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# TALES FROM THE TREE

*The Quarterly Newsletter of Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center*



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## **RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** **(Archilochus colubris)**

We all love to watch hummingbirds at our feeders and zooming around the yard checking out the colorful flowers. During the fall migration, we enjoy watching the one we refer to as "The General" who has made it his sole mission to guard ALL of the feeders.

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird is the only species native to the eastern United States. They usually arrive in our area around the first of April and leave by the first of November. They are solitary during breeding and nesting season. In fact, the male only sticks around long enough to fertilize the eggs and leaves the female to brood and raise the young while he's out fertilizing more eggs.



*Female Ruby-throated Hummingbird*  
*Photo Credit: Joel Daniel*

The nest is usually on a fork of a downward sloping twig and frequently near or over water, usually about 10 to 30 feet up. The nest is made of small fragments of plant material with a thick lining of down and held together with spiders' webs. The outside is covered with flakes of lichen. The inside diameter of the nest is about 1 inch. They lay two eggs in that tiny space and the babies will stay in the nest for about 19 days. The young remain with the mother for about another week before they are fully self-sufficient.

Hummingbird tongues are amazingly long. The tongue can extend far beyond the tip of the bill when they are consuming nectar and bugs. In addition to nectar from a variety of flowers as well as artificial feeders, hummingbirds also consume fruit flies, gnats, mosquitoes, aphids, spiders, ants, and insect eggs. Pretty great neighbors for pest control during their stay here in the summer.

The adult males are easily recognizable by their ruby red gorget (throat), while the females have a whitish throat. Immature birds look like the female.

The adults are roughly 3.5 inches in length and weight 3 to 3.4 grams. For comparison, a nickel weighs 5 grams. A hummingbird's heart rate is 250 beats per minute (bpm) at rest and up to 1200 bpm when hovering. An adult human heart rate is 60-100 bpm. Their wings beat at 40-80 beats per second.

Hummingbirds have binocular vision and can spot your feeder from about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile away.

Most Ruby-throated Hummingbirds migrate across the Gulf of Mexico and winter in Central America and southern Mexico. Their non-stop flight across the Gulf takes about 18-24 hours.

If you would like to attract hummingbirds to your yard, you can plant native nectar-producing plants and avoid the use of pesticides. If you purchase hummingbird feeders, they should be easy to take apart for cleaning. It is not necessary to purchase commercial food – the best alternative is one part white table sugar to four parts hot or boiling water (needs to be hot enough to fully dissolve the sugar). Do NOT add red food coloring as it may harm the birds. In hot weather, the feeders should be cleaned daily to prevent the growth of mold or bacteria.

We admitted our first nestling hummingbirds this spring. We suspect the nest was accidentally dislodged when a family was fishing from the bank. The nestlings were found floating in the water at Tims Ford and brought to us that same day.



Photo Credit: LouAnn Partington

They were just about a week old on intake. The diameter of the substitute nest is just a little larger than a quarter.

The hummingbirds were fed a specialized nectar formula along with tiny insects as they grew and matured. And thanks to volunteer Rosanna Ohlsson and our friends Karen and Bob Yasui of Petalland Flower and Herb Farm, we had plenty of fresh flowers for the birds to practice foraging and hovering after they fledged the nest.



Photo Credit: Rosanna Ohlsson

Both birds did well and were released after just over a month in care at Petalland where an abundance of pesticide and herbicide free flowers awaited them along with plenty of tiny flying insects. They both took off and soared out of sight quickly.

## Hummingbirds in winter

Most of our hummingbirds will migrate by the end of October, but we do have some stragglers through the first part of November. Leaving your feeders up will not cause the birds to stay, but you may be lucky enough to spot the occasional west coast vagrant.

Our friend Cyndi Routledge with Southeastern Avian Research (SEAR) is part of a network of bird banders who have been tracking hummingbirds, primarily in the southeast, between November 15 and March 15. Since November of 1990, over 315 hummingbirds of 7 different species have been captured, banded, and released here in Tennessee as part of a winter banding research program.

If you choose to leave your feeders up after November 15<sup>th</sup>, please keep them clean and maintained. If you spot a hummingbird at your feeder between mid-November and mid-March, please reach out to Cyndi at [routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net). With your permission, she will come to your house to band the bird. It is a great opportunity for you to participate in wintering hummingbird research.

A big **THANK YOU** to Cyndi for providing most of the information for our front-page article. And if you would like to learn more about SEAR's work, please visit their website at [www.southeasternavianresearch.org](http://www.southeasternavianresearch.org). Their website also includes a list of flowers, trees, shrubs, and vines that you can plant to attract hummingbirds to your yard.



