



Enjoy your morning Java? It can be a life-saver for songbirds, too!

3 billion migratory songbirds pass through the city of Toronto each spring and fall. In the spring, they are en route to Canada's boreal forest, "the songbird nursery of the north." In the fall, they head to Latin America to ride out the winter. The habitat they live in must be lush and diverse enough that they can put on the body fat they will need to survive their marathon flight come spring, often over 5,000 km. The songbirds fly in the black of night and at dawn alight into any green space they can find, including your own backyard! They are re-fueling and require a variety of insects, berries, seeds, water and natural shelter in order to do so. Incorporating indigenous species is an important way to help. (Please visit www.projectchirp.com to learn more.)

These colorful migrants over-winter in Latin America where suitable habitat is rapidly being cleared to make room for "sun" coffee plantations. Sun coffee is grown with the use of highly toxic pesticides. It is completely unsustainable because it requires large amounts of fertilizers and the absence of trees means there is heavy soil erosion. This is by and large the coffee you are seeing on store shelves. The good news is that there is an alternative!

Coffee which is certified Bird Friendly® by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center (SMBC) is backed by years of scientific research by the Smithsonian Institution. Researchers know what type of habitat is necessary in order to meet the survival needs of dozens of species of songbirds. It is important to highlight that the terms "bird-friendly" and "shade grown" are the latest "green-washing" terms to hit the coffee market. Only SMBC-certified Bird Friendly® coffee has a stringent set of criteria that provide much-needed habitat for dozens of species of migratory songbirds.

SMBC-certified Bird Friendly® coffee is the gold standard for shade grown coffee. It is grown in the traditional manner, beneath the pre-existing forest canopy. The canopy is rich and dense. It is composed of a variety of species of a variety of heights thereby meeting the foraging and shelter needs of over 150 migratory songbird species. The coffee is grown organically and fairly traded. The coffee farms are typically owned by individual families and due to the intact forest the families are able to diversify their income and grow and harvest fruit, medicinal and ornamental plants and firewood as well as the deep shade coffee. Numerous insects, butterflies and mammals thrive in these forests and the health of the farming families are not put at risk.

50% of the traditional, forested coffee farms are gone. They have been bought by large coffee companies which engage in the ecologically devastating practice of sun coffee production. The opportunity exists to protect the remaining family farms but public

education and demand for this type of coffee needs to increase. Coffee which is certified Bird Friendly® by the SMBC is available in Canada through Birds and Beans Café in south Etobicoke. You may drop in, visit a store that carries it or have it delivered to your home or office.

Next time you sip your morning cup of coffee, or line up at the drive through window for a midday pick-me-up, think about where your coffee comes from and how it is grown.

Buying Bird-Friendly® coffee certified by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center is not just about birds, it is about sustainable, green lifestyles. By Christina Sharma

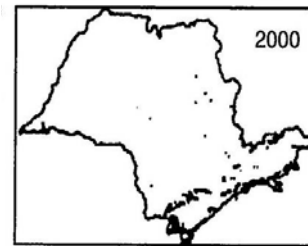
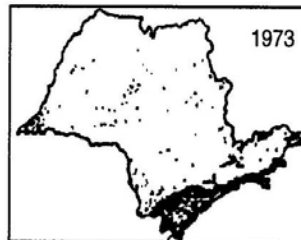
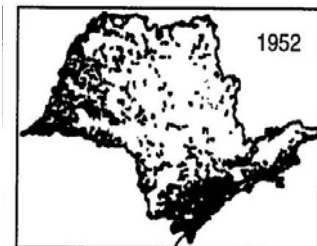


Sun Coffee



Smithsonian-Certified Shade Coffee

“Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center “Bird Friendly” certified shade coffee farms have extensive understory and canopy cover from a wide diversity of tropical trees – providing a surrogate home for orchids, butterflies, birds, and other wildlife.



The maps above show the loss of tropical forest (black) in southern Brazil (São Paulo State) since the early 1950s – in many regions of Central and South America there is little or no natural rainforest left!! Shade coffee farms provide a refuge for forest plants & animals.” * Taken from “Birds of Two Worlds” power point by Dr. B. Stutchbury. (This power point is available for you to use. It is on the Education page near the very top.)

Please visit the following websites to learn more.

Birds and Beans Café www.birdsandbeans.ca

Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center (SMBC) and SMBC Coffee

http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Coffee/Bird_Friendly/global_market.cfm

Project CHIRP! (Creating Habitat In Residential areas and Parkland)

www.projectchirp.com

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Christina Sharma
Founder and Director
Project CHIRP!
www.projectchirp.com