

Coffee in the Classroom: A Phenomenal Image



These 4 photographs, taken by Agroforestry researcher Robert Rice of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, has been excerpted from this publication: [Conserving Biodiversity Through Certification of Tropical Agroforestry Crops at Local and Landscape Scale](#). Photo a & b are from shade-grown coffee farm; photo c & d are from unshaded sun-coffee farms.

What do you notice? What do you wonder?

Show students the 4 images without context. First, ask students to jot down what they notice (make observations) about what they see (perhaps they can come up with 5-10 things.) Then have students ask questions about what they are observing.

Compare and Contrast

Have students analyze the images more deeply by explicitly comparing and contrasting the different conditions. What are at least 4 similarities and differences among the landscapes?

Connections to Biodiversity

After students have come up with a few analyses on their own, provide them with additional questions for discussion among themselves or on their own:

1. Which habitat do you think would support the most life? Why?
2. Which habitat do you think would support the most insects? Why?
3. Think about organisms that eat insects. Which habitat do you think those organisms would be drawn to live, eat, and spend time in?
4. The images on the left (a and b) are showing habitats from a shade-grown coffee farm and the images on the right (c and d) are showing images of an unshaded sun-coffee farm. As a conservation biologist, which habitat would you suggest we grow more of the worlds coffee in? Explain your reasoning.
5. What additional data do you need to support your claim?