

Blue Heron Blues

In case you hadn't noticed, the Blue Herons are very busy assaulting our water gardens. I have had two reports of nearly total depletion of their fish population. In the last month or so we have seen and chased away more than 10 Great Blue Herons trying to figure out how they could get our fish too!!! The only reason our fish weren't taken is that we covered both ponds with nets. We also covered the streams. The primary purpose of the netting was to keep the leaves from collecting in and fouling the water but the great side benefit is they are keeping the predators out. Raccoons are another threat to our fish population. Netting will certainly make it very difficult if not impossible for the 'coons to get to the fish.

Barred Owls are another threat to the well being of our aquatic pets. They do live around here. Several have been sighted at the Lake Waco Wetlands. The following is an article written by a Natalie Rowe in British Columbia printed in the Nov 2008 Birds and Blooms magazine.

“While I was on my way out with the garbage one night, a large bird startled me as it whooshed past my head! It flew up to perch in our horse chestnut tree, and I was delighted to see that it was a Barred Owl.

Soon, I noticed that the owl had taken a keen interest in our fish pond, which housed 10 large goldfish. I didn't think much of this. After all, owls don't eat fish, right?

Apparently, they do! I went out to the pond the next morning and found that half the goldfish had disappeared. I did a quick search on the Internet and confirmed that it's normal for barred owls to eat fish. Interestingly, the owl had picked off all the white-colored ones. Perhaps they were easier to see at night?

We managed to save the rest of our goldfish by covering the pond. The owl left, and even though it took many of our pets with it, we do hope to see it return one day!”

Great Briton Has Them Too!

This article was taken from the BBC. A Suffolk police investigation into the disappearance of fish worth thousands of pounds has been called off after a heron was found to be the culprit. Suffolk Police were called in after 27 Koi carp and seven large goldfish vanished from a Carlton Colville home. Officers suspected a raid by thieves and issued a witness appeal which asked if locals saw "anything suspicious" or if they had been offered similar fish. But the appeal was recalled soon after when they found the heron was to blame. A further statement issued by police explained: "This incident is now being attributed to a large heron." A police spokesman said: "We take all incidents very seriously and we were worried that someone might have made off with fish worth thousands of pounds. "Thankfully, on this occasion an arrest wasn't necessary."

Source: 'Heron to blame for fish 'thefts.'

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/suffolk/7829380.stm

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