



Why Evergreen Audubon Supports Birds & Beans Coffee

“To me, the top three threats to birds overall are habitat loss, habitat loss, and habitat loss” - Ken Rosenberg, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and voice for Birds & Beans Coffee

Evergreen Audubon believes that the coffee we buy should reflect the values we believe in, economically, socially, and environmentally. With coffee, you can pay a little more and hopefully know that the grower is receiving a fair minimum price, that the land is being used in a sustainable way, and that you're helping preserve essential wildlife habitat. A variety of independent third-party certifications have emerged that can ostensibly help guide us in our coffee choice. These certifications have become increasingly important since over sixty percent of the global coffee produced today is grown on an industrial scale under full sun. Massive plantations of coffee bushes are planted in hedge-like rows and sustained by fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigation with no thought to conservation of biodiversity. In the past three decades, industrial **Sun Grown** coffee production has destroyed millions of acres of tropical bird habitat, compounding the massive loss of forest to pasture, logging and chemically dependent monoculture crops. Cheaper brands of coffee are produced with these unsustainable methods.

Among these coffee certifications are **Organic**, which is coffee grown without most synthetic pesticides and fertilizers and is fairly sustainable. However, there are no criteria for shade cover, hence the shade can be quite sparse, or if present it may be provided by a variety of non-native plants, e.g. banana. A second certification is **Fair Trade**, which seeks to ensure that workers on coffee farms get paid fairly for the work they do and that farmers get a fair price. However, it does not require any particular environmental practices. A third certification is **Rainforest Alliance**, which requires some shade, but it can be as little as 30 percent. A fourth term that we see used as a selling point, but which is not a certification, is **Shade Grown**. This term arises from the fact that coffee historically was grown on small farms beneath the shade of extensive forests. Unfortunately, Shade Grown has become a marketing buzzword that says little about the actual growing conditions which may include fertilizers, pesticides, and a sparse cover of banana trees.

In 1996 the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, recognizing the inadequacy of these various certifications to play a meaningful role in bird conservation and in the conservation of natural habitats, came up with the **Bird Friendly** certification. This certification requires not only that the coffee be organic, but that it be grown under strict requirements for both the amount of shade, the percent of native plants creating that shade, and the multi-layered canopy structure of the forest. On Bird Friendly farms forest structure and working coffee plantations merge into a single habitat. By insisting on Bird Friendly coffee, we can help farmers resist economic pressures to leave their farms or convert them and choose instead to stay on the land and preserve good forest habitat. In a nutshell, that's the central idea behind Bird Friendly certified

coffee: pay a premium price to growers on rustic coffee plantations so that they can continue to provide prime bird habitat.

Through the years a few select coffee companies have offered a small selection of Bird Friendly coffee, but the Bird Friendly approach got a big revitalizing shot in the arm when **Birds & Beans** was launched in the United States in 2008. Birds & Beans with its strong team of passionate naturalists and professional ornithologists immediately went all-in declaring that all of their coffee would be **Triple Certified** comprising three certification levels: **Certified Organic, Certified Fair Trade, and Certified Bird-Friendly**. Furthermore Birds & Beans committed to paying their farmers top price for their coffee so they could keep growing coffee the old-fashioned shade-grown way and so they could keep supporting their workers and families. Today Birds & Beans is helping save over 2,250 family farms in Latin America that they buy from. These farms, many of which have grown coffee for over 100 years, are amazing winter refuges for both neotropical resident and migratory birds. These coffee farms are also key to anchoring viable local rural economies as well as creating healthy micro-climates rich in biodiversity. Those of us who buy Birds & Beans coffee are helping family farms stay viable and we are helping strengthen communities that might otherwise be forced to make poor environmental choices, or be steamrolled by big agribusinesses moving in and taking over, as has happened in much of the coffee-producing world. We also get to drink great tasting coffee! **Every bean sold by Birds & Beans is certified Bird Friendly, and they are the ONLY company in North America which can make that claim!**

What is missing at this point is large-scale support and commitment from the millions of coffee drinkers in America. Too many birders are not aware of the benefits of shade-grown coffee to birds and farmers, or do not realize how sun coffee is literally killing the birds we love, or how easy it is to buy **Bird Friendly** coffee from a company like **Birds & Beans** and thereby help the birds we love. Furthermore, it behooves all birders and lovers of the natural world to assume a leadership role in promoting those actions which can help stem the disastrous decline in bird populations that we are witnessing worldwide.

