

JUNE 2009

# BIRDS & BLOOMS®

BEAUTY IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

A detailed photograph of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in flight, hovering near a cluster of pink flowers. The bird's wings are spread, showing intricate feather patterns. Its throat is a vibrant, iridescent red, and its body is a mix of green and white. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

MAGICAL  
Ruby-Throat

Under the  
*Spell* of  
Hummingbirds

23 pages of tips,  
ideas and photos



# BIRDS & BLOOMS

North America's #1 bird  
and garden magazine

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From the Editor:

I'm an optimist. Ask anyone who knows me and they'll tell you that I'm always trying to find the positive side of things. That includes gardening. And I know I'm not the only one.

Photographer and author Marina Schinz wrote, "Gardening is an exercise in optimism." I think of that quote often this time of year, as the most active outdoor season approaches. It's a fitting observation.

Gardeners, and bird-watchers, too, are optimists. We have to be!

That hopeful outlook is expressed in many ways. I think of my 6-year-old son, pushing mashed-up strawberries or collections of apple seeds into the soil and waiting for growth. I think of gardeners who face weeds that won't quit or weather that won't cooperate or barriers like time or mobility. I think of bird-watchers who try and try again to outsmart squirrels or discover the identity of a mystery visitor or attract a particular bird species (for me, that's hummingbirds).

Despite frustrations and failures and unexpected surprises, we're willing to keep trying. The second part of the phrase I quoted above is "Sometimes, it is a triumph of hope over experience." How true.

Because although my son didn't grow a strawberry patch and I did not attract any hummingbirds, I know for sure we're both itching to try again this summer. In part, that's because the rewards are worth the effort, but it's also because we are—like many of you—optimists.

**A NEW FACE.** Starting next issue, you'll see a new face in this column. Stacy Tornio, who has been with *Birds & Blooms* for the past 4 years, will be taking the reins as editor.

Though you haven't seen her here before, you've been enjoying her work for quite a while now. As the magazine's managing editor, she pulled together the fantastic stories for all of our Hummingbird Special Issues, including this one, our biggest ever. She's also the creative force behind many of the fun initiatives we've had in the magazine, like the Name This Plant challenge (see the results on page 5) and the Birdhouse Auction (page 55).

Now, don't think I'm going anywhere. I'm just taking a behind-the-scenes role as the executive editor.

Believe me, I'll still be watching—and reading—this magazine that I've had the honor of working on for the past 9 years. And I'll continue to celebrate the beauty of our own backyards.

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ON THE COVER

Ruby-throated hummingbird  
by Maslowski Wildlife



● To order a print of this photograph, see page 5.



# Garden Chat

We always enjoy hearing from *Birds & Blooms* readers. So if you have a comment or suggestion to share, or would like to show off sights from your backyard, send a letter to "Garden Chat." Follow the Contributor's Guidelines below.



## We Were Wondering...

The same plant shown on the cover of the April/May issue is growing in one of my flower beds (above). It seems to thrive in our hot climate and spreads quickly. What is it called?

—Cheryl Campion, Cypress, Texas

*Editor's Note:* Many readers wondered about the identity of the pretty purple flower on our cover. It's spiderwort, which is a native wildflower commonly found in the eastern United States.

## Making a Connection

I really enjoyed reading the Feb/Mar issue. However, there was one article I found most interesting. It was the Q&A section of "No. 1 Green Thumb" (pages 16-18).

I found it to be thoroughly interactive and engaging. After reading Jeanne



## Buy a Photographic Print!

Prints of designated photographs in this issue are available for purchase. To order, call 1-866/962-1191 or visit [www.birdsandbloomsprints.com](http://www.birdsandbloomsprints.com).

● Look for this color bar on the photos available.

Walsh's answers several times, I began to ask myself the same questions.

—Roseann Pagani  
Columbia, Maryland

## Learning As We Go

In the Dec/Jan issue, Melinda Myers identified a plant as mistletoe ("Glad You Asked!," pages 14-15). She may be right, but I think it's actually a resurrection plant. This plant has the characteristics Gail Gagnon talked about, plus it looks a lot like the ones I've seen.

—Patricia Smith  
Virginia Beach, Virginia

*Melinda's response:* One of the best parts of my role at *Birds & Blooms* is meeting gardeners from around the world. While I share what I know, I am continually learning new things as well. And that is the case here.

Readers have introduced me to the resurrection plant (*Selaginella*). It is in a group called lycopods and is native from Texas to Arizona and farther south. It produces green, leaf-like stem extensions when water is available and dries up into a ball during drought. Thanks to the gardeners who were so willing to pass along what they know.

## Much Appreciated

We would just like to express how beautiful the photos were, especially the cover, in the April/May issue. After a long, hard winter for many, the sight of the spring issue was a definite joy.

—Roger and Jane Slutzker  
Lorain, Ohio

## We Have a Winner!

We received more than 12,000 votes in our Name This Plant Contest, and our winner received more than 25% of the total votes! And the name of this gorgeous coreopsis will be.....

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TERRA NOVA'S RUBY FROST COREOPSIS, AND TO SEE ALL THE PEOPLE WHO SUGGESTED THIS NAME, VISIT OUR WEB SITE.



## Contributor's Guidelines

We love hearing from readers...in fact, we couldn't publish this magazine without them! To share your story or photo, send it to us, along with your full name, daytime phone number, E-mail address and mailing address. Each reader contributor whose story, photo or short item is published receives a *Birds & Blooms* tote bag. If you're submitting for a particular column, note that as well.

We regret that we can no longer return reader materials. If your photo is irreplaceable, please make a good-quality copy to share with us. To E-mail your photos, please send us the highest picture quality available, and attach photos as JPEG files. Due to huge mail volume, our small staff can't acknowledge receipt of submissions, but we'll always let you know if they're published.

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