

The Hummingbird Whisperer

A selection of spectacular, unique portraits by a professional nature photographer from Canada - whose personal technique and intimate images of birds from the Neotropical Region are admired, envied and imitated throughout the world



Glenn Bartley – A Wildlife Photographer in his own words

My love for photography started as a child many years ago in a backyard in Ontario, Canada. I was lying under a hummingbird feeder with a simple 35mm camera trying desperately to capture an image of these mesmerizing birds. The photos that I captured that day may not have been very good – but the experience led to a love of nature and photography that would one day blossom. Many years later I traveled to Australia for a university semester abroad. The opportunity motivated me to buy a capable camera and to learn more about the art of photography. In those days of slide film and with only a short telephoto zoom lens birds were, for the most part, still out of range. My passion for photography however was growing. Before long digital SLR's became the norm and I had purchased a 300mm f/4 lens. I finally had a set up capable of capturing some good bird images. After completing my undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies I traveled to Costa Rica for 6 months to immerse myself in nature photography. That trip solidified my love of bird photography and, from then on, much of my free time was spent learning this craft. After achieving a Masters of Science degree in Ecological Restoration I once again set off for the New World Tropics. This time my goal was to spend 6 months in Ecuador and do nothing but bird photography. On this trip I practiced and developed my techniques for tropical bird photography and especially multiframe hummingbird photography. By the time I returned to Canada many people were starting to take notice of my unique

ability to create stunning images of rare and nearly impossible birds to photograph. Today my images are well respected and represented around the world. I am an award winning photographer whose work is regularly featured in North American and International nature books, calendars and publications. My work is regularly featured in magazines such as Audubon, Birdwatching, Canadian Wildlife, Birders World, and many more. My images regularly appear in books on birds including several by National Geographic. I have also published several books of my own including my most recent books *Birds of Ecuador* and *Birds of Vancouver Island*. My primary equipment includes Canon digital SLR camera bodies and an assortment of Canon lenses. By far the lens that sees the most use is the Canon 500mm F4 L often coupled with a 1.4x Canon teleconverter. I also use the Canon 400mm F5.6L, 300mm F4L, 70-200mm F4L and the 17-40mm F4L for wide angle shots and landscape photography. I shoot most images using a sturdy tripod. I use the Gitzo 3540 XLS carbon fiber tripod and a Wimberly gimbal head. I use a variety of Canon flashes including the Canon 580EX II with a Better Beamer flash extender, 430EX and MR-14EX macro flash. In addition to my own photographic pursuits, I also lead instructional photographic workshops to exciting destinations throughout the Americas. These tours are designed to take advantage of my extensive experience in this region and teach participants to capture their own spectacular images of tropical birds.



Tufted Coquette - Trinidad

One of the most extravagantly adorned birds in the world, the Tufted Coquette can be found on the Island of Trinidad.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/200 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Exposure compensation: -2/3

Flash: On

ISO: 800

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM

+1.4x



Rainbow Starfrontlet - Ecuador

Multiflash hummingbird photography works by eliminating most or all of the natural light in the image. By controlling the light on the subject and background, using artificial sources, the photographer can also control the duration of light that exposes the image. If the flash fires for only 1/16000 of a second then only that brief moment is recorded in the image.

In this way the photographer can freeze the rapid wing beats of a hummingbird.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 50D

Shutter speed: 1/250 sec

Aperture: 9

Flash: On

ISO: 200

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM



Bearded Mountaineer – Peru

Endemic to southern Peru, this species feeds most commonly at the Nicotina flower. This image was captured by waiting at the birds favourite flowering bush and using natural light.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/640 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: On

ISO: 400

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM +1.4x

Buff-tailed Coronet – Ecuador

In this classic multiframe hummingbird photograph the goal was to create a natural looking scene using artificial light from 5 flashes, an artificial background and a staged flower.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 50D

