

BIRDS & BLOOMS

# Gardening *for* Birds



42  
proven  
plants

Top annuals,  
perennials & shrubs

Bonus!  
*Garden*  
Plans

*Blooms Hummingbirds Love*

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JONATHAN JENKINS

## Want to bring even more birds into your backyard?

Now you can, simply by offering them the plants they love. From ruby-throated hummingbirds sipping nectar from bee balm (above) to cedar waxwings looking for shrubs with berries, it's easy to plan your garden for the birds. Let's get started!



RICHARD DAY/DAYBREAK IMAGERY

# Create a haven for birds

By Anne Pink, St. Paul, Minnesota

It takes more than just feeders to attract birds to your backyard. Putting out the welcome mat for your feathered friends also requires some basic “birdscaping.”

Just what does that mean? Filling your backyard with everything birds need to survive—and that includes more than food and water. You’ll also have to add plants that provide suitable places for nesting and cover from weather and predators.

Combine these ingredients, and you’re on the way to establishing a complete ecosystem for feathered friends.

Even if you’re starting from scratch, the good news is you don’t have to plant an entire meadow or forest, nor does your flower bed or border need to look wild and unkempt. You just have to select the plants

that are most desirable to native songbirds (and it’s a lot easier than you think). Here are some suggestions to get started:

**Evergreens**, primarily conifers, are a key element. They provide dense shelter and well-hidden nesting sites, and the seed-producing cones offer food.

To incorporate conifers into your landscape, anchor them to flower beds, then design around them. Most importantly, consider the size of the plant and the area available. Many evergreens grow more than 60 feet tall and spread 20 or more feet wide. But there are a variety of evergreens suitable for every space and growing condition.

**Deciduous shrubs and trees** (plants that lose their leaves in autumn) are the second-



DEBORAH SMITH



TERRY EVANS

**DOUBLE BEAUTY.** Plant flowers around your birdbath (left) to get even more beauty. Above, a ruby-throated hummingbird stops at a zinnia. Below, cedar waxwings in a birdbath.



CEDAR WAXWINGS, LINDA MOON

most important element in a bird-friendly landscape. If you have limited space, consider small ornamental trees or shrubs.

Many trees and shrubs produce berries for food, as well as flowers in spring and gorgeous colors in fall. Some bird species will use tree crotches, where branches meet, for nesting.

American highbush cranberry, elderberry and American mountain ash will all attract birds, such as gray catbirds, American robins, northern cardinals, cedar waxwings and northern mockingbirds. Summer-fruit producers include cherry, raspberry, serviceberry, grape and plum.

**Ornamental grasses**, native or not, provide both seeds and shelter. They combine beautifully with evergreens and flowers, and come in all sizes, shapes and

colors. Here's another benefit: The only annual maintenance needed is a trim back in spring. Keep in mind, however, that while most grasses form clumps, some seed prolifically and should be avoided or used carefully.

**Perennials** provide nectar and seed sources for backyard birds. Some, like purple coneflowers and black-eyed Susans, supply both. Seeds from plants such as liatris and sunflowers will attract a variety of birds, including finches, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches and buntings.

Thistle plants are also valuable to seed-eaters. American goldfinches even delay their nesting season until the blue-flowering bull thistles go to seed. The birds use the thistledown to build their nests and the seeds to feed young.



**BUFFET LINE.** When you plant flowers that birds love, they can serve themselves, like this downy woodpecker (below). Above, American robins feed their nestlings.



**Annuals** bloom all summer long, and some are top-notch nectar sources for hummingbirds and butterflies, so save some space for them.

Seed producers like sunflowers will attract a variety of birds, including finches, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches and buntings. Even woodpeckers (like the one below left) enjoy them.

Other common and inexpensive plants like zinnias and petunias are also welcome additions to a birdscaped garden.

**Birdbaths** are essential to a bird garden, since avian species need water for drinking and bathing. The sounds of water that moves and splashes in fountains or ponds will draw a lot more birds to your backyard, so keep that in mind. However, a simple shallow dish or birdbath is both inexpensive and effective.

**Birdhouses** and feeders will attract even more birds into your backyard. House wrens are about the only bird that will nest in a swinging birdhouse, so most should be post- or tree-mounted. Feeders should offer a variety of food, including seed, suet and sugar water.

The way you arrange these bird-friendly elements in your yard is entirely up to you. If your yard is small, consider putting lower plants around the foundation, creating a “stadium effect.” Or ask a neighbor to share garden space that straddles the property line.

For larger properties, create clusters that lead the birds to feeders near your house, so you can see the activity from your favorite windows.

As you can see, birdscaping isn't rocket science, but it does take a little research and planning to select trees, shrubs and flowers that serve the birds' needs. Your efforts will be rewarded with plenty of winged activity.

# Great bird Perennials

*These 17 “flowering feeders” will return to bloom in your garden year after year.*



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## Liatris

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Blazing star, gayfeather.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Liatris* species and cultivars.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

**SIZE:** 2 to 5 feet high, 1 to 2 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Pink-purple or white flower heads, produced in dense spikes.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full to partial sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Once established, its tuberous rootstock will anchor it and enable it to survive drought.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Kobold (or Goblin), though no higher than 2 feet tall, has large, deep-purple blooms.