## Thanks to our Big Payback Donors We raised \$1908!!

Keely Beale  
Jeanne & Tommy Shaw  
Susan Markel  
Debbie Sykes  
Debra Dimario  
Aimee Stubbs  
Kimberly Dutzek  
Holly Gilbert  
Heather Roberts  
Lorena and Cauliflower  
Candace Wade  
Tennessee Bird Brigade  
Nessie Kurganova  
Kim Hannah  
Philippa Holloway  
Amanda Miranda  
Maria De Pasquale  
Bettina Bowers  
Angela Hensley  
Dr. Sarah Wellman  
Gracie & Jerry Vandiver  
Donna Jennings  
John Ham  
LouAnn Partington  
Patricia Rachkiss  
Vance Keller  
Virginia Terry  
Anne Ray  
Emily P. Davis  
Joy Clay Chrisman

## HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

It's been a busy year for us, especially with phone calls. We've already logged over 3,000 calls and texts! Fortunately, not all those calls result in admissions to our organization. We've really emphasized reuniting wild babies with the parent(s) whenever possible which saves our resources for the truly orphaned or injured animals. In some cases, the call is out of our normal service area or are species we are not equipped to handle, such as larger mammals or birds of prey and we are able to refer the calls within our middle Tennessee network of wildlife rehabilitators.

We worked with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) this spring to produce two Public Service Announcements geared towards preventing accidental kidnapping of young songbirds. The PSAs were posted to the TWRA Facebook page and shared to our Facebook page.

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## THANK YOU!!

To Erica Marshall for several donations of fresh vegetables – she's helped keep our grocery bill reasonable for our growing mammal youngsters!

To Danielle Alsup for the donation of cages and supplies and especially for a nearly new air conditioner for mammal building. What a life saver with the extreme heat this summer!

## **SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE**

- Become a member – just complete the application on the back of this newsletter, or visit our website to download and print an application.
- Give a gift membership to a friend!
- Purchase items from our wish list.
- Donate newspapers (we use those to line cages and cover the tables under the cages)
- Contact us about volunteer opportunities, such as transport, animal releases, administrative/office work, fundraising, board membership or contributing to our newsletter
- Like us on Facebook and stay updated on releases, admissions, and other news.
- Invite us to speak to your church or civic group – we love to tell people about the work we do!

***Check our website at [www.ziggystree.org](http://www.ziggystree.org) for other ways you can support us!***

### **WISH LIST**

- Gift cards (grocery store, Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply)
- Dried Bloodworms
- High quality dry cat food
- Baby Food (fruit – apples, bananas, blueberries)
- Canned or frozen mixed vegetables
- LCD Projector
- Heating Pads (without automatic shut-off)
- Nuts (pecans, walnuts, acorns)
- Fresh Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, sweet potatoes, zucchini, apples)
- Paper Towels
- Facial Tissues
- Toilet Paper
- Unscented laundry detergent
- 24, 36 or 48 inch Bungee cords

Contact us at 615-631-2205 or 931-841-9781 to arrange to drop off any of the above items.

For assistance with orphaned or injured mammals or general questions about mammals, text Angela at 615-631-2205.

For assistance with orphaned or injured birds or general questions about birds, text LouAnn at 931-841-9781.

For assistance with injured turtles, contact Rachel at 615-587-2977.

***Looking for a project for your scout troop, church, school or civic group? We'd love to have more squirrel nest boxes, and could also use small bluebird or woodpecker boxes to use with our young cavity nesting birds. Contact us for more information.***

## **KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS**

Thanks to our 81 participating families in the Kroger Community Rewards program, we have received our second quarter check for \$363.65. The funds we receive annually through this program are covering approximately one month of our operating costs.

If you shop at Kroger and would like to support us through this program, just go on-line to [www.kroger.com/community\\_rewards](http://www.kroger.com/community_rewards), and enroll your rewards card, selecting Ziggy's Tree as your charity. You still get gas points and discounts – and Kroger donates money to us!

Don't have an e-mail address or computer access? You can still sign up. Just call 1(800) KROGERS, OPTION 3 or 1(800)576-4377, OPTION 3.

For privacy reasons, Kroger does not provide names of those who have signed up to support us. So even though we can't thank you personally, please know that we are extremely grateful for your support.

And please ask your friends and family to enroll and support us!



