

COOL FACTS ABOUT THE GREAT BLUE HERON

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Serially monogamous- ie. All parents and chicks go their own way at the end of the season. They do not stay together as a family. If parents are successful and see each other again at the nesting site, chances are they will become a pair again.

Chicks- do not reproduce until they are approx. two years old. Exceptions have been noted. 'Just say no' doesn't always work.

How to id. a parent vs. chick:

Parent has two black plumes hanging off the head with white head in middle vs. Chick has black feathers on head- first sticking up, later lying down.

Height: 4 feet – 3 inches

Weight: 5 pounds

Wingspan- 6 feet

Egg size and color: pale blue- a little larger than a chicken egg

Life span- 17 to 22 years

Diet: fish, gophers, small birds. GTBH (great blue heron) uses its' razon sharp beak to stab and grab prey.

Incubation and feeding: Both parents incubate, and feed the chicks. After hatching, both parents take turns staying with chicks for first four weeks to keep them warm at night. Adults feed chicks by regurgitation into the bottom of nest. They do not feed beak to beak. Chicks pull parents' beak down to stimulate regurgitation.

At six weeks, chicks are full size like their parents. It takes twelve weeks after hatching for chicks to fledge.

NOTE: PREDATORS ARE RARE AT STOW LAKE COLONY.

IF A NEST WAS ATTACKED BY GREAT HORNED OWL or GOLDEN EAGLE, PARENT WOULD FLY OFF AND NOT TRY TO REPEL THE ATTACK.

ADULT'S GOAL IS TO REMAIN ALIVE TO REPRODUCE ANOTHER DAY.

*****IF ANOTHER HERON FLEW CLOSE-PARENT WOULD CHASE AWAY.**