



Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society's How you can help birds

Drink shade grown coffee - unlike sun grown coffee which is produced in sterile monoculture environments devoid of most wildlife species, shade grown coffee is grown beneath an intact tree canopy which provides habitat to hundreds of birds, mammals and other wildlife species. While you are at it, help local people out too, and try to make sure the coffee you purchase is fair trade.

Buy a duck stamp annually - officially known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, the “duck stamp” is one of the most successful conservation initiatives ever conceived and the most conservation bang you can get for your buck. Ninety eight cents of every dollar generated by the sale of these stamps go directly towards the protection of habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge system. To date, over \$750 million has been used to purchase or lease over 5.3 million acres of wildlife habitat. There are approximately 553 refuges in the USA as of this year.

Keep your cat(s) indoors - the approximately 100 million feral and free-roaming cats in the country kill tens to hundreds of millions of birds and small mammals each year. While there is little you can do to prevent feral cat predation, you can play a role in reducing free-roaming cat predation -- by keeping your pet cat(s) indoors. Please.

Support conservation organizations - local, regional, and national conservation organizations, which play such a vital role in achieving conservation success, simply would not exist without the financial support of individuals who care about conservation.

Conduct citizen science - participating in the Christmas Bird Count, the Breeding Bird Census, Project Feeder Watch or one of several other data gathering programs is an important way to contribute to science. These programs have been instrumental in broadening our understanding of bird populations such as population trends and changes in distribution.

Become involved in the political process - it's a simple but under-appreciated fact that elected officials, especially local ones, react to public opinion. If they get letters, phone calls, or comments advocating for a certain conservation action (e.g. such as preserving Plum Island!) they often will respond. If you are willing to speak out, your voice can be a powerful tool for conservation.

Limit your use or don't use pesticides - pesticides are designed to kill things and even when used according to label can kill unintended targets. Use alternatives to pesticides and make changes to the conditions in your lawn and garden to eliminate the need for pesticides.

Make other environmentally benign lifestyle changes - in living our lives we all have an impact on the environment upon which birds depend. There are many things you can do to reduce your environmental footprint including recycling, composting, using energy efficient light bulbs and appliances. Drive a gas efficient car, take public transportation or carpool. Buy locally grown produce and products.

Buy recycled paper products- The fluffy toilet tissue purchased by most Americans, and stocked in virtually all of our supermarkets, requires pulp containing long wood fibers found only in virgin timber (from live trees). When you use premium tissue, you flush down the toilet part of a tree that may have been felled solely for that purpose. And that tree may have been harvested from Canada's boreal forest, where 57 percent of Blackburnian warblers breed—along with a third of all North American songbirds.

Wear your binoculars proudly - when birding in popular birding spots, while stopping to get a bite to eat or pump gas keep your binoculars visible around neck so that business patrons know why you're there. Your binoculars serve as a trigger to them to care about bird conservation in their local community since what they are benefiting economically from the presence of birds.

Take a child on a hike or birding - we underestimate our ability to influence others, and fail to realize how impressionable children can be. Get kids excited about birds, talk about how cool they are - their fascinating migratory feats, complex songs

and calls, and well developed senses and coordination - and watch how your behavior piques an interest. Remember, today's children will grow up to be tomorrow's conservationists! You don't have to focus just on kids, talk up birds and nature to anyone you meet. Let them feel your enthusiasm!

Protect birds from window collisions - More birds are killed each year from striking windows than from any other direct cause of death, and the problem is growing as window sizes increase and houses get larger. Use window decals / stickers or cover your windows with blinds, awnings or shutters to minimize the reflection of the sky. One company that manufactures window stickers that have proven effective at reducing collisions is WindowAlert, available on the web at www.windowalert.com

Create a bird friendly yard - Whether you have a tiny backyard or a big one, you can landscape for birds and other wildlife. Plant bushes, trees and other plants that provide food, protection from predators, and resting spots during migration; provide nesting spots in cavities and dense shrubbery, leave leaf litter and brushy corners where birds can feed and hide.