

THE ESSENTIAL BIRD FRIENDLY® TOOLKIT:

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR THE
ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS



Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
Migratory Bird Center



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Association of Zoos & Aquariums

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SAFE
SAVING ANIMALS
FROM EXTINCTION
NORTH AMERICAN
SONGBIRDS

Thank you to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Saving Animals from Extinction (AZA SAFE) North American Songbird program for their support of Bird Friendly® coffee, and this project.

THE ESSENTIAL BIRD FRIENDLY® TOOLKIT

How to Use This Guide

Thank you for your interest in supporting Smithsonian Bird Friendly® coffee!

The Essential Bird Friendly® Toolkit is designed to address key barriers preventing the sale and support of Bird Friendly® certified coffee at AZA facilities. This toolkit contains the most requested Bird Friendly® resources, as determined by you—the keepers, educators, volunteer supervisors, retail and concessions managers, and leaders interested in supporting Bird Friendly® coffee at your facility. Its contents are informed by surveys and interviews with over 50 AZA professionals representing 45 accredited institutions, as well as the feedback of over 1,500 AZA supporters. The result is a collection of resources designed to make it easier for zoos and aquariums to successfully sell and support Bird Friendly® certified coffee at their facilities.

GETTING STARTED

If you are just learning about Bird Friendly®, begin by reading the *Bird Friendly® One Page Overview* and *Bird Friendly® Infographic*—these documents provide an overview of the connections between coffee and habitat conservation, as well as an introduction to the Smithsonian Bird Friendly® certification program.

MORE BIRD FRIENDLY® RESOURCES

The *Essential Bird Friendly® Coffee Toolkit* also contains the following:

- About Bird Friendly®- *Key Bird Friendly® messages* for AZA facilities
- The Bird Friendly® Gold Standard- A *certification overview*, comparing Bird Friendly® certified coffee to other sustainability certifications
- Learn More- A selection of additional Bird Friendly® resources, including a *Bird Friendly® wholesale database* and price sheet*

The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center has created four additional toolkits which are uniquely-tailored for AZA facilities and their staff at different points in their journey to support Bird Friendly®. These toolkits include:

- **A LEADER'S GUIDE TO BIRD FRIENDLY® COFFEE**, designed for AZA directors and leaders considering supporting Bird Friendly® coffee at their facility
- **INSTIGATING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: MAKING THE SWITCH TO BIRD FRIENDLY®**, designed for Bird Friendly® champions within AZA who are looking to initiate a conversation about Bird Friendly® with their leadership
- **RETAIL OPERATIONS: SELLING & SERVING BIRD FRIENDLY® COFFEE**, designed for retail and concessions managers who want to begin selling and promoting Bird Friendly® coffee
- **EDUCATION & OUTREACH: SUPPORTING THE "DRINK BIRD FRIENDLY®" MESSAGE**, a comprehensive suite of messaging and engagement resources designed for education, communication, and volunteer teams

For additional information on the Smithsonian Bird Friendly® program or to request a physical copy of this toolkit, please contact BirdFriendly@si.edu.

*If you have not already received the password to unlock this document, please contact BirdFriendly@si.edu to request access.



ABOUT BIRD FRIENDLY®

Key Messages for AZA Facilities



What is Bird Friendly® certified coffee?

- Bird Friendly® coffee is the only certification that guarantees every coffee bean sold is grown in a way that protects habitat for birds and other wildlife.
- Bird Friendly® coffee comes from certified farms that protect habitat for birds and other wildlife. Instead of clearing rainforest, Bird Friendly® coffee grows under the shade of native trees.
- While other coffees may claim to be “shade grown,” only Bird Friendly® certified coffee maintains strict environmental criteria proven to support wildlife, making it the most biodiversity-friendly coffee on the market.
- Bird Friendly® coffee habitat flies above the rest by ensuring a combination of canopy cover and tree diversity proven to provide quality habitat for birds and other wildlife living on coffee farms.

Why is Bird Friendly® coffee important?

