

A Hummingbird Tale

While I was working in my garage potting up some plants one day in late May I kept hearing a loud buzzing sound and then something bumping against the window. Thinking it was maybe a bumblebee or June bug, I ignored it at first. But as it continued for a while I decided to investigate further, and to my surprise what did I find but a male ruby-throated hummingbird completely entangled in a huge spider web hanging from the ceiling!

I carefully pulled down the web with him inside and delicately cradled him in my hand. He sat there very still as I gently pulled the spider web from his tiny wings and long beak. One wing was sticking out at an odd angle and I feared it was broken. Then I remembered that a hummingbird's wings go in all directions when they fly so I tucked it back up against his body where it belonged. He felt light as a feather in the palm of my hand and I stood there in awe admiring him as the sun glinted off his ruby red throat and iridescent blue-green body.

After almost five minutes resting in my hand he took a short upward test flight to see if everything was okay. Then off he flew, straight over to my hummingbird feeder, where he sat and drank and drank and drank for the next ten minutes or so, refueling after his ordeal.

The next morning when I came out of my garage a hummingbird buzzed me briefly before flying off to visit the flowers. Was he saying "Thank you"? Well the pleasure was all mine, as I know I will never forget the day I held this precious jewel of the bird world in my hand!



—Jane Gahlman