

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**Animal Abstract**

**Element Code:** ABNUC29080

**Data Sensitivity:** No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Amazilia beryllina*

**COMMON NAME:** Berylline Hummingbird

**SYNONYMS:**

**FAMILY:** Trochilidae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** Deppe, 1830

**TYPE LOCALITY:**

**TYPE SPECIMEN:**

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** There are at least 319 species of hummingbirds. The *Amazilia beryllina* is one of three species of the genus *Amazilia* in Arizona.

**DESCRIPTION:** The Berylline hummingbird attains a body length of 11 cm (4.25 in) and a weight of 4.25 to 5.75 grams. The male has a glittering green chest, and a gray to brown abdomen. Above, it is equally green on the crown and upper back, with a chestnut lower back that blends with a purple-chestnut rump. The central tail feathers are purple, and the outer ones are rufous with purple tips. The wings have a beautiful rufous patch not found on any other American hummer. The upper bill is black, the lower one reddish. The female has colors similar to the male though somewhat duller and grayer. Young beryllines have completely black bills.

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:** The bright rufous tail and wings separate this hummingbird from all others.

**ILLUSTRATIONS:**

Color photo (Wildlife Views, 1995:10)

Color drawing (National Geographic, 1999:265)

Color photo (Tyrell, 1985:10)

Color drawing (Sibley 2000)

Color photo (In <http://www.sabo.org/images/behunest.jpg>)

Color photo (Bowers in <http://www.enature.com/fieldguide>)

**TOTAL RANGE:** From southeastern Arizona to Sonora and Chihuahua southward to Chiapas and east to Veracruz, Mexico. Also found in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** Southeastern Arizona, in the Chiricahua, Huachuca and Santa Rita mountain ranges.

### **SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**BIOLOGY:** A hummingbird's brush tipped tongue is tubular at the tip. They also have the unique ability to hover and feed at the same time, storing their food in a small crop for sustenance overnight. They have the ability to endure temporary cool weather or cold nights by becoming dormant. Hummingbirds in northern ranges, migrate in the winter to warmer climates. Because of their small size, they have one of the highest metabolism of any warm-blooded vertebrate animal in the world. They must feed almost continuously all day to remain alive. In order to search for the food need to supply such a high metabolism, they are able to fly forwards, backwards, shift sideways, and fly straight up and down.

**REPRODUCTION:** Females build the nest and raise the young by themselves. They also establish nesting territories from which they drive out other hummingbirds. The nests are made of thin blade grass, completely dried and held together by spider webs. Nests are secured to supporting branches, also using spider webbing. The nest exterior is covered with green leaflike lichens, often with stands of grass streaming below. The nests are oval and measure 40 to 50 mm with a cavity depth of 15mm. Females usually lay 2 eggs, that are long elliptical to long subelliptical; eggs are white and measure 13 x 9 mm. In Arizona, *Amazilia beryllina* was observed nesting in July, hatching in July and August and fledging in late August to September. They are double brooded. In Oaxaca the nests have been observed in shrubs, oak and pine up to 15m above the ground. In the U.S. the nests have been found in riparian sycamores between 5 and 8m above the ground.

**FOOD HABITS:** Nectar from flowers is the main food source for hummingbirds. They also eat small beetles, weevils, bugs, flies, gnats, mosquitoes, aphids, leafhoppers, flying ants, wasps, and spiders. Most hummingbirds get the insects from flowers.

**HABITAT:** Wooded riparian canyons, open woodland of primarily pine and pine-oak; non-breeding season they can be found ranging into arid scrub, deciduous forests.

**ELEVATION:** About 5,000 – 6,500 ft. (1,524-1,981 m).

**PLANT COMMUNITY:** Madrean evergreen woodland

**POPULATION TRENDS:** Unknown

**SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION****ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:****STATE STATUS:****OTHER STATUS:**

Not Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS  
Region 3 1999)  
[Forest Service Sensitive USDA, FS Region  
3 1988]

**MANAGEMENT FACTORS:** Unknown

**PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:** Unknown

**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:**

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** USFS – Coronado National Forest; AMNH -  
Southwestern Research Station; TNC – Ramsey Canyon.

**SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

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USDA, Forest Service Region 3. 1999. Regional Forester's Sensitive Species List.

**MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

The family is thought to have originated in South America with a secondary radiation into North America. Species name is Latin for the color of beryl, bluish green to sea green.

**Revised:** 2002-02-11 (AMS)  
2004-01-02 (AMS)

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Arizona Game and Fish Department. 20XX (= **year of last revision as indicated at end of abstract**). X...X (= **taxon of animal or plant**). Unpublished abstract compiled and edited by the Heritage Data Management System, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, AZ. X pp.