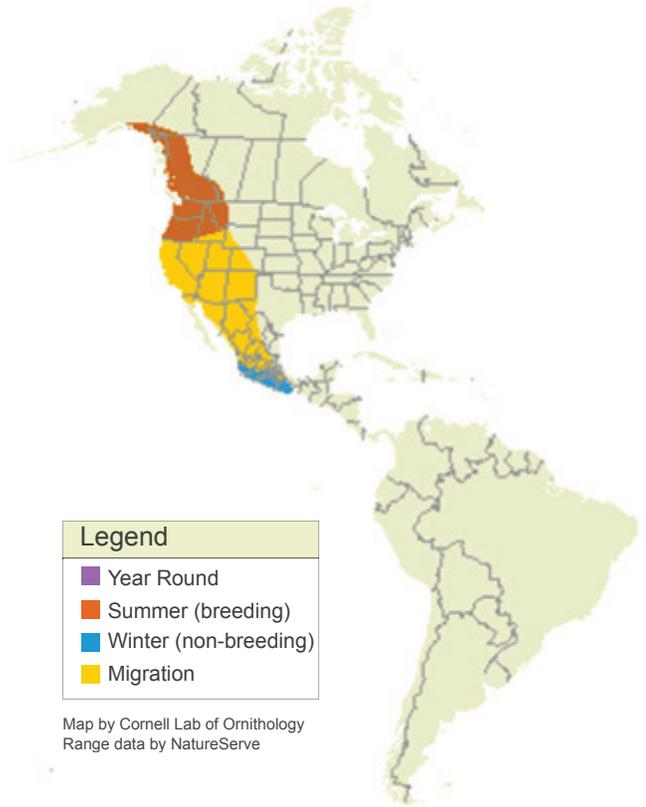


# Rufous Hummingbird

*Selasphorus rufus*

The feistiest hummingbird in North America. The brilliant orange male and the green-and-orange female Rufous Hummingbird are relentless attackers at flowers and feeders, going after (if not always defeating) even the large hummingbirds of the Southwest, which can be double their weight. Rufous Hummingbirds are wide-ranging, and breed farther north than any other hummingbird. Look for them in spring in California, summer in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, and fall in the Rocky Mountains as they make their annual circuit of the West.



## Keys to Identification

### Size and Shape

A fairly small hummingbird with a slender, nearly straight bill, a tail that tapers to a point when folded, and fairly short wings that don't reach the end of the tail when the bird is perched.

### Color Pattern

In good light, male Rufous Hummingbirds glow like coals: bright orange on the back and belly, with a vivid iridescent-red throat. Females are green above with rufous-washed flanks, rufous patches in the green tail, and often a spot of orange in the throat.

### Behavior

Rufous Hummingbirds have the hummingbird gift for fast, darting flight and pinpoint maneuverability. They are pugnacious birds that tirelessly chase away other hummingbirds, even in places they're only visiting on migration. Like other hummers, they eat insects as well as nectar, taking them from spider webs or catching them in midair.

### Habitat

Rufous Hummingbirds breed in open areas, yards, parks, and forests up to treeline. On migration they pass through mountain meadows as high as 12,600 feet where nectar-rich, tubular flowers are blooming. Winter habitat in Mexico includes shrubby openings and oak-pine forests at middle to high elevation.

## Cool Facts

- The Rufous Hummingbird makes one of the longest migratory journeys of any bird in the world, as measured by body size. At just over 3 inches long, its roughly 3,900-mile movement (one-way) from Alaska to Mexico is equivalent to 78,470,000 body lengths. In comparison, the 13-inch-long Arctic Tern's one-way flight of about 11,185 mi is only 51,430,000 body lengths.

## Measurements

### Both Sexes

- Length - 2.8 - 3.5 inches
- Wingspan - 4.3 inches
- Weight - 0.1 - 0.2 ounces