

Fellow Hummer Lovers

October 26, 2019

Most of our wonderful Ruby-throated hummers have migrated now, but I'm getting more reports than usual about some lingering at homes. The cooler weather forecast for next weekend will probably send most of them on their way. Most hummer hosts reported larger than normal numbers during fall migration. We never know all the reason why, but I think a successful nesting season and the drought bringing more hummers to feeders contributed to good numbers during migration.

It doesn't count as a winter hummer, but a good bird during migration was a banded adult male Ruby-throated Emma Rhodes captured September 27 on the Fort Morgan Road west of Gulf Shores, AL. The hummer was banded in May in Chesterville, MD. It was right on time heading to the tropics for the winter.

We are getting our first reports of wintering hummers. Steve Backes in Valrico, FL has identified his male Rufous back for the sixth winter, and a female Rufous is back for the seventh winter south of Birmingham. Joe Misiaszek in Lakeland, FL has taken enough pictures to identify two returning Ruby-throated hummers; one back for the second winter and the other back for the third winter. On October 17, Emma Rhodes caught a banded adult male Rufous in west Mobile that I banded this past January in Atmore, AL at Paula and Ralph Wright's home.

Please look carefully at any hummers at your feeders now, because they may not be Ruby-throated. I have three good reports of Rufous at homes on the coast, but they aren't using feeders much because of all the flowers. Females and young males are hard to identify, but I might be able to identify your hummer if you send me a picture.

Ruby-throated hummers count as winter birds starting November 15, so please let me know of any hummers after that date. One of us will be glad to come identify and band your winter visitor and include it in our continuing research.

I hope to see you and a hummer soon,

Fred