

# Hummer House News

Spring 2013

Volume 1 Issue 1

## Upcoming Events

### Birding 101

A basic birding class to help further your bird watching skills. There is no charge for the class but reservations are required as seating is limited. Content will be the same in both classes. Call or email Cathy for reservations for one of the classes.

**March 23 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

**April 16 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

### Private Bird Banding

The program is limited to 25 participants who will see the banding process and a chance to be up close and personal with birds in the hand. This program offers excellent photographic opportunities. Lunch is included with the cost of \$25 for adults and \$15 for children under 12. For registration, please call Cathy.

**May 18 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**June 22 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

### Contact Us

[cathy@hummerhouse.com](mailto:cathy@hummerhouse.com)

325-255-2254

### A Word from Cathy....

*Dan and I enjoyed a rather quiet "off season" this year. We avoided the nasty flu bug and have enjoyed good health. We have had just enough rain to keep the bluebonnet plants alive but will need lots more for them to bloom. The South Concho is low but is still trickling over the dam. The spring continues to run. We hosted 7 wintering hummingbirds and our usual "winter" birds. We expect to see Black-chinned Hummingbirds arriving by mid-March.*

### Now is the time to get ready for hummers.

Put out feeders and nesting cotton by mid-March. Nesting material, refills and feeders are available at online store at [www.hummerhouse.com](http://www.hummerhouse.com) or at the shop in the Hummer House Observation Room.

### Available Cottage Openings

**Hummer House** July 21-25,  
most of August

**Lodge** July 2-9, most of August

**Hideaway** April 9-11, April 16-18,  
April 22-25, June 12-14,  
June 25-27, July 2-11,  
July 21-25, all of August

### Winter Hummingbirds

The Hummer House lived up to its name this winter as seven hummingbirds have been visiting there all or part of this season. Five of these are Rufous Hummingbirds that commonly live in the mountain west as far north as Alaska and two are Allen's Hummingbirds that commonly live and breed in California. The Allen's Hummingbirds are rare in this part of Texas at any season of the year and especially so in the middle of winter. One of the Rufous Hummingbirds is a full colored adult male that has been present for at least two months. We encourage you to maintain a feeder during the winter for these special visitors to our area.



**Another Winter Visitor at Hummer House  
Red-breasted Nuthatch**



### Skillet Mixture

- 1 cup shortening (or lard)
- 1 cup crunchy peanut butter
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups quick oats
- 2 cups corn meal
- 1 cup black oil sunflower seed hearts
- 1 cup black oil seed
- 1 cup mixed bird seed

In the old days, we melted the lard and peanut butter together in our iron skillet and then hand stirred in the dry ingredients. I now combine the lard and peanut butter with my Kitchenaid mixer. Then I add the dry ingredients and combine until the mixture resembles cookie dough. Press mixture firmly into an iron skillet and hang on a tree.

### Hummingbird Nectar

Pour 4.5 cups sugar into a 1 gallon plastic jug. Add 2 drops red food coloring and water to fill container. Place lid on jug and shake for about 1 minute. Pour mixture into feeder. Refrigerate unused portion. Our nectar is a bit sweeter than most to mimic the sugar content in flowers. The red food coloring is not necessary to attract hummingbirds but allows you to see from a distance the amount of nectar in your feeder. Also, if the water appears to be cloudy, remove it from your feeder and replace with fresh nectar.