



# GREAT BLUE HERON



## QUICK FACTS

**Scientific Name:** Ardea herodias

**Population:** ~500,000 (estimated)

**Lifespan:** 15-20 years (wild), up to 25 years (captivity)

**Size:** 91-137 cm long (36-54 in)

**Wingspan:** 167-201 cm (66-79 in)

**Weight:** 2-3.6 kg (4.4-7.9 lbs)

**Speed:** Up to 48 km/h (30 mph) in flight



## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- **Color:** Gray-blue with white face, black plumes
- **Sensory Adaptations:** Keen eyesight, sensitive bill for prey
- **Limb & Tail Functionality:** Long legs for wading, strong wings



## FUN FACT !

They fly with neck retracted



## HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION



**Range:** North America

**Preferred Habitat:** Marshes, rivers, coastal areas

**Elevation Range:** 0-1,500 m (0-4,921 ft)

IUCN Red list category  
Least Concern

## DIET & NUTRITION



**Primary Diet:** Fish, frogs, small mammals

**Foraging Method:** Stands still to ambush prey

**Adaptations:** Sharp bill for spearing, patient hunting



## UNIQUE ADAPTATIONS



**Stalking:** Stands motionless to catch prey

**Colonial Nesting:** Breeds in large groups



### Survival score

Strength: 7/10

Stealth: 8/10

Adaptability: 7/10



## REPRODUCTION & LIFE CYCLE



**Mating Season:** March-July

**Gestation:** 25-29 days (incubation)

**Clutch Size:** 3-6 eggs

**Parental Care:** Both parents feed chicks for 50-60 days



## ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE



**Role:** Predator, wetland health indicator

**Indicator Species:** Presence indicates healthy wetlands

**Cultural Significance:** Symbol of patience



## THREATS

Habitat loss, pollution, human disturbance



## CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Wetland protection, nesting site preservation



**Call to Action:** Protect wetlands, reduce pollution, spread awareness



## INTERESTING FACTS

They can fly with a 2kg fish

Herons regurgitate pellets of bones

They roost trees at night

