



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!



ENN MEMBERS

- » [Our Editorial Affiliate Network](#)
- » [Partner Sites](#)

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- » [Submit a News Release](#)
- » [Be a Part of ENN](#)

ADVERTISE WITH ENN

- » [Why Advertise with ENN](#)
- » [Contact ENN Sales Team](#)

ENN ARCHIVES

- » [News Archive](#)

ABOUT ENN

- » [History](#)
- » [Mission Statement](#)
- » [Our Staff](#)
- » [Editorial Philosophy](#)
- » [Contact ENN](#)
- » [ENN Terms](#)
- » [Fair Use Notice](#)

Printer Friendly Version



From: University of British Columbia via EurekAlert!
Published July 18, 2016 04:10 PM

Hummingbird vision wired to avoid high-speed collisions

Hummingbirds are among nature's most agile fliers. They can travel faster than 50 kilometres per hour and stop on a dime to navigate through dense vegetation.

Now researchers have discovered that the tiny birds process visual information differently from other animals, perhaps to handle the demands of their extreme aerial acrobatics.

"Birds fly faster than insects and it's more dangerous if they collide with things," said Roslyn Dakin, a postdoctoral fellow in the UBC's department of zoology who led the study. "We wanted to know how they avoid collisions and we found that hummingbirds use their environment differently than insects to steer a precise course."

Note: Watch a video of the experiments here: <https://youtu.be/6Z45BaswaOs>

Scientists at UBC placed hummingbirds in a specially-designed tunnel and projected patterns on the walls to figure out how the birds steer a course to avoid collisions when they are in flight. They set up eight cameras to track the movement of hummingbirds as they flew through a 5.5-metre long tunnel.

"We took advantage of hummingbirds' attraction to sugar water to set up a perch on one side of the tunnel and a feeder on the other, and they flew back and forth all day," said Douglas Altshuler, associate professor in the department of zoology. "This allowed us to test many different visual stimuli."

While not a lot is known about how birds use vision in flight, it is known that bees process distance by how quickly an object goes past their field of vision, like we do as we drive down a road. As we pass by telephone poles on the side of the road quickly, our brains understand that the objects are nearby; buildings in the distance will take some time to pass, letting us know they are further away.

Read more: [EurekAlert!](#)

Image: Ruby-Throated Hummingbird via [OHIODNR.gov](#)



RELATED ARTICLES

- » [Study Examines Flight of Hummingbirds](#)
June 24, 2005 12:00 AM
- » [Hummingbirds and Hawks, perfect together?](#)
September 6, 2015 07:58 AM
- » [Birders Eye Winter Hummingbirds, Vagrants](#)
February 14, 2005 12:00 AM
- » [Migrating birds may "see" Earth's magnetic field](#)
September 26, 2007 12:30 PM



FEATURED AFFILIATE

ECoreport

View all the featured contributing content by this source

METEOROLOGICAL
DATA SERVICES
AVAILABLE
WORLD WIDE

