

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD AT NEW HAZELTON, BRITISH COLUMBIA

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The Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*), an eastern North American breeding species, ranges west across central Canada to the west-central border of British Columbia and Alberta (Robinson et al. 1996). The bird's current status in British Columbia is not well known. Campbell et al. (1990), on the basis of only four occurrences, considered the hummingbird "casual on the south coast and accidental in the Peace Lowlands" of northeastern British Columbia. More recently, Phinney (1998) reported the Ruby-throated Hummingbird as a "very rare summer visitant. Does not breed" in the Dawson Creek area. During the late 1990s and early 2000s there have been a few additional reports from the Peace River region including Cecil Lake, Chetwynd (Campbell et al. 2007), Feller's Heights (Phinney

1998), Fort St. John, Pouce Coupe, Rose Prairie, and Taylor (R.W. Campbell pers. comm.).

The species still remains rare in northeastern British Columbia and Phinney (1998) suggests that the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is now declining with the increase in Rufous Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufus*) and Calliope Hummingbirds (*Stellula calliope*).

This article documents an extralimital occurrence of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird at New Hazelton, British Columbia. On 6 August 2007, I was up early as we were heading into the mountains on a trip. We have a few Rufous Hummingbirds around so the feeders are still up and I noticed another hummingbird, a male, which I could not identify. When I got home later in the day the mystery hummer was still feeding and I was able to get a better look at him. It was identified as a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

On 7 August, it was feeding again but dominating the feeder and keeping the Rufous Hummingbirds away. Fortunately, I have a second feeder that I keep out of view of the first one, so males don't try to dominate both feeders and the female Rufous Hummingbirds can still feed. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird had a couple of favourite sites where it perched so it could keep a close eye on the feeder and chase away the other hummingbirds. I was able to set

up my Swarovski spotting scope and get good views of the ruby-throat from about 12 metres (40 ft) away. I called my niece who took some photographs so we could have a record of this sighting (Figure 1).

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird was last seen around 0830 hrs on 9 August. I have lived here since I was two years old and have never seen a hummingbird like this one.

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Literature Cited

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Figure 1. The shape and general body colouration (a) along with the black chin, red throat, whitish underparts, and dusky green flanks (b) helped identify the male Ruby-throated Hummingbird. New Hazelton, BC. 7 August 2007 (Kim Tremblay). BC Photo 3597.

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About the Author

Ray has been watching birds for 35 years and has a good working knowledge of the local bird life.