- Three-quarters of the world’s coffee is farmed using practices that leave no place for birds, or worse, actively destroy forest habitat.
- Three billion birds have disappeared from North America since the 1970s. Migratory and resident birds depend upon the habitat provided by coffee farms, and the way in which coffee is grown can support this habitat or destroy it.
- Bird Friendly® coffee farms can support as many bird species as undisturbed forests. Providing this important habitat helps maintain biodiversity and support a healthy ecosystem in coffee growing regions.

What are zoos and aquariums doing?

- Zoos and aquariums across the AZA are making the switch to Bird Friendly® certified coffee at concession stands and/or gift shops.
- Zoos and aquariums are also working with local coffee companies to make Bird Friendly® certified coffee available in more communities.
- The AZA SAFE North American Songbird program supports “Drink Bird Friendly®” as one of its key messages and conservation actions for protecting songbirds.

How can I get involved?

- Make the switch to Bird Friendly® certified coffee. Look for the Bird Friendly® seal wherever coffee is sold.
- Request Bird Friendly® coffee from your local cafe, grocer, or roaster.
- Spread the Drink Bird Friendly® message with people in your community.
- To find a store or cafe near you, visit drinkbirdfriendly.com.

THE BIRD FRIENDLY® GOLD STANDARD

A Certification Overview

Bird Friendly® certified coffee does more to protect birds and wildlife than any other certification on the market. It's the only coffee that is 100% organic, and guarantees that every bean purchased is grown in a way that protects biodiversity. No other certification compares—see for yourself!



Bird Friendly®

The Bird Friendly® certification criteria were developed by Smithsonian scientists, who determined that coffee farms with a tall and diverse shade tree canopy can support as many birds as nearby undisturbed forests. All Bird Friendly® certified coffee farms provide wildlife habitat that has:

- At least ten tree species
- Three distinct layers of canopy
- A minimum of 40% shade coverage
- Tree height of 12 meters or more

100% of coffee sold as Bird Friendly® is grown in a way that meets or exceeds these standards, ensuring habitat protection.

All Bird Friendly® coffee is certified organic, meaning it is grown without synthetic pesticides or chemicals that can harm the health of humans and the environment.

Rainforest Alliance

The Rainforest Alliance certification requires farmers work towards 15% natural vegetation on coffee farms, far below the 40% canopy cover required by the Bird Friendly®. There is no core requirement for shade coverage during initial certification, meaning Rainforest Alliance certification does not guarantee that farms provide high quality habitat for birds.

Rainforest Alliance permits farmers to use some pesticides and fertilizers. There is no organic requirement for Rainforest Alliance certified coffee, and less than 20% of Rainforest Alliance certified coffee is grown organically.

The Rainforest Alliance standard offers the coffee sector a pathway towards greater environmental and social sustainability, with multiple indicator metrics that farmers can understand, track, and achieve over a period of years.





Organic

Organic certification assesses pesticide and herbicide use at the farm level, with an emphasis on natural processes and ingredients. Certified organic coffee farms are only permitted to use limited, USDA- or CFIA-approved pesticides that are vetted for human and environmental safety.

Organic certification operates at 100% product purity, meaning all products labeled as organic meet or exceed standards for natural processes and ingredients.

Organic certification does not assess shade coverage or habitat requirements for birds or other wildlife.



“Shade Grown”

“Shade grown” generally refers to coffee that is grown underneath shade trees. It is a commonly used term that appears on many coffee bags, but it has no set definition.

“Shade grown” is not a certification standard. It lacks a universal definition or third-party oversight. Without certification standards to verify claims, “shade grown” has become a greenwashed term in the sustainable coffee realm. Coffee farms with just 5% shade cover from one tree species can claim to be “shade grown,” although this provides very little habitat for birds and other wildlife.

“Shade grown” coffee has no affiliations with organic certification or pesticide regulations.



Fair Trade






FAIRTRADE & FAIR TRADE USA

Fair Trade certifications focus on improving the livelihoods of farmers and producers through equitable trade and fair working conditions. They guarantee a minimum price is paid to certified coffee farmers.