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## Rugosa rose

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Beach rose, Japanese rose and salt-spray rose.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Rosa rugosa*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 2 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring to autumn.

**SIZE:** 3 to 8 feet high, 8 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Cupped and fragrant white, red or pink flowers that appear as singles, doubles or small clusters.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant small bare-root roses while dormant in spring. Add container plants during growing season.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Seek out alba for white flowers blooming from pale-pink buds.



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## Globe thistle

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Echinops ritro*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 10.

**BLOOM TIME:** Midsummer.

**SIZE:** Up to 4 feet tall.

**FLOWER:** These are typically dense plants. They have silvery or bright-blue spherical flower heads up to 1 to 2 inches in diameter, with small, spiny petals.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** These plants enjoy full sun in often poor, sandy soil.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Space 15 to 18 inches apart in well-draining soil.

**PRIZE PICKS** Favorites include Taplow Blue and Veitch's Blue—both have wonderful coloring.



## Amaranth

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Love-lies-bleeding.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Amaranthus caudatus*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 10 and 11; grow as an annual elsewhere.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to early autumn.

**SIZE:** 3 to 5 feet high, 1 to 2½ feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Shades of red, purple and green form 18- to 24-inch cascading “ropes” of tiny flower clusters.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds in spring after the last frost; reseeds.

**PRIZE PICKS:** A named variety called Emerald Tassels is especially desirable for its lime-green blooms.



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## Blanket flower

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Gaillardia.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Gaillardia x grandiflora*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** All summer.

**SIZE:** 2 to 3 feet high, 1 to 2 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Red or yellow with yellow or purple centers.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow perennial types in spring or early summer. Start annual types indoors four to six weeks before planting outdoors. Wait for frost danger to pass before planting outside.

**PRIZE PICKS:** New hybrid Fanfare sports a distinctive ruby center and golden, trumpet-shaped outer florets.



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## Black-eyed Susan

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Rudbeckia*.

**HARDINESS:** Most are Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer through autumn.

**SIZE:** 1 to 6 feet high.

**FLOWER:** Yellow, orange and russet petals with black-brown or green centers.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun; will tolerate light shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds directly in the soil in early spring or fall by scattering them on loosened soil.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Popular perennials include *Rudbeckia hirta* and *Rudbeckia fulgida*; Goldstrum is a classic flower, prized for its beauty and durability.



JIM WIELAND/RDA-MKE



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## Yarrow

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Achillea*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

**SIZE:** 6 to 52 inches high, 12 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Yellow, white, red and pink.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds outdoors in spring or early summer. Divide in spring. Long-lasting when cut or dried.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Moonshine is indispensable for bright, light-yellow flowers. *Achillea filipendulina* is a favorite among gardeners because it's not weedy.

## Coral bells

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Heuchera.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Heuchera*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Varies by cultivar, but most coral bells typically bloom from late spring into early summer.

**SIZE:** 8 inches to 3 feet high, 12 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Bell-like blooms in purple, red, black, silver, amber, orange and bronze.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Partial to full shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant in early spring, choosing a well-draining soil.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Plum Pudding sports both attractive foliage and flowers. Purple Petticoats has ruffled foliage.



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## Lupine

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Lupinus perennis*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 7.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late spring and early summer.

**SIZE:** 3 to 4 feet.

**FLOWER:** The gorgeous plant produces spires of pea-like blooms, clustered together.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** These plants like full sun but will also tolerate some light shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant 2½ feet apart; deadhead flowers to promote continued blooming.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Longtime garden favorite Russell hybrids, Gallery dwarf hybrids.



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## Gazania

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Gazania*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 9 to 11; annual elsewhere.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late spring to fall.

**SIZE:** 3 to 8 inches high, 8 to 10 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Brightly colored, daisylike blooms; bronze, shades of orange, pink, yellow, white red, brown and green.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant in sandy, well-drained soil.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Chansonette Series, Daybreak Red Stripe.

## Phlox

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Garden phlox.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Phlox*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 4 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

**SIZE:** 24 to 36 inches high, 30 to 36 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Pink, white and purple.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Deadhead flowers throughout the growing season to promote continued blooming. With this, you should enjoy blooms all summer long.

**PRIZE PICKS:** David and the Flame Series resist powdery mildew.



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## Lavender

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Lavendula*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 5 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

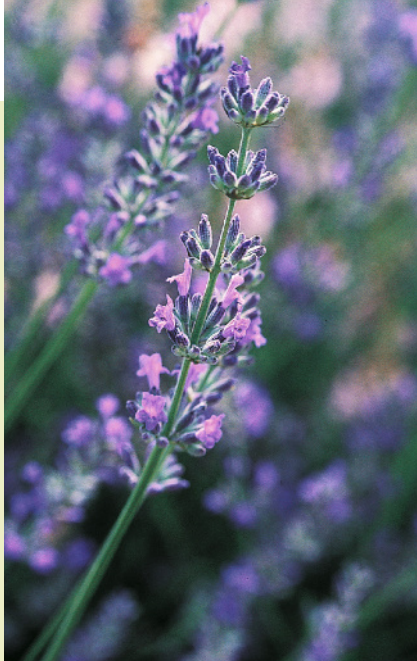
**SIZE:** 24 to 36 inches high, 30 to 36 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Purple, blue.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant in well-drained soil, in spring in northern areas. It's best to plant these in larger groups to showcase their scent.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Hidcote Blue is a favorite among gardeners for its rich color.



