

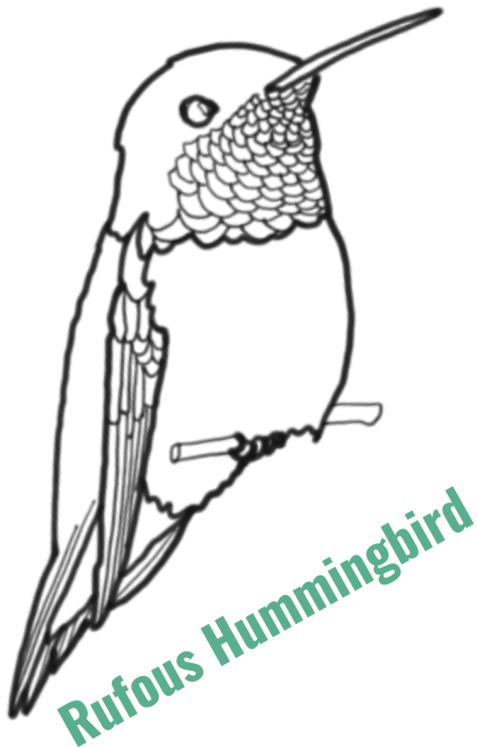
# Seasonal Visitors: Hummingbirds in B.C.



**Suggested age range:** Grades 3-8

**Materials required:** 1 glass 'Kikkoman' soy sauce bottle, 1 metal clothes hanger, pliers, string or fishing line, water, sugar, stove.

**Initial time required:** 45 minutes



Hummingbirds are a fascinating, energetic bird. They are an important pollinator, helping to transfer pollen that gets on their upper body as they move between flowers. Unfortunately they are threatened by habitat loss and climate change. Many of the native plant species that hummingbird species rely on to survive are threatened by invasive species, pesticides and changing bloom times due to changing temperatures.

Hummingbirds migrate from B.C. all the way to Mexico every year around September! They return to B.C. again in late May, searching for food after their long journey. The most common species of hummingbird in B.C. is the Rufous. The Calliope hummingbird is common in the southern interior in the summer. The Anna's hummingbird can be seen on the southern coast.

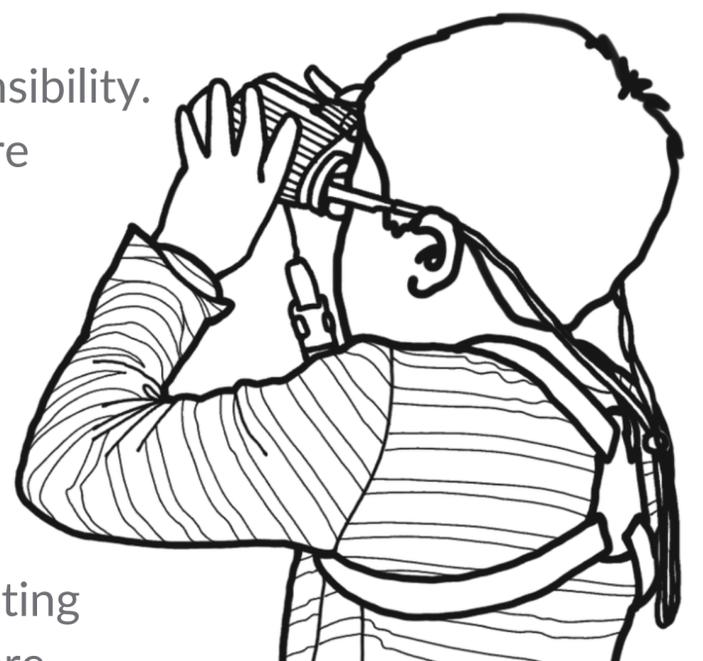
Like all of us, hummingbirds need food, water, shelter and space to breed and to survive. Building a hummingbird feeder by reusing materials you might normally throw in the trash or recycling bin is a great way to help support hummingbird populations.

## Fun Fact

Hummingbirds flap their wings so quickly (20-80 times per second) that they can hover in mid-air AND fly backwards!

However, building and putting up a feeder come with responsibility. You need to regularly clean and maintain the feeder to ensure you do not harm hummingbirds (see page 3 for details). If you commit to winter feeding, you must commit fully as the few hummingbirds that stay in warmer regions of B.C. during the winter may come to rely on this food source and will suffer if it is interrupted.

