

SPECIES YOU'LL SEE

Ruby-throated Hummingbird	North Carolina's only nesting hummingbird, and the only one you'll see most of the year. Common statewide. A small number overwinter, mainly near the coast.	BREEDER
Rufous Hummingbird	Fiery orange, famously feisty. North Carolina's most regular winter visitor, typically peaking December–January.	WINTER

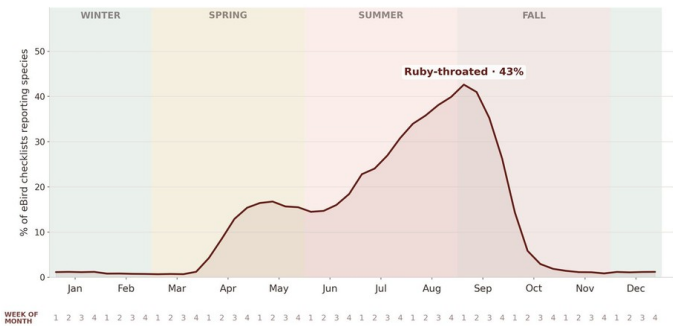
Also recorded: Black-chinned turns up most winters too, in smaller numbers. Anna's, Calliope, Allen's, Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, and Buff-bellied are all genuine rarities, each represented by real but individually-dated records — not birds to expect.

WINTER HUMMINGBIRDS

Rufous is North Carolina's most regular winter visitor, typically peaking in December or January depending on the region. Black-chinned turns up most winters too, in smaller numbers.

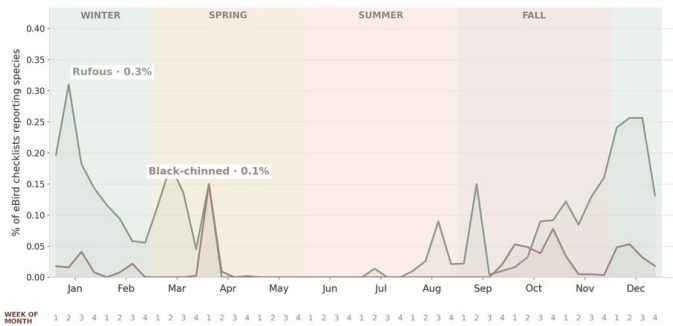
A small number of Ruby-throateds skip migration entirely and overwinter here too, concentrated mainly near the coast. Report any hummingbird seen November 1 – March 15 to [Susan Campbell](#), an NC Museum of Natural Sciences-affiliated researcher who documents these birds statewide.

NORTH CAROLINA'S HUMMINGBIRD SEASON, STATEWIDE



Source: eBird bar chart data (Cornell Lab of Ornithology), 2016–2025 (pulled Aug 2026)

NORTH CAROLINA'S WINTER VISITORS, STATEWIDE



Source: eBird bar chart data (Cornell Lab of Ornithology), 2016–2025 (pulled Aug 2026)

MIGRATION WINDOW

COUNTY	FIRST ARRIVALS	RELIABLY COMMON BY
Mecklenburg (Charlotte)	Early April	Mid-April
Wake (Raleigh)	Early April	Mid-April
Buncombe (Asheville)	Mid-April	Late April
New Hanover (Wilmington)	Early March	Mid-April
Dare (Outer Banks)	Some overwinter*	Early March

*Dare County sees enough winter presence that our 25%-of-peak threshold is crossed in January, before spring migrants even arrive — a genuine coastal overwintering pattern, not a data error. Busiest month statewide: **September**.

TOP NATIVE PLANTS

Spring — First Arrivals

- Eastern Red Columbine
- Fire Pink

Midsummer

- Coral Honeysuckle
- Wild Bergamot

Late Summer — Migration Fuel

- Cardinal Flower

Mountains vs. coast: Asheville-area blooms can run 1–2 weeks behind the Piedmont and coast — plant a mix of early and mid-season bloomers if you're at elevation.

PERFECT LITTLE SANCTUARY® — TOP NORTH CAROLINA PERFORMERS

- ✓ Purple Coneflower — North Carolina native
- ✓ Black-Eyed Susan — North Carolina native
- ✓ Lance-Leaved Coreopsis — North Carolina native
- ✓ Perennial Lupine — confirmed North Carolina native

Best planting window: **October**, timed to spring migration. 9 of the blend's 12 varieties need cold, moist stratification, so fall sowing works best.

FULL SEASON TIMELINE

Feeders up	Early March (coast) – early April (Piedmont, mountains)
First arrivals	Early March (coast) – mid-April (mountains)
Nesting season	Late May – late July
Southbound migration begins	Late July, males first
Statewide peak	Early September
Most departed	Mid-October
Rufous typically peaks	December (Piedmont, mountains) – January (statewide)

