

# Hummingbird Haven Keeps Leona Shearer Busy



Just one of the hundreds of hummingbirds that visit Leona Shearer's feeders each day. (Harrington Photo)

By Linda Harrington

If you haven't noticed many hummingbirds around this summer, it is no wonder. They are all vacationing on Staples Brook Rd., in Debert.

Leona Shearer has been putting out hummingbird feeders for over ten years and as the years went on she noticed the number of birds seemed to be increasing. "They seemed to be hatching out their babies and bringing them to the feeders," she says.

This year Leona has had a full time job keeping up with the demand. "They go through about nine cups of syrup per day. I read on the internet that one cup feeds 25 birds, so I must have over 200 birds coming each day," she says with a big smile.

Sitting out on the deck it seems like a miniature airport, as the tiny birds come one after the other, sometimes as many as five or six at a time, fighting for their spot at the feeder.

Leona's daughter Carrie Denmore says her mother is obsessed with feeding

the hummingbirds. "If she goes away for a few days, she is always checking to make sure someone is filling the feeders and even checks for text messages to make sure they have been fed," laughs Carrie. "She has been known to call up neighbours and ask

them to come and feed them, and there is always a bottle of syrup made up, just in case she can't be home."

Leona says she starts feeding them in May, and keeps on until mid-September, or until the last bird has left. She guesses she has gone through out 20lbs of sugar this summer but feels it is a small cost to pay for the enjoyment she gets from watching them. "If the feeders aren't out, they come to my kitchen window and look in, as if they are asking to be fed," she says. "I just love my little feathered friends."

Leona has some hints for feeding hummingbirds. First she says you must be faithful as they must eat first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

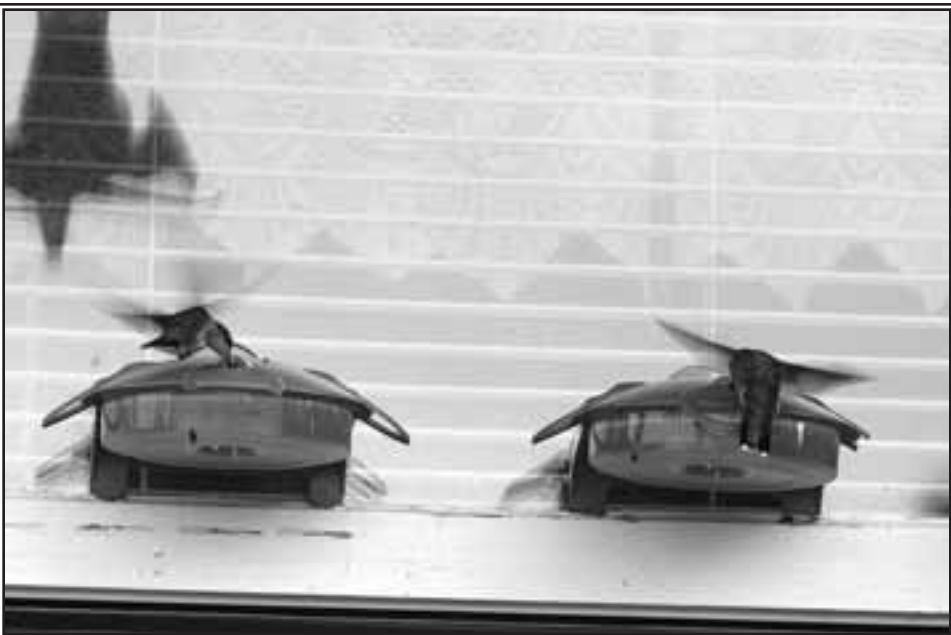
The nectar must always be fresh. Leona changes the feeders every second day and makes sure the feeders are clean and free of mold (which can harm the birds). She mixes a 1 to 4 sugar/ water ratio.

"I have to fill my feeders 3 times a day, in what I call frenzy season, when all the babies hatch and twice a day the rest of the time. They love to have warm nectar at night, which I consider their bedtime snack," she says with a laugh.

These hummers will certainly be well fed for fall migration and no doubt Leona's "Hummingbird Haven" will be the spring destination of choice.

*"I just love my little feathered friends."*

Leona Shearer



The steady hum of wings is heard as hummingbirds come one after another to Leona's Shearer's feeders. (Harrington Photo)



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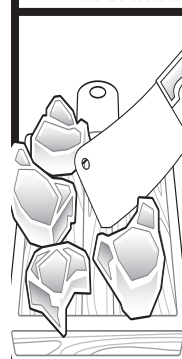


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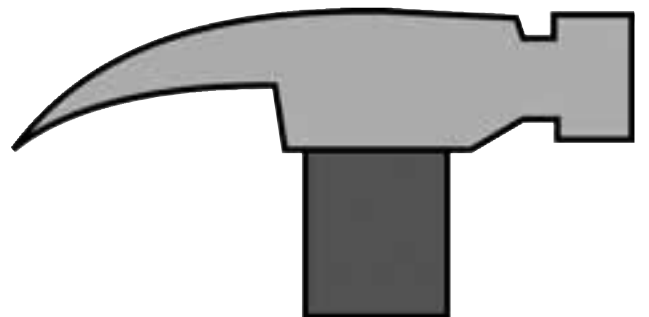
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