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## Autumn Joy sedum

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Sedum* Autumn Joy or *Sedum* Herbstfreude.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late summer until first frost.

**SIZE:** 2 feet high.

**FLOWER:** Star-shaped blooms form clusters that start out pale green then become burgundy.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant 15 inches apart from spring through early fall. Divide in spring.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Closely related Vera Jameson features pink flowers against dusky, purple-tinged foliage—lovely!



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## Penstemon

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Beardtongue.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Penstemon*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

**SIZE:** 18 to 36 inches high, 12 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** White, yellow, orange, red, pink and purple.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to light shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seed outdoors from late winter through early summer.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Gorgeous Husker Red owes its name to its reddish foliage and stems; the flowers are white with a pink cast. *Penstemon barbatus* has striking scarlet flowers.



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## Stokesia

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Stoke's aster.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Stokesia laevis*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 5 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early summer through fall.

**SIZE:** 1 to 2 feet.

**FLOWER:** 3- to 5-inch-wide blue, lavender or pink blooms with ragged-toothed petals around a creamy white center.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant 15 inches apart; divide every three to four years. Regular deadheading will extend bloom time.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Blue Danube, Silver Moon.

## Goldenrod

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Solidago* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to fall.

**SIZE:** 8 to 48 inches high, 24 to 30 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Yellow.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Deadhead flowers to promote continued blooming. Give them room to spread.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Golden Fleece is a dwarf variety with arching clusters; Fireworks is known for its unique flowering stems; Golden Baby is compact and blooms early.



DONNA AND TOM KRISCHAN

## Hollyhock

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Alcea rosea*.

**HARDINESS:** Biennial and short-lived perennial in Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early to midsummer.

**SIZE:** 3 to 8 feet high, 1 to 3 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Funnel-shaped or double blooms in numerous bright and pastel hues including red, pink, yellow, white and purple.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant seeds in midsummer for blooms the following year.

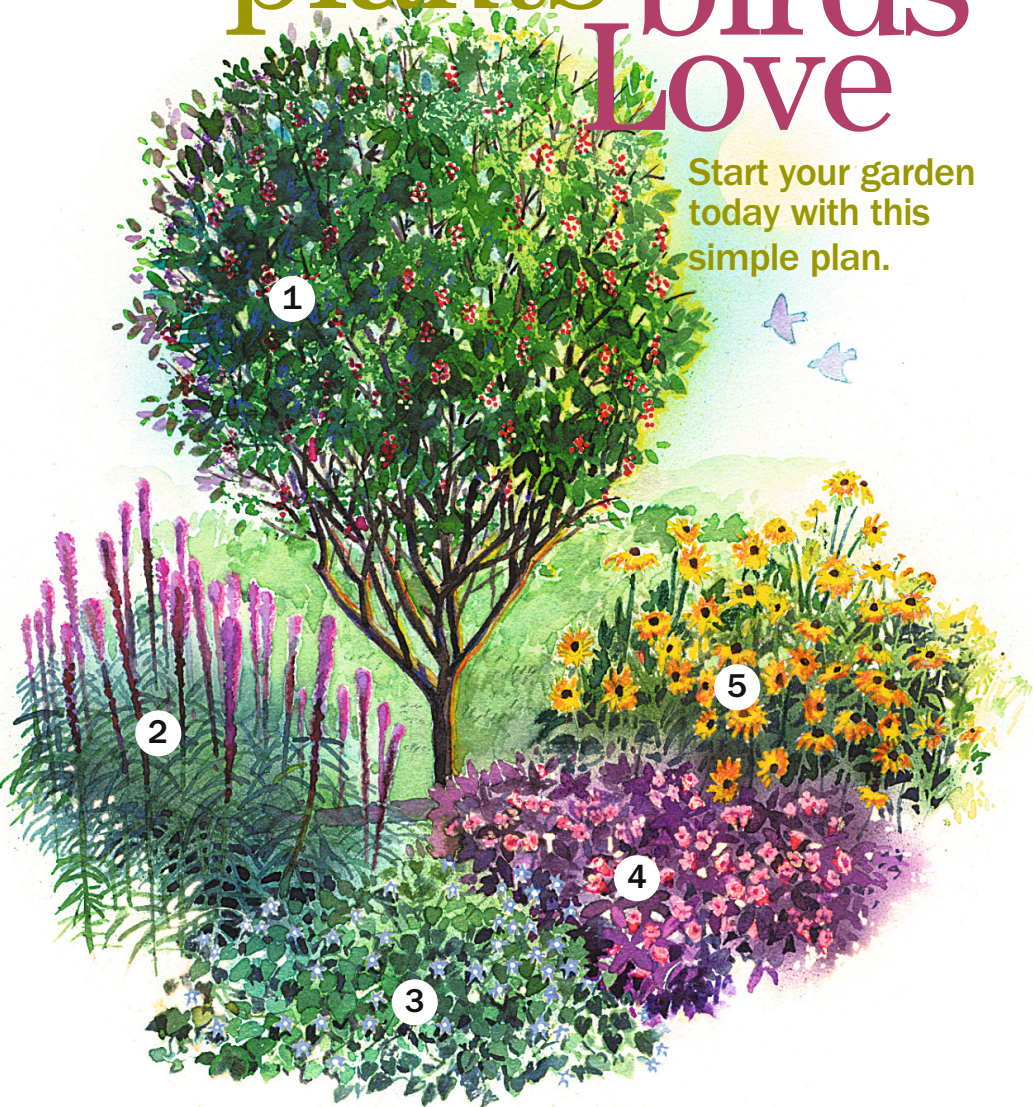
**PRIZE PICKS:** Try Chater's Double for double blooms or Nigra for striking, dark-maroon flowers that appear almost black.