Shutter speed: 1/250 sec

Aperture: 6.3

Flash: On

ISO: 200

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM



Ruby Topaz - Tobago

The iridescence of hummingbirds is often brought out by the positioning of the flash/es. Would-be spectacular images may not live up to their potential if the delicate angle of iridescence is not successfully captured.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D
Shutter speed: 1/250 sec
Aperture: 8
Flash: On
ISO: 400
Lens: EF400mm f/5.6L USM

**Black-crested Coquette -
Costa Rica**

The Coquette's are some of the smallest and cutest hummingbirds. They are typified by not only their small size, but also the amazing ornamental feathers that the male birds possess.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/4000 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: Off

ISO: 800

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM +1.4x



Wire-crested Thorntail - Peru

The long tail and strange head feathers of the Wire-crested Thorntail give it an "out-of-this-world" appearance.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/1000 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: Off

ISO: 800

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM +1.4x



**Fiery-throated Hummingbird - Costa Rica**

A truly spectacular species of the Costa Rican highlands, the Fiery-throated Hummingbird has an iridescent throat that is unlike any other hummingbird.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/640 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: On

ISO: 800

Lens: EF300mm f/4L IS USM

White-necked Jacobin - Ecuador

The White-necked Jacobin is one of the most wide ranging tropical hummingbird species. It is easy to identify by its unique blue head and contrasting white neck.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 50D

Shutter speed: 1/250 sec

Aperture: 7.1

Flash: On

ISO: 200

Lens: EF300mm f/4L IS USM





**Sword-billed
Hummingbird -
Ecuador**

The Sword-billed Hummingbird has an unbelievably long bill. It is so long and heavy that these birds must perch with their bills straight up in the air or risk tipping over. Watching these birds sip nectar from the long tubular flowers high in the Andes, it is easy to see how these birds have evolved along with the flowers that they feed upon.

Camera Model: Canon
EOS 50D
Shutter speed: 1/250 sec
Aperture: 8
Flash: On
ISO: 200
Lens: EF300mm f/4L IS
USM +1.4x

**Great
Sapphirewing -
Ecuador**

One of the largest hummingbirds in the world, the Great Sapphirewing lives in the highlands of the Andes. Their large wings beat slower than many smaller species giving them an appearance that almost resembles a large butterfly.

Camera Model: Canon
EOS 50D
Shutter speed:
1/250 sec
Aperture: 8
Flash: On
ISO: 200
Lens: EF300mm f/4L IS
USM





Marvelous Spatuletail - Peru

Perhaps the most spectacular of all the hummingbirds, the Marvelous Spatuletail lives only in a small area in Northern Peru. The males have incredibly long tails that truly must be seen to be believed.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/250 sec

Aperture: 7.1

Flash: On

ISO: 200

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM



Gray-chinned Hermit - Ecuador

The Hermits are not the most flashy of all the hummingbirds. Generally gray and brown with decurved bills, these birds often feed at the flowers of *Heliconia* plants. (1)

Camera Model: Canon EOS 50D

Shutter speed: 1/250 sec

Aperture: 9

Flash: On

ISO: 200

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM



Violet Sabrewings - Costa Rica

A large hummingbird of the cloud forests of Costa Rica, the Violet Sabrewings is truly unmistakable. (2)

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/200 sec

Aperture: 6.3

Flash: On

ISO: 250

Lens: EF300mm f/4L IS USM





Rufous-crested Coquette - Peru

Sometimes a simple portrait of a species allows the viewer to best admire the characteristics of these amazing birds.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/400 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: On

ISO: 400

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM +1.4x

**Violet-crowned Woodnymph - Costa Rica**

Hummingbirds, like all birds, must bathe to keep their feathers clean. These birds are also very habitual about where they take their baths. This image was captured using a multi flash technique at a location where I had seen hummingbirds bathing repeatedly. After waiting for several days I finally captured an image of one of these beautiful birds emerging from the water.

Camera Model: Canon EOS 7D

Shutter speed: 1/200 sec

Aperture: 5.6

Flash: On

ISO: 800

Lens: EF500mm f/4L IS USM +1.4x