

# Belted Kingfisher

*Ceryle alcyon*

## General Information:

-Widely distributed and common along freshwater bodies of water as well as the coast, this is the only kingfisher across most of its range. It is one of the few North American birds where the female is more colorful than the male.

## Song:

-Bold raspy rattle sounds like a heavy fishing reel.

## Behavior:

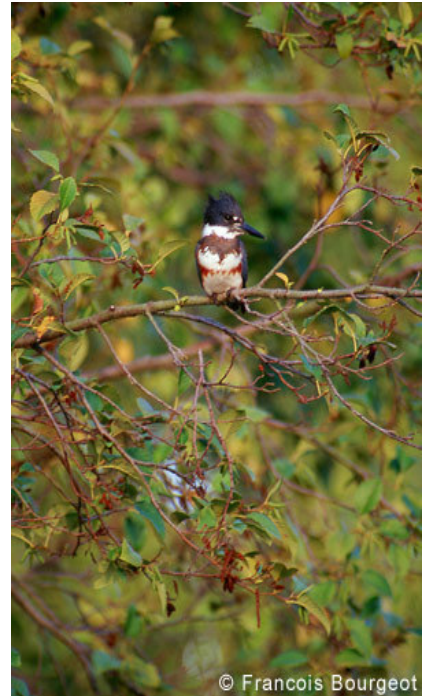
-Generally solitary. It plunges headfirst into water from a perch or a hover up to 20 feet or more above water to catch fish. It feeds primarily on fish but also takes amphibians, reptiles, insects, crustaceans, and mollusks. Frequents favorite perches along waterways for hunting.

## Breeding:

-Monogamous and a solitary nester.

## Nesting:

-Incubation of 23-24 days by both sexes. The 1-2 broods per year of altricial young are fed by both sexes and stay in the nest for 27-29 days. For a nest, the Belted Kingfisher digs a burrow in a bank, usually about 3-7 feet deep, but occasionally up to 15 feet deep.



## Population:

-Slight decline in North America.

## Conservation:

-Often viewed as problem at fish hatcheries; before regulation they were shot and killed at hatcheries and along trout streams, and in fact, they are probably still illegally shot at some fish hatcheries. This is an awesome bird and there is no need to shoot it!

## Shoreline Restoration Issues:

- If you would like to create an environment friendly to the Belted Kingfisher on your shoreland property you are going to want to concentrate on planting some trees directly along the shoreline. This will give the Belted Kingfisher perches to sit on as it looks for food. Furthermore, you are going to want to plant an assortment of emergent and submersed aquatic vegetation in the lakebed which will help attract smaller fish to the area and therefore help feed the Belted Kingfisher.