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# Five plants birds Love

Start your garden today with this simple plan.



LARRY MIKEC



# 1 Allegheny serviceberry

**Botanical name:** *Amelanchier laevis*.

**Size:** Up to 25 feet tall and wide.

**Hardiness:** Zones 5 to 9.

**Bird-friendly benefits:** Large berries appear in early summer and are irresistible to many birds, such as American robins, cedar waxwings, northern cardinals and blue jays. Some people call these trees juneberries.

# 2 Liatris

**Botanical name:** *Liatris spicata*.

**Size:** 3 feet tall and 18 inches wide.

**Hardiness:** Zones 4 to 9.

**Bird-friendly benefits:** Also called gayfeather or blazing star, this flower attracts hummingbirds to its spikes of lavender, rose or white flowers. American goldfinches, tufted titmice and others savor its seed heads.

# 3 Serbian bellflower

**Botanical name:** *Campanula poscharskyana*.

**Size:** 6 inches tall and 24 inches wide.

**Hardiness:** Zones 3 to 9.

**Bird-friendly benefits:** Deep-purple bell-shaped flowers on trailing stems make this a hummingbird favorite.

# 4 Midnight Wine weigela

**Botanical name:** *Weigela* Midnight Wine

**Size:** 24 inches tall and wide.

**Hardiness:** Zones 4 to 9.

**Bird-friendly benefits:** This dwarf cultivar of weigela has purple leaves and pink flowers that attract hummingbirds.

# 5 Black-eyed Susan

**Botanical name:** *Rudbeckia fulgida*.

**Size:** 36 inches tall and 18 inches wide.

**Hardiness:** Zones 4 to 9.

**Bird-friendly benefits:** Numerous seed-eating birds enjoy the seed heads at the center of this flower's bright-yellow petals. Some birds you might see are chickadees and finches.

# Great bird Annuals

*Plant these seven pretty annuals for beauty, and you'll have a bird buffet, with no waiting.*



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## Sunflower

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Helianthus annuus*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to early autumn.

**SIZE:** 2 to 15 feet high, 18 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Mainly yellow. Ray of florets with a dark center.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds 6 inches apart in spring. Thin to the strongest growers so the plants are 18 to 24 inches apart.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Russian Giant, Autumn Beauty.



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## Bachelor's button

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Cornflower.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Centaurea cyanus*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late spring through summer.

**SIZE:** 2 to 3 feet tall.

**FLOWER:** About 1½-inch-wide purple and bluish flowers.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant 9 to 12 inches apart in well-draining soil; will tolerate poor soil and drought. For spring blooms, sow seeds in early fall.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Black Magic, Blue Boy, Jubilee Gem, Polka Dot.

## Cleome

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Spider flower.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Cleome hassleriana*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Midsummer to first frost.

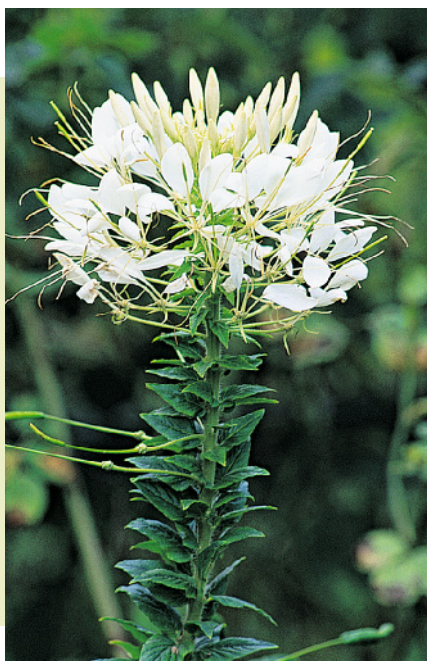
**SIZE:** 4 to 6 feet high, 2 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Pink, purple and white airy, spiderlike flowers.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant seeds or container-grown plants after danger of frost has passed. In northern areas, give seeds a head start indoors.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Queen Mix, Sparkler Blush.



