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*Just A Spoonful of Sugar Helps the Nectar Go Down: Do Hummingbirds Prefer Homemade or Store-bought Nectar?*

The purpose of this project is to test whether hummingbirds prefer homemade or store-bought nectar. My hypothesis was that the hummingbirds would prefer the homemade nectar over the store-bought nectar (Perky Pet brand) because there might be more sugar in the homemade than the store-bought nectar. The homemade nectar is based on the mix recommended by the Audubon California (2012). I tested this by placing two hummingbird feeders side by side each filled with a different type of nectar. Our test period occurred in August 2012, during the peak of the hummingbird fall migration through the San Luis Valley. Each evening, after a full day of hummingbird feeding activity, I measured the amount of nectar consumed. After 20 days of measuring, I found out that the hummingbirds preferred the homemade nectar over the Perky Pet by consuming a total of 719.73 milliliters compared to 266.25 milliliters, respectively. The hummingbirds drank more homemade nectar on 15 out of the 20 testing days. My hypothesis was correct, in that the homemade nectar has 47% more sucrose per fluid ounce than the Perky Pet. Not only is homemade nectar more satisfying to the hummingbirds, it is also cheaper than store-bought brands. This means that in tough economic times, you can still feed and enjoy hummingbirds for very little cost.