

Birds of the Sugarbush

More than 30 bird species are known to use maple sugarbushes as nesting habitat. Here are a few...



Black-throated Blue Warbler

Important Habitat Feature:
Dense seedlings, saplings, and shrubs in the forest understory for nesting and foraging insects



Wood Thrush

Important Habitat Feature:
Abundant saplings and small trees making up a middle forest layer for nesting



Scarlet Tanager

Important Habitat Feature:
Variety of tree species in the forest canopy for foraging insects



Eastern Wood-Pewee

Important Habitat Feature:
Hardwood forests and forest edges with a relatively open understory for flying out from high perches to capture insect prey

What Can You Do?



Look for the label.

To recognize and support participating maple producers for their good work, look for maple syrup containers with the label indicating the syrup was produced in a bird-friendly forest habitat.

Maple producers who intentionally integrate bird habitat into the stewardship of their forest are taking the first step toward ensuring important nesting habitat features are promoted during sugarbush management activities.

Remember that maple sugarbushes are inherently good for birds, but forests that are intentionally managed with birds in mind are even better!

Contact Audubon Vermont at 802-434-3068 or Vermont@audubon.org for more information.

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BIRD-FRIENDLY MAPLE Project



Look for the label ... ▶



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What is a Bird-Friendly Sugarbush?



By keeping forests intact, maple sugarbushes are pretty good places for birds to nest and find food. But with a little extra consideration, their long-term value to birds and overall forest health can increase.

A bird-friendly sugarbush is managed for these features to offer great places for birds to forage, hide, and raise their young:

- A diversity of tree species; more than just maple
- Layers of vegetation; from small seedlings on the forest floor, to saplings and shrubs, to the canopy overhead
- Standing dead trees and live trees with cavities; the bigger the better
- Logs and branches on the forest floor
- Birds singing!

A Uniquely Vermont Conservation Project



The Bird-Friendly Maple Project is a collaborative effort to integrate bird conservation with Vermont's maple syrup industry by:

- Promoting sugarbush management practices that support birds, forest health, and sustainable sap production
- Recognizing maple producers for considering bird habitat in their sugarbush
- Increasing awareness of the important role Vermont's forests play in bird conservation
- Educating consumers about maple syrup and its many natural benefits

Whether you're a bird watcher, maple producer, or simply enjoy the taste of pure maple syrup, the Bird-Friendly Maple Project is for you!

Birds and Maple Syrup—What's the Connection?



Each year, as winter slowly transitions to spring, the sweet sap of maple trees is collected from the forest and boiled down to create a signature Vermont product—pure maple syrup.

A few short weeks later, the same forests that were buzzing with maple sugaring activity, referred to as sugarbushes, come alive with the songs and bright colors of songbirds. These birds, many of which spend the winter in the tropics, will look to find an abundance of insects to feed on, cover from predators, and places to conceal a nest—all in an effort to successfully raise the next generation of their species.

Add to this the fact that Vermont forests are a globally important nesting habitat for many of these species, and the bird conservation value of sugarbushes just got a little bit sweeter!