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## Four o'clock

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Mirabilis jalapa*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Midsummer through fall. Blossoms open in midafternoon and fade before sunrise.

**SIZE:** 1½ to 3 feet high, 1 to 3 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Purplish-red, yellow, pink, white and lavender blooms, sometimes on the same plant. Some varieties have striped flowers.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Four-o'clocks will reseed. Grows as perennial in Zones 7 to 11. All plant parts are poisonous.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Jingles.



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## Cosmos

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Cosmos bipinnatus*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to late fall.

**SIZE:** 1 to 6 feet high, 1 to 2 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Single or double daisy-shaped blooms in pink, white, red and purple.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Place tall varieties near a fence or provide stakes to help the plants stand up to winds and rain.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Diablo, Sea Shells, Sonata Series.

## Nasturtium

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Tropaeolum majus*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early summer until frost.

**SIZE:** Climbing varieties reach 10 feet, dwarf varieties form mounds that are up to 15 inches tall, 12 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Bright yellow, red, cream, apricot and salmon.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow directly in most gardens after last frost. Plant  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch deep. Thin plants as they become crowded.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Alaska Series, Whirlybird.



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## Marigold

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Tagetes*.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to autumn.

**SIZE:** 6 inches to 3 feet high, 6 to 15 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Yellow, orange, gold, bronze and creamy white.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Directly sow into the garden after the threat of frost has passed. Lightly cover seeds with soil and keep moist until they germinate.

**PRIZE PICKS:** French marigold (*Tagetes patula*) is compact and grows from 6 to 15 inches tall. African marigold (*Tagetes erecta*), with its enormous blooms, can reach 3 feet tall.



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# Trees, shrubs *and berries* for birds

*These picks provide treats sure to please the hungriest backyard birds, offering beauty for you and shelter for your feathered friends.*

## Mountain ash

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Sorbus*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 2 or 3 to 7.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** 10 to 50 feet high, 10 to 30 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** White and strongly scented; bright-red or orange berries peak in early autumn.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Sun to light shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds in a cold frame in autumn. Plant balled-and-burlapped trees in spring.

**PRIZE PICKS:** The American (*Sorbus americana*) and Korean (*Sorbus alnifolia*) varieties are great landscaping plants with beautiful white blossoms and brilliant berries. The European variety (*Sorbus aucuparia*) performs best in cool, moist areas.



## Spruce

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Picea* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 2 to 8.

**SIZE:** Up to 60 feet tall and 30 feet wide.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant balled-and-burlapped trees in spring in moist, well-draining soil. Be sure the root flare is at or slightly above the soil line. Mulch soil to keep roots cool and moist.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Colorado blue spruce, Serbian spruce, dwarf Alberta spruce.

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## Rhododendron

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Rhododendron* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 4 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late spring.

**SIZE:** 8 to 10 feet high and wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** White, cream, yellow, apricot, pink, rose, deep red and lavender.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Partial to light shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant in a lightly shaded area with protection from winter sun and winds. Moist, acidic soil that drains well will help your rhododendron do its best.

**PRIZE PICKS:** The Catawba rhododendron is a beautiful evergreen with purple flower clusters that can survive the cold. The Boule de Neige rhododendron tolerates heat and sun well.



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## Pine

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Pinus* species.

**HARDINESS:** All zones; varies with species.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** Up to 75 feet tall and 40 feet wide.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant balled-and-burlapped trees in spring through fall in moist, well-draining soil. Be sure the root flare is at or slightly above the soil line. Water well after planting.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Austrian pine, Scotch pine, red pine.

## Crabapple

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Malus* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 4 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** 10 to 25 feet high, 10 to 25 feet wide.

**FOLIAGE:** Green (some bronze), turning yellow in fall.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Select disease-resistant cultivars with small, persistent fruit.

**PRIZE PICKS:** The Japanese flowering crab (*Malus floribunda*) boasts a stunning display of deep-pink or red buds that fade to white, with yellow fruit that turns brownish-red in fall. For excellent disease resistance, consider Adams.



GLENDA MUELLER



## Rose of Sharon

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Hibiscus syriacus*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 5 to 8 or 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late summer to midautumn.

**SIZE:** 10 to 12 feet high, 6 to 8 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Mainly pink, purple and white.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full to partial sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** In northern areas, plant in spring. Thrives in moist soil that drains well.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Red Heart is a single-petal white bloom with a crimson center. Minerva has larger, pretty pink-tinged lavender flowers with ruby-red centers.



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## Cherry

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Prunus* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9, varies.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** Up to 30 to 70 feet high (some ornamentals are much smaller); up to 30 to 50 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** Clusters of pink or white flowers; small red or black fruit in summer.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Transplant cherry trees in spring. Select a protected spot to reduce the risk of winter damage or late spring frost.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Popular backyard choices are the ornamental purpleleaf sand cherry (*Prunus x cistena*), with pink flowers and purple leaves, and the sargent cherry (*Prunus sargentii*), which produces profuse flowers.