Fair Trade certifications do not guarantee farms provide habitat to birds or other wildlife.

Fair Trade certifications mention a preference for organic practices, but have no organic requirement.

CERTIFICATION COMPARISON

	SHADE COVERAGE	PESTICIDE REGULATION	PRODUCT PURITY	BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION
Bird Friendly® 	Strictly Regulated	100% Organic. No synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.	100%	All farms provide habitat for a diverse community of birds and other wildlife.
Rainforest Alliance 	Some regulations in place	Highly hazardous pesticides banned; pesticide use must follow a management plan	90%	Some farms provide some habitat for birds and other wildlife.
Fair Trade 	No regulations in place	Not regulated. Suggests managing or decreasing use of pesticides.	100%	No regulations in place to help birds and other wildlife.
Organic 	No regulations in place	100% Organic. No synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.	100%	Biodiversity benefits from the chemical restrictions, but no habitat requirements in place.
“Shade Grown” 	Loosely defined; no real regulations in place.	Not regulated	Not regulated	Some farms provide some habitat for birds and other wildlife, but no guarantees in place.

Sources:

https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/business/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-Sustainable-Agriculture-Standard_Farm-Requirements_Rainforest-Alliance.pdf

<https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/business/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Coffee-Certification-Data-Report-2020.pdf>

<https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/business/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/rainforest-alliance-marks-guide.pdf>

<http://www.coffeehabitat.com/2020/07/new-rainforest-alliance-shade-criteria/>

https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOP_BehindTheSeal.pdf

http://www.coffeehabitat.com/2006/02/what_is_shade_g/

<https://fairtrade.ca/what-is-fairtrade/the-impact-of-our-work/#the-difference>

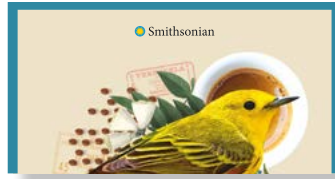
LEARN MORE

Bird Friendly[®] Resources

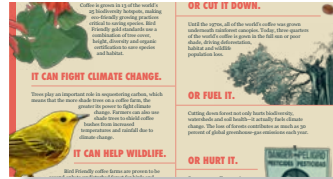
Want to learn more? Access additional Bird Friendly[®] resources using the links below.

Roaster	Location	Coffee Name	Single	Price per 30g (US\$)
Aspen Coffee Roasters	Seattle, WA	Paradise Peak, Organic, Sustainable Bird Friendly	Whole Bean	\$1.10
Aspen Coffee Roasters	Seattle, WA	Paradise Peak, Organic, Sustainable Bird Friendly	Whole Bean	\$1.10
Aspen Coffee Roasters	Seattle, WA	Paradise Peak, Organic, Sustainable Bird Friendly	Whole Bean	\$1.10
Aspen Coffee Roasters	Seattle, WA	Paradise Peak, Organic, Sustainable Bird Friendly	Whole Bean	\$1.10
Aspen Coffee Roasters	Seattle, WA	Paradise Peak, Organic, Sustainable Bird Friendly	Whole Bean	\$1.10

[Roaster Database:](#)
Bird Friendly[®] roaster information and coffee pricing*



[Bird Friendly[®] One Page Overview:](#)
The basics of Bird Friendly[®] coffee



[Bird Friendly[®] Infographic:](#)
Highlights the main impacts of Bird Friendly[®] coffee



[Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center Facebook and Twitter:](#)
Current events, news, and research highlights from SMBC



[Bird Friendly[®] Website:](#)
A resource for general information on the Bird Friendly program



[Bird Friendly[®] Certification Overview:](#)
The science behind Bird Friendly[®] coffee certification criteria



[About Bird Friendly[®]:](#)
A concise look at Bird Friendly[®] coffee and what sets it apart from other sustainable coffees

* Please note this is a password-protected document. If you have not already received the password to unlock this document, please contact BirdFriendly@si.edu to request access.