

# Bird of the Month - March

## Belted Kingfisher



### IDENTIFICATION

- **Males Slate Blue-gray on back and head, White collar set off by gray**
- **Females Similar to males but with chestnut band on breast**
- **Both are crow-sized birds with large bills that like to perch on wires above water, famous for their wild hairdos**

### FOOD

- **Feeds mostly on fish but may take crustaceans, insects and amphibians on occasion**

### PREDATORS

- **Few animals will attack a bird with a massive weapon for a beak but occasionally kingfishers fall to hawks and owls and may suffer from nest raiders like snakes and raccoons**

### BEHAVIORS AND FUN FACTS

- **Habitat - Kingfishers need open water that contains small fish and stream banks where they can dig cavity nests into the banks**
- **Kingfishers form mating bonds for only one season and will seek new mates every year**
- **They often give their loud, rattling call when defending nest sites or favorite feeding locations**
- **Unlike most bird species, female kingfishers are more colorful than their male counterparts**
- **Baby kingfishers produce a powerful stomach acid that helps digest the scales and bones of the meals supplied by their industrious fisherman parents**