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## Dogwood

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Cornus* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 2 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** Up to 20 feet high and up to 25 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FOLIAGE:** True flowers are green, and up to ½ inch across. The more showy bracts—modified leaves that resemble petals—are white, pink, rosy red or yellow. In showier species like flowering, kousa and pagoda dogwood, they are up to 2 inches.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Performs best in moist soils with some afternoon shade. Pick species that work with your climate.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Cornelian cherry dogwood, Cherokee Chief and Cloud Nine flowering dogwood and red twig dogwood.



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## Firethorn

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Pyracantha coccinea*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 5 or 6 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring.

**SIZE:** Up to 15 feet high, up to 20 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** White flowers in 1- to 2-inch clusters; orange-red or yellow berries appear fall through winter and remain until birds feed on them.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun (for best fruit protection) to full shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Sow seeds in containers in a cold frame in autumn. Plant container-grown firethorns in spring, in well-drained soil.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Consider a disease-resistant hybrid such as Apache. For northern regions, try the hardy Teton or Yukon Belle, which survive winters to Zone 5.



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## Hawthorn

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Crataegus*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early in the summer.

**SIZE:** 20 to 45 feet high, 20 to 30 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** Most varieties bloom white flowers, but some are pink; applelike fruits ripen in autumn.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Small container-grown hawthorn trees can be added to your backyard throughout the year, but balled-and-burlapped trees should be planted in spring.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Look for the thornless variety Cocks spur. Lavalle hawthorn has great fall color.



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## Serviceberry

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Amelanchier* species.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 3 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early spring.

**SIZE:** 6 to 40 feet high, 5 to 30 feet wide.

**FLOWER/FRUIT:** White to light pink flowers; ¼- to ½-inch red-purple to purple-black berries produced two to three years after planting.

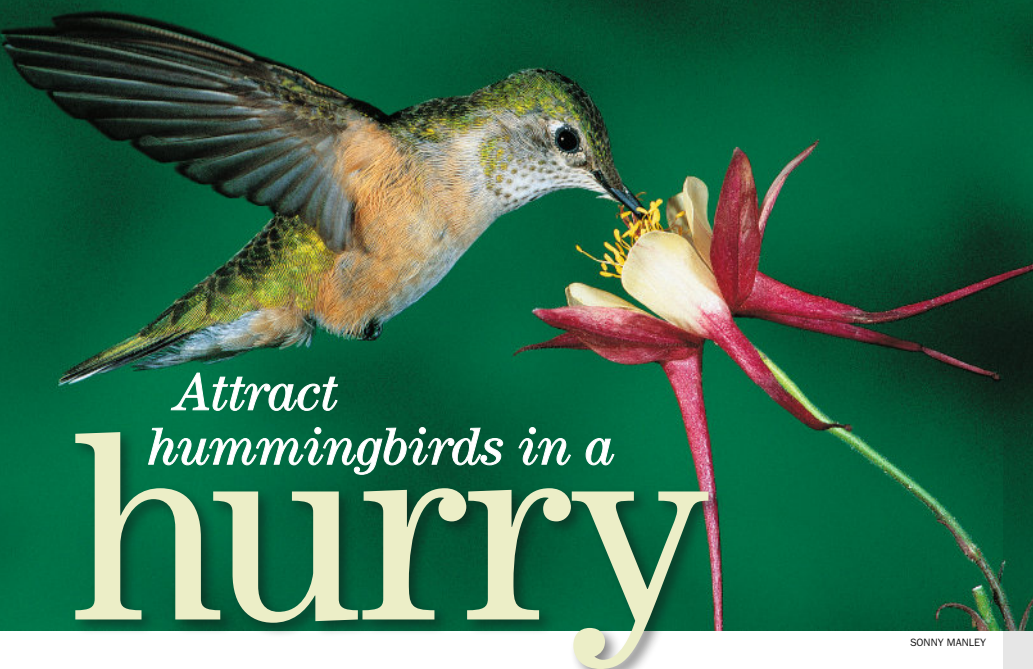
**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Be patient; they can take several years to establish.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Downy serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), also known as shadbush, is a slow-growing small tree that eventually reaches 30 feet. A close cousin, shadblow serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), is often considered more of a shrub.



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SONNY MANLEY

# Attract hummingbirds in a hurry

In most parts of the country, virtually anyone can try hummingbird gardening and, yes, even expect success. You don't need a huge manicured garden to get started. A simple hanging basket, container or window box packed with mostly red nectar-producing flowers will do the trick. And once you see an iridescent hummingbird flitting from flower to flower, you'll want to expand your plantings next year to bring in more of these unbelievable birds.

## Plan Your Own Garden

**Seeing red.** To hummingbirds, a patch of red flowers is like a neon "EAT" sign along a lonely highway. These birds search out nectar from many different-colored flowers, but they're really drawn to the red ones.

Scientists believe that hummingbirds have learned through experience that red tubular flowers contain the most nectar. So anything red—be it a flower, baseball hat

or tricycle—prompts them to investigate. That's why hummingbird feeders usually have red feeding ports.

**Tube-shaped blooms.** Many plants on hummingbirds' hit lists are tube-shaped flowers that provide large amounts of nectar deep at the base of their blooms. Hummingbirds can easily reach this sugar water, while bees and most other nectar-loving insects cannot.

