

# BIRDS & BLOOMS

BEAUTY IN YOUR OWN B



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hummingbird  
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*gimme  
some  
sugar!*



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TOP  
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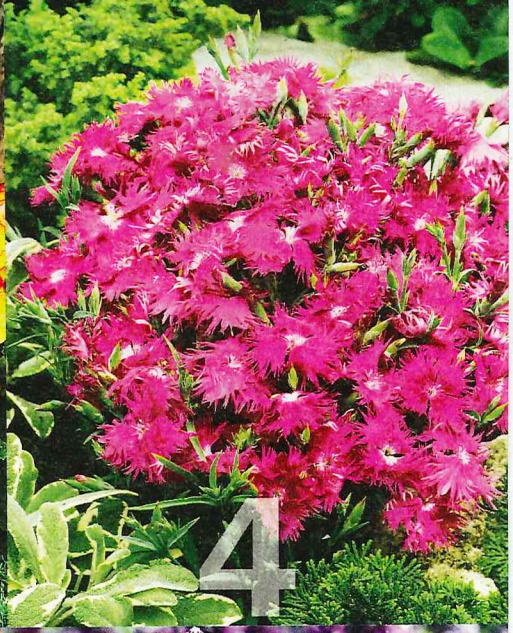
# hummingbird award winners

*You're sure to lure lively hummers  
to your backyard with these picks  
from All-America Selections.*

By Danielle Calkins

Summer isn't quite complete without the cheerful buzz of hummers in your backyard. With so many plants to choose from, it can be overwhelming to pick the right ones. This is where our friends at All-America Selections can help. We looked at some of their best nectar-rich picks from past years to put together this list of award-winning annuals. Give them a try in your garden. Your hummingbirds will thank you!

1



# 1

## Sparkler Blush cleome

(*Cleome hasslerana*, 2002 winner)

Not your typical cleome, this hybrid was a breeding breakthrough when it was introduced. Densely covered with pink flowers, it's more closely branched than other cleomes, giving it a denser appearance on a more compact plant.

**Why we love it:** The airy blush-pink florets attract not only hummingbirds, but butterflies and bees, too. It makes an excellent annual garden hedge.



# 2

## Quartz Burgundy verbena

(*Verbena x hybrida*, 1999 winner)

The intense wine-colored florets will attract hummers first with their color, then with their nectar. Improved resistance to mildew means this annual will flower a lot longer than many other verbenas.

**Why we love it:** With a full season to blossom, this verbena will thrive in any container or hanging basket.



# 5

## Twinny Peach snapdragon

(*Antirrhinum majus*, 2010 winner)

The shape of this variety's colorful florets makes it especially easy for hungry hummingbirds to reach the nectar. With their bewitching blend of peach, yellow and light-orange blooms, these snapdragons provide excellent coverage for both annual borders and containers.

**Why we love it:** These easy-care plants show exceptional tolerance to hot summer growing conditions.



# 6

## Avalon Bright Pink nicotiana

(*Nicotiana x sandarae*, 2001 winner)

This dwarf variety of flowering tobacco is one of the smallest and earliest-blooming available. Plants are super-branched, providing a framework for masses of bright-pink flowers that blossom freely all summer long—a real treat for hummers!

**Why we love it:** The star-shaped blooms are visible from quite a distance, and the plant is virtually maintenance-free, making it perfect for both border and container planting.



# 9

## Moonsong Deep Orange marigold

(*Tagetes erecta*, 2010 winner)

The flower color is fade-resistant and such a rich orange it makes others look pale by comparison. Easy to grow in 5- to 6-inch pots, plants will flower in about 70 to 84 days.

**Why we love it:** Over the summer, the old blooms will be covered with green foliage, which keeps the plants looking fresh throughout the growing season.



# 10

## Magellan Coral zinnia

(*Zinnia elegans*, 2005 winner)

This garden zinnia produces masses of clear, bright-colored double coral blooms on bushy, well-branched plants. After the first bloom is over, it treats you to another flush of flowers, lasting all season long.

**Why we love it:** This is only one of six colors in the Magellan series, which performs beautifully outdoors in gardens and containers.



# 3

## Pin Up Flame begonia

(*Begonia x tuberhybrida*, 1999 winner)

This stunning tuberous begonia variety produces loads of 4- to 5-inch single blossoms in a glowing combination of deep yellow with scarlet and orange edges. A prolific bloomer with good weather tolerance and durability, Pin Up Flame will give you fabulous color from summer through fall.

**Why we love it:** All by itself, this begonia will brighten up a shady garden. With minimal care, it's perfect for a patio container, even in your least sunny spots.



# 4

## Supra Purple dianthus

(*Dianthus interspecific*, 2006 winner)

Exceptional, long-blooming garden performance, heat tolerance and attractive flower form and color make this winner worth considering for your garden. Hummers will be attracted to the color and to the plentiful supply of blossoms this annual produces throughout the season.

**Why we love it:** In addition to its grace in the garden, Supra Purple makes a lovely cut flower.



# 7

## Evolution salvia

(*Salvia farinacea*, 2006 winner)

This variety expands the salvia color range with its lilac spikes. Hummingbirds, bees and butterflies are attracted to the well-branched, robust plants.

**Why we love it:** Pair it with a Lady in Red or Summer Jewel variety, and you have a hummingbird magnet!



# 8

## Purple Wave petunia

(*Petunia x hybrida*, 1995 winner)

This highly popular variety has flower power to spare. The abundance of iridescent purple blossoms draws both hummingbirds and bees. Even better, it was recently improved for earlier bloom time and slightly larger flowers without sacrificing the eye-catching color.

**Why we love it:** This petunia has a vigorous spreading growth pattern that carpets gardens or delivers an astounding hanging basket.



Danielle Calkins is our assistant digital editor. Like hummingbirds, she loves red flowers, especially roses.

## How'd they get the vote?

These Top 10 plants, like all other AAS winners, are top of their class. How does it work, exactly? AAS is an organization made up of seed-industry professionals, and they conduct confidential and impartial trials of never-before-sold seed varieties throughout North America.

They grow established varieties next to the new entries for a comparison of growth habit, flower or fruit size and many other factors. Only the best performers—eight in 2011—are declared AAS Winners.

**Web Plus:** For a full list of the newest AAS winners, visit our Web Plus page, [birdsandblooms.com/plus](http://birdsandblooms.com/plus), where you'll find the best vegetables and flowers for 2011.