



Olivia Adams

SPRING IS SPRUNG...

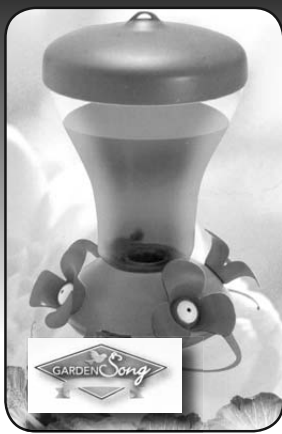
"Spring is sprung, the grass is riz, I wonder where the birdies is?"

The "birdies" I'm thinking about in this case are hummingbirds. The small birds that flit to and fro fascinate people, hovering in the garden or at a feeder. Now is the time when we can finally bring out our feeders, or, depending on your preference and space available, design the perfect little haven that will attract hummingbirds to your home.

Hummingbird feeders are a good attraction, but they are not a natural food source. A hummingbird relies on the nectar of flowers primarily. If you wish to provide a haven, you must consider the bird's appetite and behavior. A hummingbird has a high metabolism and so must feed every 10-15 minutes. They can't smell, so they depend on their eyesight and memory, which explains why they seem to be drawn most to bright colors of red, orange, and purple. Armed with these facts, you can tackle the question of what to plant and where to plant it. A few examples of plants that draw hummingbirds are azaleas, weigela, lupines, lilies, delphiniums, columbine, and bee balm. The key is to offer a variety of plants ranging in different heights and sizes. When you plant a garden like this, you provide the birds with an unobstructed view of all the plants that are available to linger over. It is also a good idea to have plants that bloom at all different times of the season so that there is an abundance of food. Your garden will be bursting with color the entire season through, so the birds won't be the only ones enjoying it. Another benefit to growing plants that attract the birds is that a hummingbird eats insects and spiders as a source of protein. Now don't feel that the whole yard has to be full of plants that attract hummingbirds. Just choose an area where you can enjoy and admire the little birds.

So if you're an avid photographer, draw sketches, or just want to sit and watch the hummingbird, start planting and hanging your feeder!

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