

Tales from a
**Sisters
Naturalist**
by Jim Anderson

**Coffee beans
and birds**

Not being a coffee-drinker (anymore), and not being in the bird-researcher loop as many of my friends are (including Doug Beall), the business of songbird conservation and coffee-growing methods went right over my head — until Doug grabbed my attention in Bi-Mart the other day. (Many *Nugget* readers will know Beall’s name as it is attached to the splendid photos that appear in the column Sisters Country Birds.)

It seems an age-old problem has popped up again: the lack of understanding between land-owners and their efforts to make an income off their holdings and still provide the welfare of wildlife using the said land to live on.

For me, the greatest collision of land ownership and the welfare of nature is the destruction of the rain-forest to create a business to ostensibly help people improve their lives in what was once a jungle. The destruction of the Amazon Rainforest by Brazil that began in 1941 to achieve that goal has, in my opinion, had a major negative impact on the world’s climate. Seems some coffee-growers are doing the same thing to North American birds who spend their winter in South America.

It comes down to this: Coffee farms can provide good habitat for birds — including wintering migrants from North America as well as birds that live year-round in the tropics. Or they can destroy or damage bird habitat. It’s largely a matter of how the coffee is grown.

Bird conservation groups are now reminding us: Many of the colorful songbirds that we enjoy in the United States — including warblers, tanagers, orioles, and grosbeaks — migrate south to the tropics and winter in Mexico and Central and South America for five months. Some of the world’s top coffee-producing countries are located there; therefore, coffee farms are a major land

use in an important region for wintering bird habitat. By buying sustainable (and particularly “Bird Friendly” labeled) coffees, you can help provide economic support for important bird habitat.

People have been drinking coffee in the USA since long before there was a USA. According to history and the coffee industry, the Dutch introduced coffee to the New World in the 1700s. In those far-gone days it was a forest-floor crop grown under a dense overhead forest canopy. The growers were happy with the profit base and the birds were happy with the way the farmers were doing business

However, things are not that way today; machines and chemicals are now being used to grow coffee out in bright sunlight, which is said to be generating a greater profit. And in today’s world, profit drives everything.

Some coffee farms in operation today still use the traditional, rustic method of growing coffee in the shade, where artificial fertilizers aren’t necessary. Decaying leaf litter recycles nutrients to feed the coffee plants. Pesticides aren’t needed either, because more birds are around to eat insect pests, and the volume of coffee grown, and the subsequent profit satisfies the investors and farmers.

From various scientific reports, many tasters have said rustic — shade-grown — coffee yields a higher quality brew that tastes richer. This is partly because forest coffee isn’t machine harvested, but picked by hand, allowing trained pickers to choose only the ripe coffee berries/beans. But it’s also more expensive to raise and harvest.

Modern coffee-growing has introduced sun-tolerant varieties of coffee that can be grown in the open and tend to have higher yields than shade-grown coffee. According to agricultural and environmental scientists, this technique is much harder on the environment, resulting in forests being cut down, with pesticides and fertilizers employed to stimulate higher yields — and higher profits.

In some places, sun-grown coffee has dominated the landscape. For example, in Colombia, about 70 percent of coffee croplands have been converted to sun-grown operations, which is sad news for birds, especially the migrators.