Trumpet vine is an excellent example. It offers 10 times more sugar water than other plants!

**Less fragrant,** more filling. Surprisingly, many flowers to which hummingbirds flock have little to no scent. And, as nature would have it, there's a good reason.

Sweet-smelling flowers attract bees and other insects. Hummingbirds, like most birds, have a poor sense of smell and rely on vision to find food. So hummingbirds get odor-free flowers largely to themselves.



RICHARD DAY/DANBREAK IMAGERY

**Cascading blooms.** Hummingbirds are in a flying class of their own, with the ability to fly forward, backward and upside down—and even hover! And some nectar flowers, like fuchsia, have adapted to accommodate them by producing blooms that hang downward, restricting their sweet treat to only agile hummingbirds.

## Planting Your Hummer Garden

Planting a hummingbird garden is no different from creating a perennial border, a mixed container or any other garden. The basics are the same—soil rich in organic matter that drains well will keep the flowers healthy. And healthy nectar plants produce loads of the sweet stuff.

There are hundreds of blooming plants—annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs—that hummingbirds feed from. Which ones should you choose? How should you plant them? It's easier than you think:

**Mix plenty of annuals.** Annuals ensure long-blooming flowers that immediately produce nectar, from the time the migratory hummingbirds return north until they leave in fall.

**Aim for continuous blossoms.** Perennials and flowering trees and shrubs are excellent additions to a hummingbird garden, but plan carefully before you plant. Seek a mix of nectar producers that bloom from early spring to fall.



RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD AT BEE BALM, TERRY POOLE

**Plant in clusters.** Again, red is a sure bet for attracting hummingbirds. To get their attention, cluster red blooms together so they shout out, “Dinnertime!”

**Plant low to high.** Consider your hummingbird garden as a stadium and place shorter plants in front of taller ones.

This gives the birds easy access to all the blooms, without plant stems and leaves interfering. As a bonus, you’ll also see them better from your patio or window.

**Deadhead for more blooms.** Even though many hummingbird plants are low-maintenance annuals and perennials, take time to deadhead blooms before they go to seed. This keeps the plants pouring energy into flower production, and the longer your nectar-producing plants produce flowers, the more hummingbirds you’ll attract. That, in turn, will convince them to come back year after year.

# *Hummingbird* Plants



*Try these seven nectar-rich flowers to entice flying jewels into your backyard.*

## Red hot poker

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** Torch flower.

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Kniphofia*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 5 to 9, depending on cultivar.

**BLOOM TIME:** Late spring to autumn, depending on cultivar.

**SIZE:** 2 to 6 feet high, 1 to 3 feet wide.

**FLOWER:** Red, orange, yellow, white, greenish-white or bicolored.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Prefers sandy soil. Mulch plants for first winter.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Little Maid, Royal Standard.

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## Flowering tobacco

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Nicotiana glauca*.

**HARDINESS:** Annual.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer to first frost.

**SIZE:** 10 inches to 5 feet high, 6 to 24 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** White, red, pink, lavender, green and yellow.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Partial shade to full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Prefers rich, moist, well-draining soil.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Nicki Red, Nicki White and Nicki Lime; Avalon Bright Pink is a dwarf cultivar.



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## Geranium

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Pelargonium x hortorum*.

**HARDINESS:** Zone 10; grown as annual in most areas.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer until frost.

**SIZE:** 12 to 20 inches high and wide.

**FLOWER:** Large, round clusters of white, pink, red or purple individual blooms.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Can be propagated from cuttings or seeds, but is more commonly grown from flowering pot-grown plants.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Black Magic Rose, Orbit series.

## Foxglove

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Digitalis*.

**HARDINESS:** Biennial or short-lived perennial, Zones 3 to 10.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring through summer.

**SIZE:** 18 inches to 6 feet high.

**FLOWER:** Tubular, bell-shaped blooms in white, cream, yellow, apricot, pink, purple, red, coppery rose and golden brown.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** In spring, plant seeds or transplants for blooms the following season.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Excelsior Hybrids, Foxy.



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## English primrose

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Primula vulgaris*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 4 to 8.

**BLOOM TIME:** Early spring to summer.

**SIZE:** Up to 8 inches high and 15 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Fragrant clusters.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Partial shade; can tolerate full sun if soil is moist.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant in compost-rich soil; water well. Partial shade produces better blooms.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Commonly sold in mixes such as Orient Star, Pageant Mix and Spectrum Series.



## Bee balm

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Monarda didyma*.

**HARDINESS:** Zones 4 to 9.

**BLOOM TIME:** Summer.

**SIZE:** 3 to 4 feet high, 18 to 26 inches wide.

**FLOWER:** Flower clusters of tubular blooms.

Commonly red, but also come in violet, purple, pink and white.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun; tolerates afternoon shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Space plants at least 18 inches apart and water liberally. Plants spread quickly and will appear as one large mass.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Jacob Cline, Violet Queen, Blue Stocking, Snow White and Snow Queen.



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## Sweet pea

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Lathyrus odoratus*.

