

Fellow Hummer Lovers,

I've been waiting all season to get even with the hummers feeding on flowers and ignoring me when I tried to catch them. The freeze made hummers much more interested in feeders, so I went to the coast and caught 41 hummers in four days.

I started in Mobile on January 3 at Velma Britain's home. I caught two Ruby-throated hummers I banded in December and then caught her return Ruby-throated back for the second winter. At Vicki Dykes' home, I enjoyed catching her third year return Ruby-throated and sharing it with her young granddaughter. I banded a Rufous at Barbara McLeod's home and then went across the bay to Fairhope. There I met Brenda and Kevin Shaw and introduced them to winter hummers when I banded their two Rufous. I think I'll band lots more hummers at their great location.

I started a seriously cold morning January 4 at Linda and Roby Tomlin's Daphne home where I finally convinced their Rufous to let me give her a band. In Spanish Fort, I banded a Ruby-throated for Gail and Ron Critchely. Back in Daphne, I banded a couple of Rufous for Sheila Mitchell. Shelia enjoyed learning about winter hummers, and I expect to be back at her home soon. I banded three Rufous for Bill Summerour in Silverhill to make four for him this winter.

I got really busy in Foley where I started at Ellen Crotty's banding a Ruby-throated and catching her fifth year return Rufous. Thank goodness Ellen went to Eva Barnett's home to help me, because there I banded 3 Black-chinned, 2 Rufous, and 1 Ruby-throated in addition to catching a Ruby-throated back for the second winter. Processing 7 hummers quickly in cold weather made me feel like the proverbial one-armed paper hanger, but the birds were all feisty and healthy. Eva has an amazing yard with lot of other great birds in addition to a yard full of hummers. Also in Foley, I banded a Black-chinned for Francis Cuellar and two more Black-chinned hummers for Kathie Farnell. At Kathie's home, I also caught a Ruby-throated I banded last winter at Eva Barnett's home. There must not have been room for it at Eva's home. 19 hummers in one day made me happy and tired.

While it was still almost dark January 5, I set up at Jan and Ken Taylor's home in Foley to try to catch their hummer that has been my nemesis the past three winters. That smart bird ignored all my nefarious plans to catch her until it got really cold. After more than an hour, their seventh year return Rufous' hunger overcame her reluctance and she finally went in my trap. She will be my bird of the winter no matter what else I might catch.

I headed to Pensacola where I started by banding a Black-chinned for Joe Williams. I got another great return when I caught Brenda and Jerry Callahan's fifth year return Rufous. I banded a Ruby-throated for LaRue Holtzclaw and then a Black-chinned and a Ruby-throated for Glenda and Dean Bowman. At Vickie and Ron Parker's home, I banded a Rufous and caught their second year return Rufous named Omar. I finished up in Pace banding a Ruby-throated for Nancy Boucher. I also found out that day that Fred Dietrich in Tallahassee caught a Black-chinned at Fran Rutkovsky's home that I banded last January at Pam Stine's home near Gainesville.

I banded my first two hummers on January 5 for Larry and Polly Bennett in Navarre when I got a Rufous and a Ruby-throated. In Niceville, I banded a Ruby-throated for Jean and Jim Kammeyer and then got a message about more hummers in Pensacola. I headed back there to band two Ruby-throated hummers for Diana Polizo. I finished up my trip in Pace where I banded a Ruby-throated for Diane and Dick Smith.

Thank goodness for a busy banding trip after a really slow winter banding season. More reports are coming in, and I'll head back to the coast early this week. I'll also make a swing down through central Florida the third week of January, so let me add to you me banding schedule if you have a hummer.

Past Hummer Updates for me and Fred Dietrich are available at our web site.

[www.http//hummingbirdresearch.net](http://hummingbirdresearch.net). Just click on Hummer Updates.

Thanks,

Fred