Chasing Hummingbirds Across Texas

Where Would I Go, In Texas, If I Wanted To See Hummingbirds…

Mark Klym
Texas Hummingbird Roundup
Texas Has a Wealth of Hummingbird Diversity

- Eighteen species have been recorded in the state
- No one county is limited to one species of hummingbird.

Anna’s Hummingbird
But...

- Some species are much more likely in some regions of the state than in others.

Berylline Hummingbird – Brewster County
So Where Would I Go
Use the Tools of the Trade

• Good field guides
  – Williamson
  – Howell

• Good books about Texas Hummingbirds

• Regional field checklists

• Regional rare bird alerts.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird

- East Texas during the nesting season
  - Has been recorded as far west as Arizona
- Central and Upper coast during migration
  - In both cases I am looking for shelter
Ruby-throated Hummingbird

- Most likely April through September
- Can stay year round especially closer to the coast
Identification Tips – Ruby-throated

• Bill is short and stout
• Back is yellow green
• Tail is long, sticking out past the tip of the wings
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Black-chinned Hummingbird

- Edwards plateau and west.
  - Has been recorded east in coastal states
  - Looking for thick brush and shelter
Black-chinned Hummingbird

- Most numerous March through October
  - Can stay all winter
Identification Tips – Black-chinned

- Bill long and slender, slightly down curved
- Back gray green
- Tail does not protrude significantly beyond tip of wings.
Black-chinned Hummingbird
Buff-bellied Hummingbird

- South Texas and along the coast to about Victoria most of the year.
- Has been seen in summer as far north as Bastrop and Washington Counties
  - Another brush country bird.
Buff-bellied Hummingbird

- Year round bird
- Winters further up the coast than breeding range.
Identification Tips – Buff-bellied

- Bill straight, red with black tip
- Top half of bird deep green
- Tail and wings cinnamon
- Clicking call.
Buff-bellied Hummingbird
Rufous Hummingbird

- Mountains of west Texas during migration
- Well sheltered coastal areas during winter months
- Can be seen in any county of Texas
  - Associated with forests and trees
Rufous Hummingbird

- Not recorded in June in Texas
  - Have one photograph from Cibolo in late May

Photo by LeAnn Sharp
Identification Tip - Rufous

• Look for the red coloration – will always be red in tail and flanks.
Rufous Hummingbird
Broad-tailed Hummingbird

• West Texas mountains during migration.
  – Year round, somewhat more likely March through November
  – Somewhat more open area but still seeking shelter
Identification Tips – Broad-tailed

- Red will appear on the bird in spots we do not find red on Ruby-throats
- HUGE round tail
- Wing trill
Calliope Hummingbird

- West Texas during migration
  - Most numerous July through September
  - Areas with well developed shelter during winter months
Identification Tips - Calliope

- Smallest bird in North America
- Short, straight bill
- Short tail
- Long wings.
Magnificent Hummingbird

- Mountainous regions of west Texas
  - March through November but more likely April through September
  - Rocky slopes with pine forests nearby

Photo by Mark Lockwood
Identification Tip - Magnificent

• Long sleek bird of solid color from top of head to tail
• Extremely long bill
• May carry a “crest”
Lucifer Hummingbird

• Lowland areas of west Texas
  – February through November but more likely Late May through early September
  – Looking for more open woods, clearings, dry brushy grassland.
Identification Tip - Lucifer

- Short bird with large head
- Short wings
- Long forked tail folds to a point
- Black down-curved bill
- Look for the buffy tan belt
Adult Female Lucifer Hummingbird
Blue-throated Hummingbird

• Nesting in Chisos Mountains.
• Seen occasionally in Davis Mountains
  – Most common late April through mid August. Is seen March through early November
  – Cool shady canyons with forest habitat. Prefers middle to higher elevations.

Photo by B. Randall
Blue-throated Hummingbird

- Largest Hummingbird in Texas
- Gray-green back, dark breast
- Large black tail with white tips
- Eye lines.

Photo by D. & M. Zimmerman
Blue-throated Hummingbird Anomaly in Texas
Anna’s Hummingbird

• Semi desert areas of west and north Texas with overgrown fields and scattered trees
  – August to early May with peaks in September to December
Identification Tips – Anna’s

- Put on a red helmet but did not do up the straps.
- Put on his Sunday-go-to-meeting suit complete with black tails and vest then went out and rolled in the mud!
There Are Some Birds That You Would Follow Based On Previous Records

- Watch for listings on lists like Texbirds
- Check rare bird alerts
- Share information with other birders

Photo by Brandon Best

Juvenile White-eared Hummingbird
Lubbock, TX
Green Violet-ear

• Would expect it to be found in areas of thick canopy – forest, thicket locations
  – Hill Country records May through September

Photo by Bill Lindeman
Green Violet-ear Identification

- Tall, grass green bird with black tail and violet blue breast and ear patch.
Green-breasted Mango

- No records of the bird north of the Nueces River except out of state
  - Most reliable locations are gardens with considerable cover in McAllen.
  - Scattered occurrences throughout the year

Photo by Berlin Heck
Green-breasted Mango Identification

- Deep green bird with down-curved bill, throat dark emerald green extending onto the breast as a central stripe. Outer 3 to 4 rectrices violet purple.
- Female underparts white with dark vertical central line. Cinnamon brown may be present on chin.

Photo by Berlin Heck
Broad-billed Hummingbird

- Widely scattered records across the state
  - Bird is associated with brushy woods, partial clearings and thickets in their traditional range
  - Scattered occurrences throughout the year

Photo by Leonardo Sonoqui
Broad-billed Hummingbird
Identification

• Red bill tipped in black with distinctly broad profile at the base. Saphire blue gorget, emerald green breast. Whitish undertail coverts.

Photo by Mark Lockwood
White-eared Hummingbird

- Were very scattered sightings until this year
- As many as 10 sightings in west Texas this year
  - Associated with pine oak woods, mountain pine forests in traditional range
White-eared Hummingbird Identification

• Broad white band on “ear”. Male bold purple head. Female and juvenile head gray-green. Large black tail.
Berylline Hummingbird

- All confirmed Texas occurrences have been well west of the Pecos River
  - All occurrences have been summer events
  - Associated with scrubby woods and overgrown clearings.

Photo by Sid & Shirley Rucker
Berylline Hummingbird Identification

• Apple green to turquoise throat and breast. Broad band of cinnamon to rufous color on wings. Tail square to notched deep rufous with distinct violet sheen.
Violet-crowned Hummingbird

• Most of the records are from west Texas
  – More open land like scrubby borders and partial clearings
  – Mostly winter occurrences, November through March

Photo by R. Curtis
Identification Tips – Violet-crowned

• Slightly larger bird with a brown green back
• Red bill with a black tip
• Spotless white chest and gorget

Photo by R. Curtis
Costa’s Hummingbird

- Scrubby thorn semi desert with scattered trees are associated with this bird in its traditional range
  - Scattered occurrences most months except January and February.
Identification Tip – Costa’s

- Put on a purple helmet and did up the straps
- Put on his Sunday-go-to-meeting suit with slightly less showy tails and stayed out of the mud!
Allen’s Hummingbird

- Coastal Texas has had a good number of these birds each of the last several years
  - Associated with scrubby woods and border areas.

Photo by Allan Morgan
Identification Tip – Allen’s

- Very emarginate feathers on the tail

Photo by Rusty Trump
There Are Other Species Reasonably Close to Texas

• Cinnamon Hummingbird, Bumblebee Hummingbird and Plain-capped Starthroat have been seen north of the Mexican border
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Mark Klym
Texas Hummingbird Roundup
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