

# Ruby-throated Hummingbird (RTHU)

## Feeder Visit Protocol Field Guide (U.S. and Canada)

### Task

To count the number of times RTHUs visit a feeder in 45 minutes

### What You Need

- ☐ Hummingbird feeder
- ☐ Food for feeder
- ☐ Pencil or pen
- ☐ [Ruby-throated Hummingbird Feeder Visit Data Sheet](#)
- ☐ Bird identification guide
- ☐ Clipboard
- ☐ Binoculars (optional)

### In the Field

1. Fill out the top of the *Ruby-throated Hummingbird Feeder Visit Data Sheet*. Record date and time period that observations are made.
2. For each RTHU seen, identify its sex and age if possible.
3. Record each visit to the feeder on the *Ruby-throated Hummingbird Feeder Visit Data Sheet* during the 45 minutes. Record by the following categories:
  - Red-throated adult male (March through October)
  - Adult female (white-throated, March and April only)
  - Undetermined sex (if throat is not observed)
  - Undetermined sex (adult female/young female/young male, May through October, if throat is unmarked)
  - Young male (if throat is heavily streaked in green or black and/or has one or more red feathers)

**Note 1:** If an individual bird comes to the feeder, departs, and immediately returns to the feeder without perching in the field of view, it counts as only one visit. If it perches within view and returns to the feeder, it still counts as one visit. Only if the bird leaves the field of view and returns can it be counted again, and then it should be counted again even if you think it may be the same bird.

**Note 2:** If you see a color-marked or unusual RTHU, other species of hummingbirds (vagrants), or ANY hummingbird from mid-October through mid-March, describe the color markings and shape of beak. Record your observations on the [Ruby-throated Hummingbird Sighting Data Sheet](#). Contact Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History at [research@hiltonpond.org](mailto:research@hiltonpond.org) or (803) 684-5852 as soon as possible.