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HUMMINGBIRDS in the FALL

I still have these lovely avians at my feeders. According to the Audubon Society Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are eastern North America's only breeding hummingbird aren't we lucky!

But their breeding season is at an end and I know they will soon be beginning their fall migration. Almost all leave North America in fall, wintering from Mexico to Costa Rica or Panama. Some may cross the Gulf of Mexico but many go around, concentrating along the Texas coast.



The hummers have loved this Mexican cigar plant and scaveola this season, drinking up the fruits of their labor...Ocean Pines. Photos courtesy of <https://www.facebook.com/william.hill.798>

There is a common myth that if you leave your feeders up too long, hummingbirds will be encouraged to stay and not migrate. But that isn't true.

According to Hummingbird-guide.com "Scientists have studied the hummingbird in regard to migration. They have banded many hummingbirds and tracked their marvelous migrations. As a result, we now know scientifically that hummingbirds do not migrate because of a lack of nectar or we stop feeding hummingbirds. It is the length of daylight in autumn and spring that triggers the hormones that cause hummingbirds to migrate. When the hormones surge, the birds become restless. In addition, they start to become nocturnal because hummingbirds migrate at night. Finally, when the length of day shortens even more the hormonal surge becomes greater and our dear hummingbird friends leave us."

So how long should you keep your feeder up? Experts say two weeks after you see the last hummingbird at your feeder. That way you can assist migrants who stop in your yard on their way south.