

# Kingfisher Fact Sheet



*Rye Meads kingfisher by Peter Hewitt*

**Latin name** – *Alcedo atthis*

**Description** – a small bright blue bird, with an orange chest.

**Where they live** – by slow moving, shallow rivers or streams with clear water.

**What they eat** – mainly fish (mostly minnows and sticklebacks) but they also eat water insects (freshwater shrimps, tadpoles etc)

**When to see them at Rye Meads** – kingfishers stay at Rye Meads all year round, but the best time to see them is between March and September when they are breeding.

**Nesting** – usually kingfishers nest in river banks, but here at Rye Meads we've built a special nesting bank for them. They nest in burrows, that they dig into the bank. They can have up to three broods of young per year, with up to 7 young per brood!



*Rye Meads' kingfisher nesting bank*

**Kingfishers around the world** – there are 87 different species of kingfisher around the world! The common kingfisher, *Alcedo atthis*, is the only kingfisher found in Europe.

**Threats** – kingfishers are quite short lived. Sever winters, lack of food, chemicals, traffic and window collisions are common threats for kingfishers. Humans can disturb the breeding pair, if people get too close the parents won't go in to feed the young—which is why we have a special hide for people to watch the kingfisher here at Rye Meads, we can get good views but we won't disturb the adults!