

# BAYOU CITY BIRDING

## ZINE #1

### HERONS & EGRETS

Hérons and egrets are large wading birds that have dagger-like bills, long legs, and long S-shaped necks that they can coil against their bodies. Look for them as they fish in shallow water and perch in nearby trees. Birds are shown in order of size, with the largest first.

© 2015 Wendy Wright



BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON



GREAT BLUE HERON



YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON



GREAT EGRET



YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON NESTLINGS



SNOWY EGRET

CATTLE EGRET



GREEN HERON



## LEARN MORE WITH...

A FREE APP: Merlin Bird ID

WEB SITES: AllAboutBirds.org, HoustonAudubon.org, JohnMuirLaws.com/drawing-birds, ProjectWild.org

BOOKS: The Stokes Essential Pocket Guide to the Birds of North America, National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America, The Sibley Guide to Birds, The Crossley ID Guide: Eastern Birds, The Laws Guide to Drawing Birds, and Identify and Draw North American Birds

**Download more of the Bayou City Birding Zines at [WhiteOakBayou.org](http://WhiteOakBayou.org)**

## GREAT BLUE HERON

WHEN: Year round

LOOK FOR: A stately four-foot-tall bird with a black and white striped face, orange bill, pink-gray neck with light/dark cross-hatching in front, and mostly blue-gray body accented with patches of pale-red

FIELD NOTES: Juveniles have duller coloring. In the late 1800s, the Great Blue and others were hunted almost to extinction for feathers used to decorate women's hats. Laws were passed just in time to save them, sparked by a new conservation movement.

---

1st SEEN ON AT

## GREAT EGRET

WHEN: Year round, but more common in summer

LOOK FOR: An athlete with pure white feathers, yellow-orange bill, extra long neck, long black legs, and really big black feet

FIELD NOTES: The Great Egret has the longest/skinniest neck of the group. While most herons and egrets eat fish and critters that live in or near the water, the Great Egret will also hunt on land for rodents, reptiles, and insects. Like other herons and egrets, they fly with their necks folded underneath.

---

1st SEEN ON AT

## SNOWY EGRET

WHEN: Year round, but more common in summer

LOOK FOR: A ballet dancer with white feathers, pointy black bill, black legs that sometimes show a yellow "seam" up the back, and bright yellow feet

FIELD NOTES: Snowies always seem to be having fun. They will run around and shuffle their feet to stir up fish hiding below, which like all herons and egrets, they swallow whole. Snowies are a bit larger than the mostly white Cattle Egrets (see inset), which feed on insects in fields and have stubby yellow-orange bills.

---

1st SEEN ON AT

## BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON

WHEN: Year round, but uncommon in winter

LOOK FOR: A bird shaped like a bowling pin with a beak - with red eyes and feathers of black, gray, and white on a stocky body with a relatively short neck

FIELD NOTES: Juvenile Night-Herons look very different than the adults. Both species start out with brown feathers dotted with light spots and then gradually take on adult characteristics during the course of 2+ years. Very young Night-Herons sport wild "hair" and look like orange-eyed dinosaurs!

---

1st SEEN ON AT

## YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON

WHEN: March through September

LOOK FOR: A serious bird with a black and white striped face, red eyes, black bill, gray feathers edged in white, and legs that fade from pink to yellow

FIELD NOTES: Unlike most herons and egrets, Night-Herons are most active at night. Yellow-crowns often build nests in Live Oak trees along streets, making it easy to watch the nestlings grow and take their first flights. The yellow patch on the head of adults shows in only the best light and fades to white by summer.

---

1st SEEN ON AT

## WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

The Night-Heron in the box had fallen out of its nest before it could fly. Injured birds and those who cannot be placed back into their nests can be taken to The Wildlife Center of Texas. There, they will be cared for in the hope they can be released back to nature. The boxed bird was set free in August 2015. 😊

Please learn more about wildlife rehabilitation now - beginning with info at [WildlifeCenterOfTexas.org](http://WildlifeCenterOfTexas.org) - so that you will be ready to safely take action when a bird or mammal needs your help! You can also support wildlife rehabilitation with a donation to The Wildlife Center of Texas and/or by serving as a volunteer if you are 16 or older.

## GREEN HERON

WHEN: Year round, but uncommon in winter

LOOK FOR: A collection of spare parts, including a blue-green head/back/wings, orange eyes, two-tone bill, purple-red neck with white stripes down the front, and yellow-orange legs set on huge feet

FIELD NOTES: The Green Heron usually keeps its neck coiled against its body, shooting it out like a dart gun to catch fish. It is one of only a few birds who know how to place bait in the water to attract fish. Small and dark, it often blends into the background.

---

1st SEEN ON AT