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

(May 2022 – July 2022)

## ADVOCATE

Banjo Baby Squirrel Fund & Cheryl Schur

## SUSTAINING

Sharon Butcher \* Karen Dean  
Julie Wotruba \* Jacqueline Marushka  
Bucket Foundation \* Robin Mitchell

## SUPPORTING

April Wright \* Leslie Lehman \* Amy York  
Larry Partington \* Lori Rainwater \* David Ventura  
Cheryl Powell \* Meredith White \* David Cornish \*  
Jack Triplett \* Connie Stidham  
Patricia Waldron Mitchell \* Debbie Bomar

## FAMILY

Sherri Stringfellow \* Hamilton Family \* Leslie Buckingham  
Stephanie Smith \* Trish Fernandez \* Anna Landry  
Sherri Baggett \* Chrissie Willman \* Suzy O'Daniel  
Lacey Garrett \* Emily McRae \* Mike Blackburn

## INDIVIDUAL

Susan Howell \* Kay Ford \* Lorena Romero Alberto  
Tennessee Bird Brigade \* Sharon Jackson  
Bonnie Augustine

## VETERINARIANS

Pet Medical Center  
Airport Animal Clinic \* Creekwood Veterinary Hospital

## IN-KIND & CASH DONATIONS

Devin Aracena \* Justin Holton \* Marcia Murray  
Engedi Howell \* Liz & Cash's Pet Treats  
Nora LeAnn Hale \* Traci Webb \* Andrew Eddington  
Candice Parker \* Kim Leverett \* Paige Derryberry  
Amanda Greer \* Stephen & Gretchen \* Shirley Breiner  
Analia Miller \* Leann Barron \* Critter Gitter  
Steve Tatum \* Melissa Rodgers \* Kimberly Stavros  
Janet Browand \* Sylvia Brown \* Kelsey Henderson  
Sherry Few \* Addison Cates

## IN MEMORIUM

Faye Wood by Ruth Ann Henry  
Cheryl Schur by Banjo Baby Squirrel Fund  
Cheryl Schur by Sunday Perkins & Jay Sayarat  
Susan Sweetser by Ruth Ann Henry

## MATCHING DONATIONS

Crown Castle

## 2022 RELEASES

### MAY

13 Eastern Gray Squirrels  
3 Southern Flying Squirrels  
1 Barred Owl  
1 American Goldfinch  
2 House Finches

### JUNE

3 Eastern Cottontails  
16 Eastern Gray Squirrels  
2 Virginia Opossums  
2 Groundhogs  
4 Eastern Bluebirds  
3 Common Grackles  
5 Downy Woodpeckers  
7 American Robins  
1 Brown Thrasher  
1 Northern Mockingbird  
3 Tree Swallows  
1 Northern Cardinal  
3 Brown-headed Cowbirds  
2 Song Sparrows  
2 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds

### JULY

2 Virginia Opossums  
1 Groundhog  
1 Wood Duck  
7 Northern Mockingbirds  
4 Mourning Doves  
1 Canada Goose  
2 Barn Swallows  
1 Northern Rough-winged Swallow  
1 Common Yellowthroat  
1 Blue Jay  
1 Gray Catbird  
4 American Robins  
3 House Finches  
1 Northern Cardinal  
1 Chipping Sparrow

We'll update our turtle releases in our next issue.

Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center  
PO Box 713  
Tullahoma, TN 37388



**NOTICE: YOUR MAILING LABEL CONTAINS YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE.**

To avoid any interruption with delivering your newsletter, we ask that you renew at least one month before the date shown. Use the Membership Form provided below.

**PLEASE RENEW, STAY INFORMED, WE NEED YOU!!!**

**YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE, I AM ...**

- A NEW MEMBER**  
 **RENEWING MY MEMBERSHIP**

Memberships are for one year  
Gift Memberships are also available.

**Please Mail This Form To:**

**Ziggy's Tree WRC  
PO Box 713  
Tullahoma, TN 37388**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.**

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Family	\$40.00
___ Supporting	\$100.00
___ Sustaining	\$250.00
___ Advocate	\$500.00
___ Wildlife Champion	\$1000.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive my newsletter by email.

I am interested in volunteering in the following areas:

- \_\_\_ Environmental Education  
\_\_\_ Wildlife Rehabilitation  
\_\_\_ Fundraising/Administration

Checks should be made payable to Ziggy's Tree WRC. You can also renew/donate by credit card at [Paypal.me/ziggystree](https://www.paypal.com/merchot/?z=ziggystreewildlife).

Not sure what to get that special someone for birthdays, anniversaries or just because? Consider giving them a one year membership to Ziggy's Tree!

Members receive our newsletter.

*Ziggy's Tree strives to be environmentally conscious. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of our newsletter, please check the box above or e-mail [ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com](mailto:ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com) to be placed on our mailing list.*