

Anatomy of seduction

by [Mary M. Brown](#) in the [April 22, 2008](#) issue

it turns out
the allure of hummingbirds
has little to do

with their own rouge—
instead, the thrilling
iridescence of their
wings depends

upon the distance

between the ridges
of their feathers, dulling structures

my guess we'd ignore,
were it not for some blessed
interplay

with incident light