



California Native Plant Society
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California Native Hummingbird Plants

Originally by Ellie Gioumousis, revised 8/18/2019

Hummingbirds seem to favor red flowers, possibly because bees tend to avoid red flowers resulting in more nectar in them. They also prefer flowers with tubular shapes, which are a perfect fit for their long beaks and tongues. Hummingbirds do not rely on nectar alone though; a significant percent of their diet comes from insects and arthropods, so leave the bugs for the birds.

Aquilegia formosa (Western columbine)

Will take sun or shade but takes more water in sun. It blooms in spring with delightful red and yellow hanging flowers.

Arctostaphylos (Manzanita)

Many species; blooms from January to March and is drought tolerant. Part sun to light shade. Berries provide food for other birds.

Chilopsis linearis (Desert-willow)

This small tree grows by washes and oases in the desert so does need some water. It has beautiful rose- lavender flowers and needs heat to bloom.

Cirsium occidentale (California thistle)

This is the cobweb thistle, a native. It has white foliage and a brilliant red flower and is not invasive. It grows in open woodlands in this area. It is an extremely good source of nectar.

Cynoglossum grande (Hound's tongue)

This is a native forget-me-not that is found in open woods and blooms in March. It is fairly drought tolerant when established, going completely dormant in summer.

Delphinium cardinale (Cardinal or Scarlet larkspur)

Beautiful brilliant red flowers on 2' to 5' stalks blooming from May to June. Needs good drainage, partial shade and regular water while growing. Goes dormant in summer.

Diplacus aurantiacus (Sticky monkeyflower)

This 4 foot shrub is covered with orange/yellow flowers in the spring and early summer. Both hummingbirds and butterflies love it.

Epilobium sp. (formerly Zauschneria) (California fuchsia)

Several varieties, but all have bright orange flowers which bloom in late summer and fall and are excellent nectar sources. They are hardy and extremely drought tolerant.

Gambelia (Galvezia) speciosa (Showy island snapdragon)

Bright red snapdragon-like flowers. It is tender to frost but grows back quickly if well-mulched. Produces flowers almost all year. Can be cut back in late February.

Keckiella cordifolia (Heartleaf keckiella, Climbing penstemon)

Native to southern California, this plant works well next to fences or at the base of a tree or next to a large shrub. Bunches of red tubular flowers from May through July.

Lonicera hispidula (California honeysuckle)

This is a vine that is happy both as a ground cover or climbing up a tree or fence.

Lonicera involucrata (Twinberry)

Known as Twinberry because of the flowers and fruit that grow in pairs, this native honeysuckle is easy and quick to grow but prefers some shade and needs regular moisture.

Malva (Lavatera) assurgentiflora (Island mallow)

This Channel Island native will grow 10 feet in one year. It blooms nearly all year with pretty rose- pink flowers that are valuable as a nectar source for hummers.

Monardella macrantha (Hummingbird monardella)

This small perennial has long red tubular flowers from June through October. It grows well in pots and rock gardens.

Penstemon

Like the sages, there are many different species and all like full sun and are drought tolerant. They usually require good drainage.

Ribes sanguineum var. glutinosum (Red-flowering currant)

Many selections with beautiful pink pendulous blossoms in early spring. Light shade to part sun and some water. Berries are attractive to other birds.

Ribes speciosum (Fuchsia-flowered gooseberry)

Bright red fuchsia-like flowers in early spring. Light shade and some water.

Salvia (Sage)

There are many native species that are good sources of nectar. They are drought tolerant and take full sun.

Salvia spathacea (Hummingbird Sage)

This sage deserves a special mention as it's one of the few that likes shade and spreads by rhizomes. It has spectacular tall magenta spikes. An excellent groundcover under oaks.

Silene laciniata (Fringed Indian pink or Catch fly)

This is a pretty little plant that is unfortunately very attractive to snails as well as to hummers. It can be grown in hanging baskets to protect it from the snail's depredations.

Trichostema lanatum (Woolly blue curls)

Striking shrubby blue-flowered perennial native to the southern coastal ranges. It requires good drainage and no summer water. Has a long blooming period.

More information available on calscape.org