

OUR FOUR MID-SIZED KINGFISHERS COMPARED IN PHOTOGRAPHS



FOREST KINGFISHER
Todiramphus macleayii
RED-BACKED KINGFISHER
Todiramphus pyrrhopygius
SACRED KINGFISHER
Todiramphus sanctus
COLLARED KINGFISHER
Todiramphus chloris

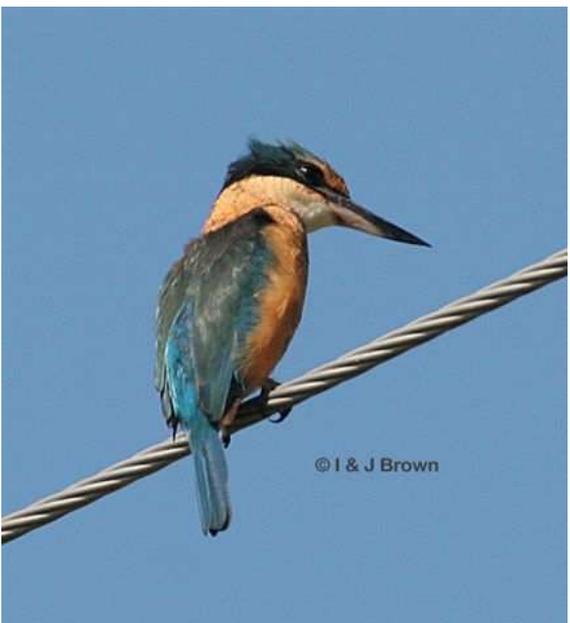


There are ten members of the Kingfisher family and most are very colourful birds,

some even quite spectacularly so. The four similar-sized species shown here are common through much of Queensland, although the Collared is restricted to mangrove foreshores. The Sacred is found throughout the state in most habitats, while the Forest is generally east of the Great Divide and the Red-backed to the west in forests and woodlands.

The Collared is also distinct in being largely sedentary while the others are migratory or nomadic, moving to northern Queensland and Papua New Guinea over winter. They all nest in hollow branches, tree-termite nests or tunnels in earth banks.

Photos: TL- Forest Kingfisher, TR- Collared Kingfisher, R- Sacred Kingfisher [all Ian & Jill Brown], BL & BR- Red-backed Kingfisher



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Birds
Queensland





Sacred Kingfisher
Wonga Beach

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Birds Queensland 2005



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Note the colour variations in the Sacred Kingfisher, with the green-blue back & wings appearing quite different at different angles of sunlight and viewing. The Forest is more consistently blue on the back & wings and has very distinctive 'headlights' of white in front of the eyes. It also has a white patch in the wing which is obvious when it flies. Both of these have similar calls and habits, although the Forest is more restricted to open forest areas in its habitat preference.

The immatures of the Sacred and Forest have duller colouration and some scalloping on the wings and upper breast.



Forest Kingfisher
Mareeba

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Photos: TL- Sacred Kingfisher [Tom Oliver], TR- Immature Sacred Kingfisher [BQ Lib.], ML- Red-backed Kingfisher [I & J Brown], MR- Forest Kingfisher [Tom Oliver], BL- Collared Kingfisher & BR- Sacred Kingfisher [BQ Lib.]



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