**HARDINESS:** Annual.

**BLOOM TIME:** Spring and summer through early autumn; varies by region.

**SIZE:** 4 to 12 feet high.

**FLOWER:** Pink, purple, salmon, blue, red and white.

**LIGHT NEEDS:** Full sun to partial shade.

**GROWING ADVICE:** Plant presoaked seeds 1 inch deep and 6 inches apart, or start seeds indoors and transplant outside after six weeks.

**PRIZE PICKS:** Royal Family Mix, Old Spice Mix, Captain of the Blues.

# 10 best hummingbird blooms

Use this plan to draw winged wonders to your backyard.

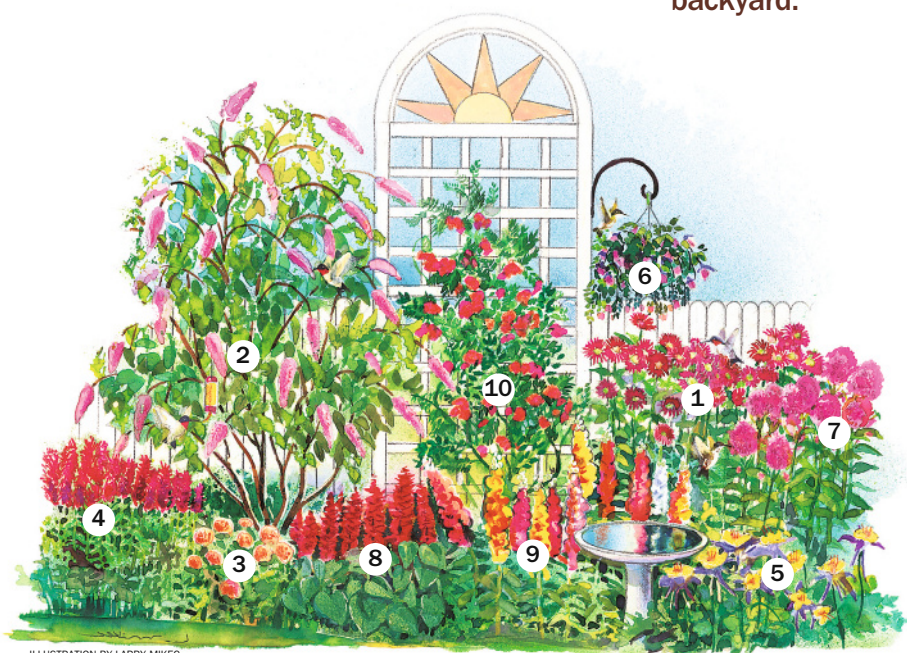


ILLUSTRATION BY LARRY MIKEC

- 1 Bee balm**  
(*Monarda didyma*)  
Perennial; Zones 4 to 9.
- 2 Butterfly bush**  
(*Buddleja* species)  
Shrub; Zones 4 to 9.
- 3 Butterfly weed**  
(*Asclepias tuberosa*)  
Perennial; Zones 4 to 9.
- 4 Cardinal flower**  
(*Lobelia cardinalis*)  
Perennial; Zones 3 to 9.
- 5 Columbine**  
(*Aquilegia* species)  
Perennial; Zones 3 to 9.
- 6 Fuchsia**  
(*Fuchsia x hybrida*)  
Annual.
- 7 Phlox**  
(*Phlox* species)  
Perennial; Zones 3 to 8.
- 8 Salvia**  
(*Salvia splendens*)  
Annual.
- 9 Snapdragon**  
(*Antirrhinum*)  
Annual.
- 10 Trumpet vine**  
(*Campsis radicans*)  
Perennial; Zones 4 to 9.



# Tempting Sunflowers for birds

Try these great sunflowers in your backyard—your feathered friends will thank you!



HAZEL ERICKSON

**Autumn Beauty:** Multibranching plant grows about 5 feet tall, with single and bicolor blooms up to 8 inches across in yellow, bronze and purple.

**Big Smile:** Dwarf, extra-early variety from 1 to 2 feet tall with bright, golden-yellow blooms up to 6 inches across.

**Floristan:** Multibranching plant grows 3 to 4 feet tall, with bicolor blooms of reddish-brown tipped in yellow.

**Holiday:** Multibranching, 6-foot-tall plant with 3- to 5-inch golden-yellow flowers that surround brown centers.

**The Joker:** Beautiful fully double, semi-double or single 4- to 5-inch flowers in a two-tone mix of mahogany and golden-yellow on 6-foot-tall plants. This is a pollen-free variety, which means you don't have to worry about getting pollen on the table when you use it as a cut flower.

**Red Sun:** Multibranching plant grows to 6 feet tall with up to 10 6-inch blooms per plant, each with dark centers surrounded by bronze-red petals with orange-red tips.

**Soraya:** All-America Selections winner in 2000; boasts single, orange-tinted flowers, 4 to 6 inches across. It grows 5 to 6 feet tall.

**Valentine:** Bold plant to 5 feet tall with a profusion of lemon-yellow flowers 4 to 6 inches across with chocolate-brown centers; good as a long-lasting cut flower.

**Vanilla Ice:** Multibranching plant with creamy-colored blooms and dark centers that grows 4 to 7 feet tall.

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