
2. Hummingbirds

Why in News?

- A study has recently found that the loss of a key gene, FBP2 makes hummingbirds more efficient at breaking down sugar to use it for energy

Highlights

- Hummingbird, native to American continent, has approximately 350 species which are found in Iridescent colours. These birds are comparable to India's Sunbirds.
- Aztecs referred to them as Huitzilin or 'A ray of sun'.
- These are small birds, barely 5cm long and weigh 2 grams.
- Their signature 'Hum' is created by beating the wings upto 50 times per second
- They can hover majestically as they sip nectar from a flower (mostly Tubular flowers such as Lantana and rhododendron), and even fly backward.
- Relative to their body mass, hummingbirds have the highest metabolic rate (calories burnt per minute) among vertebrates. Most of this energy comes from nectar.
- Rapid sugar uptake by their digestive system ensures that they utilise energy from nectar ingested just a few minutes ago.
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