

Great Blue Heron: *Ardea herodias*



The Great Blue Heron is a large wading bird in the heron family Ardeidae, and is commonly found near the shores of open water and in wetlands over most of North and Central America, as well as the Caribbean and the Galapagos Islands. It is the largest North American heron, with a head-to-tail length of 36-55 in., a wingspan of 66-79 in. and weighing 4.4-8 lbs.

These birds can be found in a range of habitats: fresh and saltwater marshes, mangrove swamps, flooded meadows, lake edges or shorelines, but always close to bodies of water.

The Great Blue Heron nests in large colonies of many sets of mated pairs. Built in trees or bushes, these nests are around three ft. in diameter and nearly as tall.

The primary diet for a Great Blue Heron consists of small fish, though it is also known to opportunistically feed on a wide range of shrimp, crabs, aquatic insects, rodents, other small mammals, amphibians, reptiles and small birds.

