

Fellow Hummer Lovers,

October 11, 2018

My thoughts are with all our hummer hosts affected by the hurricane as you start to recover. I hope you are safe and had minimal damage.

I hope you had as many Ruby-throated hummers as I had during fall migration. Most of them are in Mexico now, and it's time to start looking for our winter hummers.

During the summer, I got good news about a couple of our past winter hummers. On May 27, a guy in Utopia, New Brunswick, Canada found a dead male Ruby-throated in his garage. He saw the band and reported it. I banded that bird January 24, 2014 at Mary Boston's home in Lakeland, FL, 1,700 miles south of where it was found. Over the past twenty winters, I have banded over 1,000 wintering Ruby-throated hummers, and that was the first ever encountered on its breeding grounds. It was a real "snow bird" migrating between Canada and central Florida.

On July 23, my friend Kelly Bryan in the Davis Mountains in west Texas caught a female Rufous I banded January 23, 2018 at Lucy and Bob Duncan's home in Gulf Breeze, FL. That bird wasn't following what we think is the normal migration pattern for hummers coming to the Southeast. I hope it returns to the Duncan's home, so we will learn more about migration patterns.

I haven't banded any western hummers so far this season, but we are off to a great start with returning previously banded hummers. Jan and Ken Taylor in Foley are excited to have their female Rufous back for the eighth winter. Steve Backes in Valrico, FL has his beautiful male Rufous back for the seventh winter, and Ron Kittinger near Birmingham reports his female Rufous back for the seventh winter. Now we need to confirm the band numbers on those birds with pictures or catching them to read the band.

We have confirmed two return winter Ruby-throated hummers. A host in Tallahassee got pictures of the band to confirm his bird is back for the third winter. Joe Misiaszek in Lakeland, FL sent me pictures of the band on his second-year return.

Please contact me if you have a hummer that isn't a Ruby-throated, and I'll come check it out. Rubies count as winter hummers after November 15, and then please let me know about any hummers coming to your feeder.

Emma Rhodes, who was on our Fort Morgan banding crew, just got her permit to band hummers. She will start off helping me in Baldwin and Mobile counties. It is great to get a young bander involved in our research.

I hope to see you and a hummer soon,

Fred