To attract hummingbirds and other pollinators, consider planting bright flowers. Always do research to find out which plants are native to your area and are not considered invasive species. Hummingbirds also eat small insects such as mosquitoes, gnats and fruit flies as a protein source. Avoid using pesticides on any plants at your home so they don't end up in the insects that hummingbirds eat.





# Make Your Own: HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER



## Supplies needed:

- One glass 'Kikkoman' brand soy sauce bottle with dual-opening lid
- Stiff wire from one metal clothes hanger for making hanger for feeder
- Metal-cutter pliers for cutting stiff wire
- String or clear fishing line to hang the feeder (fishing line helps keep ants away)
- A device with internet access to watch an instructional video



Note: We recommend the glass 'Kikkoman' brand bottle for a few reasons and not because we have any affiliation with the company: 1) It is made of glass which is less likely to develop bacteria growth that could harm hummingbirds. 2) The easy screw-on lid already has two small openings that are accessible for hummingbirds and can be easily cleaned with a small brush to avoid potential bacteria growth. 3) Hummingbirds are attracted to the colour red of the lid.

## Instructions:

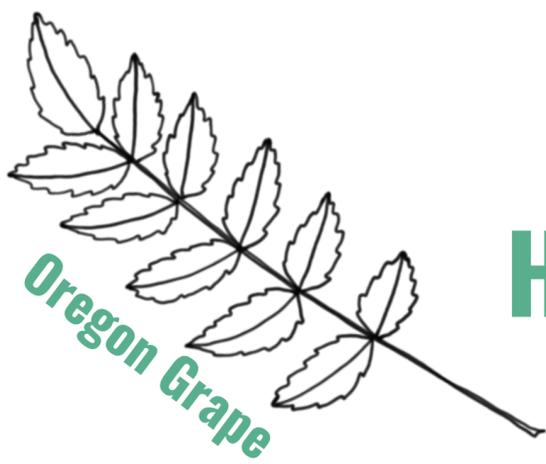
1. Gather all the materials you need for your feeder. If you do not have a 'Kikkoman' brand soy sauce bottle, ask friends, family or neighbours if they do and if they can kindly save the bottle for you.
2. Find an adult who can help with cutting stiff wire.
3. Follow this link to a handy video explaining the steps to make your hummingbird feeder: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDTmVcid7Tc>

## Helpful Tip:

When you screw the lid on, make sure that the metal wire that hangs below is near one of the two lid openings, so that it provides a perch for feeding birds.

## Fun Fact

Hummingbirds are especially attracted to red, pink, yellow and orange blooms. They can actually see more colours than humans, colours we can only imagine!



# Make Your Own: HUMMINGBIRD FOOD



## Ingredients:

- **Refined white sugar and water**, with a ratio of 1-part sugar to 4-parts water.
- Never use honey, artificial sweeteners, molasses, brown or raw sugar or corn syrup and do not add red food colouring; these could harm hummingbirds and are not needed to attract them to the feeder.

## Instructions:

1. With the help of an adult, boil the water for 2 minutes and remove from the heat. Boiling the water will kill bacteria that would harm hummingbirds.
2. Add the sugar, and stir it until it dissolves.
3. Let the mixture cool completely.
4. Pour the mixture into your hummingbird feeder. (Pouring hot water into your glass feeder could cause the glass to crack!). Extra sugar water can be stored in a refrigerator for up to 2 weeks (check the liquid for mold before you fill your feeder with it as it would harm hummingbirds).

Once your feeder is full, hang it in a nearby tree, somewhere that's challenging for ants to reach! Thin fishing line for hanging can help to keep ants off your feeder.

If possible, hang your feeder near your Sit Spot to observe birds during your practice! For instructions, visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=o68hF8JdQV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o68hF8JdQV8)

## Remember your responsibility:

Clean your feeder every two days with hot water and a bottle or pipe cleaner (for the holes in the lid). Use a cleaning solution of 1-part vinegar to 4-parts water rather than dish soap and make sure to rinse thoroughly. Fill your feeder with fresh food after cleaning. These actions will help prevent bacteria, fungus or mold growth. It is good to know you are indeed helping the birds and this may help ensure more chances of seeing happy, healthy 'hummers'!