on outside edges of yard to lure them in —hummingbirds love red.
- Select plants that bloom when birds are migrating or nesting in area (4 seasons of color).

Hummingbirds. . .

- Perch on leafless twigs.
- Nest in open areas.
- Bathe in dew drops and fine mists.
- Don't drink from ground level water sources.



*Hummingbirds are attracted to color, not scent. Choose **nectar-producing plants** that have trumpet-shaped blooms, usually oriented horizontally or downward. Red, orange and yellow are favorite colors.*

Elements of Habitat Construction— Think Vertically!

Hummers nest and rest in shade. They feed and cavort in the sun. The ideal habitat will include mature trees for shade and shelter, with shrubs underneath for perching, for food and, in some cases, nesting. **Providing a source of water for bathing and drinking is crucial.** Water can be provided with a lawn mister, a dripper on a bird bath or using a lawn sprinkler.

Plant Selection Tips.

- Think native.
- Remember plant needs: sun/shade, water and plan for mature size.
- Plant mid to late fall or early winter.

Attracting Butterflies Requires. . .

- Open spaces for fluttering.
- Protection from high winds.
- Full sun.
- Access to water.

Butterflies. . .

- Have a finely-tuned, highly-sensitive sense of smell.
- Caterpillars of individual species are attracted to specific host plants to feed on.
- Are attracted to masses of color; favorites are pink, purple, yellow and orange.

Butterflies are attracted to scent flowers more than color. They need landing fields to perch and bask. Choose large, flat-headed flowers.



Don't Forget the Nursery. . .

Include predator-free areas for butterflies to pupate and host plants for caterpillars to feed on.

