Like most humans, birds are creatures of habit. At one time or another almost every day the Kingfisher on this little North Louisiana lake can be found on almost exactly the same spot—a length of dead high wire stretched along the shore near the water.

This is a solitary bird, about the size of a big bluejay, and we had to describe it to Louisiana Tech zoologist Dr. John Goertz: Large head with crest, upper parts bluish-gray with a broad ring around the neck.

"Near the water?" the zoologist wanted to know. We told him and he told us: A belted Kingfisher. Dr. Goertz said to look for the bird in that same place—they prefer a regular perch—and this is what we have done.

The Kingfisher is fun to observe. From that wire she (this is one of the rare cases when the female has the brighter plumage) propels over the water in a half-dozen wing-beats before settling into a long, watchful low glide.

Unwary small fish are prey to the Kingfisher’s drill of a beak. This bird kills the fish (this is something we have read but not witnessed) by belting it against a branch, tossing it into the air, and catching it on the drop. We have noticed that the Kingfisher goes after insects, tadpoles and even wild fruit as well as fish.

Our Kingfisher is not sociable with other birds, not even other Kingfishers except in breeding season, and thinks she owns the lake—filling the late afternoon with a loud, wild rattle of a cry.

Somehow our spring days are not complete or comfortable until we have seen the Kingfisher on its wire, overlooking its lake. Its habit has become our habit, and we would miss it now.