The New Forest - the IFS training campus - an area which houses the FRI and its sister institutions including the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA) is also home to a rich biodiversity. These flora and fauna become a part of our neighbourhood while we are at the campus. The campus is also adorned with heritage buildings, museums, nurseries and a beautiful landscape. This initiative is aimed at making us more familiar with our neighbourhood.

The KYC (Know your Campus) initiative started by the IFS 2019 batch in this lockdown period shall come out with a campus related topic each day.

Bright colors, flawless dives, and rhythmic flights...

The Kingfishers

Family: Alcedinidae
**Peculiar characteristics** -
1. A large head compared to its body
2. Long and point bill
3. Short legs
4. Most species have an attractive colouring
5. Its flight is low and fast.
6. Can hover in air before attempting a fast targeted dive into water.

Click on the link below to see it dive and hunt like a pro.


**Food** -
As the name suggests they are excellent fishermen - with fish as their major diet.

Other things include small crabs, insects, rodents.

**Habitat** -
Majorly near aquatic ecosystems -
Lakes and ponds
Rivers and streams
Creeks and estuaries

Near human habitations -
Flooded farms and canals
Nalas

**Distribution** -

**Nesting** -
Usually nest in wall cavities, tunnels dug on water banks, unused pipe holes
About 114 species of kingfishers are found in the world
20 species are found in India

4 Species in FRI Campus

**Common Kingfisher**
*Alcedo atthis*

- About 16 cm
- Shades of Bluish green color on back.
- Pale orange belly.
- Look for orange patch near the ear.

**White throated Kingfisher**
*Halcyon smyrnensis*

- About 27 - 28 cm
- Shades of Bluish green on back.
- Bright red orangish head.
- White near throat.
**Pied Kingfisher**  
*Ceryle rudis*

- About 25 cm
- Black and white body with crest

**Crested Kingfisher**  
*Megaceryle lugubris*

- About 42 cm
- Rather rare bird.
- Black and white body with a shaggy streaked crest

**Did you know?**
Kingfishers are territorial and try to dominate good fishing grounds.

They are species of the ecotone zones as they prefer shallow waters.

**Walk down to the Tons banks, if luck you may spot all four of them at one place.**

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Text, Design and Photographs:  
Kasturi Sule, IFS 2019

Illustration: Green Humour
Reference and maps: Birds of Indian Subcontinent (Book by Inskipp and Grimmett)

Bird calls: www.xeno-canto.org