

# Lyons on Wheels

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

## 2024 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid Woodland Edition

**MSRP: \$31,725 (LE) As Tested: 37,470 (Woodland Edition)**



Toyota added the Woodland edition to the RAV4 Hybrid lineup last year. It stakes out a spot halfway between the majority of RAV4 owners - who rarely drive off pavement - and the minority that venture off-road on a regular basis.

Woodland models ride on a TRD-tuned suspension. The coil springs and twin-tube shock absorbers are beefed-up over stock models to better keep up with the demands of rugged terrain. The bronze colored, 18" TRD alloy wheels are shod with Falken Wildpeak all-terrain tires, and the drive modes include a Trail setting, in addition to Sport, Eco and EV modes. The Trail setting functions as a limited slip differential, distributing power to specific wheels as needed, to enhance traction. The Woodland's suspension tuning and chunkier tread make for stiffer ride quality and elevated tire noise compared to stock trim models, though the differences are slight. Ride quality on paved roads is comfortable, and the suspension handles broken pavement without bruising the passengers. That bodes well as we enter spring, when flowers bloom and potholes loom. Woodland editions are equipped with a 120V inverter, to provide an onboard power source for compatible items. Also standard is a 1¼" rear activity mount, allowing for the addition of a bike rack or cargo carrier in back. Roof rails with cross bars provide the base for topside storage. Inside, cargo capacity ranges from 37.6-69.8 cu.-ft. Rear seatbacks fold to a mostly flat load floor. Cargo loads easily through the wide, rear opening, and liftover height is quite low.

Power for RAV4 Hybrids is provided by a 2.5L Atkinson cycle four cylinder gas engine, combined with a pair of AC motors and a lithium-ion battery pack. The combined, system power output is



*Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.*

219 horsepower, which comfortably handles daily driving needs. EPA fuel economy estimates are 38/35/37. That's slightly lower than the other RAV4 hybrid models (41/38/40). I'd guess that's due in part to the beefier tread on the Woodland's Falken tires. Regardless, I logged 33 miles per gallon in a week of more highway than 'round town travel, which is quite respectable, for a compact sized SUV with AWD, that doesn't need to plug in.

Woodland models add a new, option bundle for 2024. The Weather package (\$925) includes heated front seats, a heated, leather wrapped steering wheel, and rain-sensing, wipers. All weather floor mats and cargo mat help keep the great outdoors off of the cabin carpeting. The layout of controls in the cabin of these fifth generation RAV4's is easy to live with. Woodland models have an 8-inch multimedia touchscreen at mid-dash, with a bank of knobs and buttons below, for HVAC functions. Select, secondary controls are embedded in the steering wheel. The infotainment system is Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatible. There's adult-sized room, front and back.

Parked midway up the RAV4 trim ladder, the Hybrid Woodland Edition adds a new wrinkle to the lineup. It appeals equally to those who occasionally do some light off-roading, as well as those who just like its rugged, outdoorsy vibe.

*A 40 year resident of the Capital District, Dan Lyons is the author of six automotive books, and photographer of more than 200 calendars.*