You can learn more about **Birds & Beans** and how to purchase their coffee by going to birdsandbeanscoffee.com or if you have questions you may contact them at:

Birds & Beans LLC
PO Box 432, Byfield, MA 01922
Tel: 860-271-6326
E-mail: info@birdsandbeanscoffee.com

BIRD FRIENDLY[®] COFFEE *at a glance*



- Created by Smithsonian scientists, the Bird Friendly[®] gold standard does more than other eco-friendly seals to protect habitat that is often destroyed to make way for coffee growing.
- Instead of clearing rainforest, Bird Friendly coffees grow underneath shade trees that provide habitat for birds, including migratory species, whose impressive journeys can take them from the backyards of the US and Canada all the way to coffee farms in Latin America.
- Bird Friendly certified coffees are 100% pure shade-grown and USDA Organic, making them better for you and for the planet.
- Bird Friendly farms fight climate change and its effects—shade trees sequester carbon and protect farmers' crops from increased temperatures and rainfall.
- Coffee experts say shade-grown coffees taste better because the beans mature for longer under shade, creating a more complex, deeper flavor.
- More than 4,600 coffee growers protect over 32,000 acres of Bird Friendly[®] habitat worldwide, from Mexico to Peru, Ethiopia to Thailand.

IS YOUR COFFEE BIRD FRIENDLY?

Look for the Bird Friendly seal—the gold standard in eco-friendly, organic farming—wherever coffee is sold.

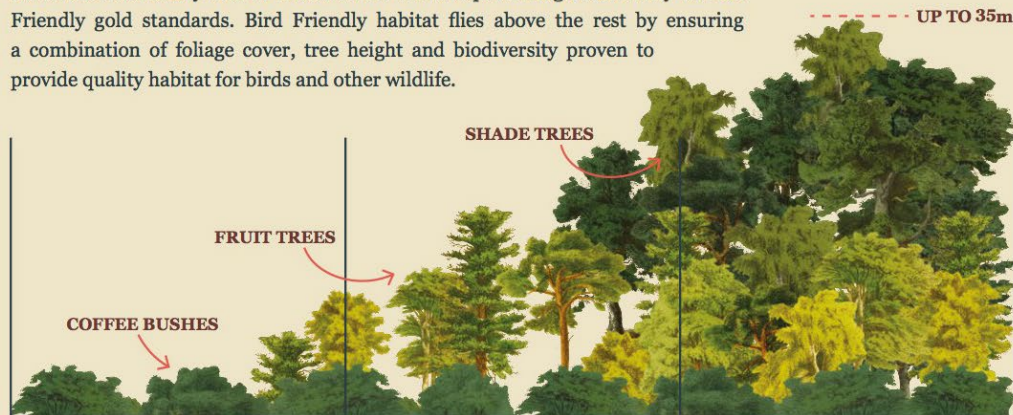
To find a store or café near you, or better yet, have it shipped to your door, visit DrinkBirdFriendly.com.

MIGRATE TO THE BEST IN BIODIVERSITY

Becoming Bird Friendly is easy—get in touch at BirdFriendly@si.edu or visit DrinkBirdFriendly.com.

NOT ALL SHADE GROWN COFFEE IS EQUAL

No other eco-friendly seal or brand comes close to protecting biodiversity to Bird Friendly gold standards. Bird Friendly habitat flies above the rest by ensuring a combination of foliage cover, tree height and biodiversity proven to provide quality habitat for birds and other wildlife.



SUN-GROWN COFFEE
61 bird species

PARTIAL SHADE
79 bird species

BIRD FRIENDLY SHADE
243 bird species*

*SMBC field work, Peru