

The Blue Heron

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My favorite species of birds in Franklin Township is the Blue Heron. I like the Blue Heron because it is a great sight to see. They are usually three to four and a half feet tall and are blue in color. The Blue Heron is found mostly throughout North America as far as North Alaska and the Southern Canadian provinces in the summer. In the winter, the range extends south through Florida, Mexico, and the Caribbean to South America. Here in Franklin Township, I find them next to a pond that is across the street from my house on Spring Hill Road. I also see them on the river that is down the street from my house. It is the South Branch of the Raritan River. There they can catch the fish that live there. I usually see them at the side of the pond waiting to catch their prey.

The Blue Heron is the largest bird in North America. Eagles, raccoons, bears, and turkey vultures are sometimes predators to Blue Herons. The Blue Heron eats small fish, aquatic insects, rodents, and other small mammals, like ducklings. That is why they love to live along the river and hang out at the pond.

When we go kayaking and canoeing, we see them nesting along the river. They don't like people and get scared when they hear us come down the river, then they fly away further down the river. The Blue Heron is very unique because of how pretty they are. When they fly down the river they look like pterodactyls because of how big they are and they have very long necks, long beaks, long legs, and really wide wings. Their wings flop up and down and they look prehistoric. They look so different than other birds and that makes them so special.

Blue Herons depend on wetlands for feeding and nesting, and luckily the land along the river by my house is wetlands. They seem to like it along the river because it seems like I see more of them every year. Blue Herons have to be careful, though, because there are eagles along the river, too, and eagles are one of the only predators that will attack adult Blue Herons. The raccoon and fox will eat the Blue Herons' eggs and young. That is why they are so scared when nesting in the trees along the river. Blue Herons are such neat birds that I really like to watch and I am so lucky to have them right outside my front door on Spring Hill Road in Franklin Township.