

CREATION CARE GREEN TIPS - JUNE

1. Of the more than **350 hummingbird species, 16 breed in the U.S.**, with more than **180 million North American plant species** dependent on hummingbirds for pollination. Hummingbirds look for orange, yellow, purple and especially red flowers to supply their nutrition, eating nectar and insects as often as **18 times an hour**, which enables them to consume the human equivalent of a whopping **150,000 calories a day** required to maintain **nearly 500 heartbeats per minute while resting, and up to 1,200 beats when in action**. Hummers need native trees and tall shrubs to provide cover and places to perch, as well as a **mix of plant species (natives, not hybrids) that have overlapping blooming seasons**, especially local or state-native species indigenous to your region and type of garden. CONTACT the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website (wildflower.org/plants) to locate local native plants (local garden clubs can also help), then do a web search for nurseries that specialize in native plants. SUPPLEMENT NATURAL FOOD with sugar-water feeders made with **four parts water to one part white cane sugar**, and place feeders **more than 30 feet from your house**, or alternatively, **fewer than 3 feet from a window** so they can't fly fast into the glass.
2. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to **double-digit percentage sales increases** in single-use plastics such as **polystyrene**, in a consumer-driven demand for food packaging and medical gear. About **15 million tons of polystyrene are produced globally every year**, and are used widely in cars, hospital ventilators, takeaway coffee cups and food packaging. Lower oil prices have also helped polystyrene makers increase volumes, all of which contribute to **the damages of climate change and ocean pollution**, with plastic production and burning emitting the **carbon equivalent of 189 coal-fired power plants**. Many of the so-called solutions to the plastic pollution crisis are misleading, putting unacceptable pressures on **already over-exploited natural resources such as forests and agricultural lands**. TO SOLVE THE PLASTIC POLLUTION CRISIS, urge companies and legislators to **rethink how products are delivered to consumers and invest significantly in reusable and refillable delivery systems**.
3. If you are considering installing a solar system at your home or business, consider the following four factors to determine if the economics work for you: **1) determine the local cost of electricity** (<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/state/>), which can vary widely; **2) figure out how much sun you get**; **3) whether your local utility has to buy your (excess) power**; and **4) the level of solar credits in your state**, which determines how many years of electric bill savings it will take to pay off your rooftop solar installation (for example, Massachusetts has a payback period of six years, while Louisiana's is 21 years). A free online tool from Google, called **Project Sunroof**, uses satellite to look at your roof and see how solar-viable you are, considering state-specific factors. Click on the site's **Explore Your Area** link, which shows you a snapshot of your town, including the percentage of solar-viable buildings, the total electrical generating capacity, and the average roof space.

4. Following the **2010 BP Deepwater Horizon blowout disaster (the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history)**, new rules and their enforcement were developed to cover rig design, well design, and vital equipment like blowout preventers, as well as investigating conflict of interests in the Interior Department. But last year, weakened enforcement expanded offshore drilling, breaking records for oil production in the Gulf. Permits over the past decade for **941 new wells, with 588 in deep water**, have resulted in **45,000 miles of underwater pipelines in an area plagued with nearly 30,000 abandoned wells** that are corroding. One collapsed well, already **gushing upward of 4,500 gallon of oil a day for 15 years**, could spill far more oil than BP ever did, according to the Audubon Society. In addition, **rising seas inundating Gulf marshes, due in part to climate change and in part to the 10,000 miles of oil industry canals cut through them**, have destroyed more than **2,000 square miles of coast**, along with the wildlife that depends on that ecosystem. BE AN ADVOCATE for enforcing commonsense regulation as we wean our country **off a carbon-based economy**.