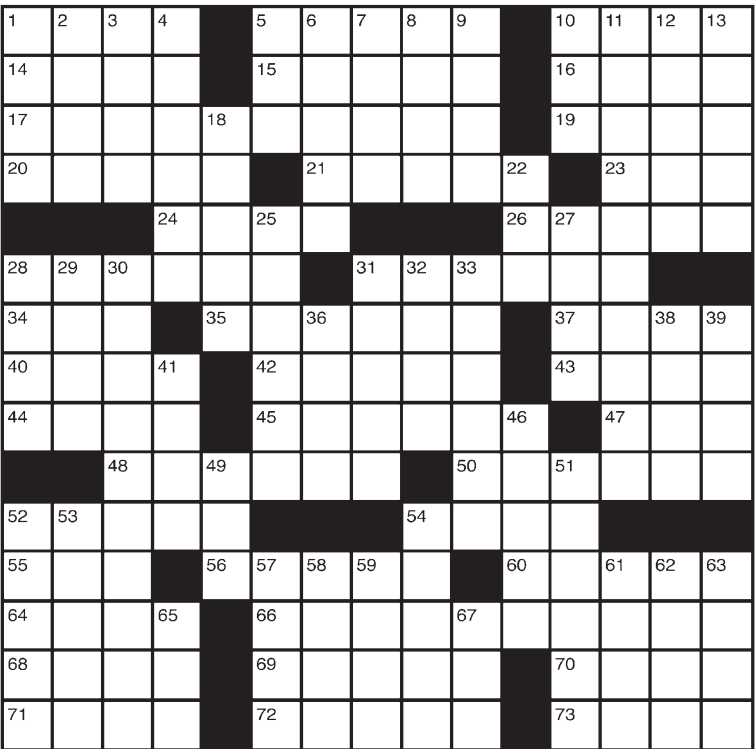
According to the

See **COFFEE** on page 31

The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- ACROSS**
- 1 ___ to;
increases
5 Third month
10 ___ out;
chooses not to
participate
14 Comedian Sahl
15 Boise’s state
16 Faucet problem
17 Nation once
part of the
U.S.S.R.
19 Salami shop
20 More modern
21 Joined the crew
23 Fast plane
24 Haughtiness
26 Make laugh
28 Female
graduate
31 Disgraced
34 Prefix for stop
or profit
35 Talented
37 Uses a shovel
40 Keep ___ on;
watch closely
42 Ferguson or
Palin
43 “Get lost!”
44 In a ___;
instantly
45 Very happy
47 Samuel’s
teacher
48 In a deafening
way
50 First grader’s
textbook
52 Mini blind parts
54 Stitched joining
55 Element whose
symbol is Sn
56 Fess up
60 Game often run
by the state
64 Fundamentals
66 Caught again
68 On the house
69 Joint most
often sprained
70 Bedtime on a
school night,
perhaps
71 Lose color
72 Purchaser
73 Preschoolers
- DOWN**
- 1 To ___;
unanimously
2 Fall asleep
3 TV’s Carey
4 Brook
5 Actress Farrow
6 “Bye, Juan!”
7 Indian prince
8 Blacken
9 Make sharper
10 Bizarre
11 Biased
12 Flooring
pieces
13 Petty ill will
18 ___ up; mention
22 Water barrier
25 Elevated
27 Prescriptions,
for short
28 Social insects
29 Cash borrowed
30 Rather cuckoo
31 Alley cat, e.g.
32 Warmth
33 Cling; stick
36 Autumn
38 Strong wind



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

9/27/17

— Last Week’s Puzzle Solved —

A	B	L	E		A	C	T	O	R		M	I	S	S
R	O	O	F		P	R	U	N	E		I	N	T	O
C	O	N	F	E	R	E	N	C	E		S	T	O	W
S	T	E	E	D		P	E	E	K	S		E	K	E
					C	I	T	E			O	W	N	E
S	C	O	T	C	H		P	L	A	N	E	T		
N	O	R			T	A	B	L	E	T		T	I	C
A	N	N	S		T	O	A	S	T		S	O	A	P
P	E	A	L		C	R	I	S	I	S		N	B	A
					M	A	S	H	E	D		L	E	S
T	H	E	M	E							D	A	R	N
R	A	N			T	O	T	H	E		B	A	D	G
A	N	T	I			P	R	O	T	E	S	T	I	N
C	O	A	L			T	I	R	E	D		C	R	A
K	I	L	L			S	O	A	R	S		H	E	W

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9/21/17

- 39 Recipe verb
41 Blemish
46 Passed out
cards
49 Neighbor of
Mexico: abbr.
51 Quantity
52 Personnel
53 Zodiac sign
- 54 No longer fresh
57 Dull-colored
58 List of dishes
59 Unpleasant
61 Threesome
62 Camp shelter
63 Elegant poems
65 Behold
67 ___ se; by itself

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