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January 1983

## Solitary Nesting by the Great Blue Heron in Central Florida

Florida Field Naturalist

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### Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1983) "Solitary Nesting by the Great Blue Heron in Central Florida," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 11 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol11/iss1/5>

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Mock 1980). The interaction between the Little Blue Heron and Forster's Tern I saw did not follow either of these methods; rather the larger heron made a determined effort to displace the smaller tern, which initially ignored the heron.

Meyerriecks (1962), Kushlan (1976, 1978b), and Willard (1977) described the foraging behavior of the Little Blue Heron as primarily of the slow walking or stand and wait type. In his summary table Meyerriecks (1960) indicated that the Little Blue Heron displays open wing feeding. Willard (1977) mentioned that the Little Blue Heron only infrequently displays "active pursuit" and stated that the Louisiana Heron was the only species he saw whirling while feeding, although both it and the Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) made open wing dashes similar to those described here. It would seem that the observations I report are the first mention of whirling while feeding by the Little Blue Heron.

I wish to thank Dr. Andrew J. Meyerriecks and Dr. James A. Kushlan for reading earlier versions of this paper and offering suggestions for its improvement.

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Florida Field Naturalist 11: 18-19, 1983.

**Solitary nesting by the Great Blue Heron in central Florida.**—The Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) usually nests in colonies with other species of herons (Ogden 1978, Pp. 137-154 in *Wading birds*. National Audubon Society Research Report 7. New York, National Audubon Society; Palmer 1962, *Handbook of North American birds*, New Haven, Connecticut, Yale Univ. Press; Bent 1926, *Life histories of North American marsh birds*, U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 135). In Florida, Meyerriecks (1960, Comparative breeding behavior of four species of North American herons, Publ. Nuttall Ornithol. Club 2) reported that mainland birds may nest singly, but I found no detailed description of a solitary nest of Great Blue Herons in the literature.

In this note I report a case of solitary nesting by a pair of Great Blue Herons in central Florida. The nest, discovered by Walter M. and Ruth D. Boone in mid-February 1982, was 12 m high in a dead and weathered pine (*Pinus* sp.). The tree was near the center of the Placid Lakes Golf Course approximately 4.5 km SW of Lake Placid, Highlands County, Florida. Canals through the area provide drainage and a man-modified riparian habitat. The nest tree was at the edge of such a canal. I watched the nest on six visits for 3 hrs 5 min between 1530 and 1710 from 24 March to 28 April 1982.

On my first visit, 24 March, the nest contained two white, downy chicks. When I returned two days later, an adult was shading the young. The siblings touched bills frequently and constantly vocalized while alternately begging and holding their bill upward. On 5 April the two feathered nestlings huddled in the nest, except to stretch and gape twice. On my 14 April visit, the young stood with the sun at their backs and gular fluttered. On 19 April one nestling wing-flapped and then settled into the nest. The last day the birds were seen by golfers was 25 April, and they reported both birds frequently flapped their wings while atop the nest. The nest was empty during my last visit on 28 April, and I saw no Great Blue Herons in the area. I believe the nestlings fledged.

I observed adults foraging twice. On 5 April an adult flew to the nest from a canal 60 m away. Similarly on 14 April I saw an adult foraging at the edge of this canal. On 19 April an adult called, flew into view from the east, landed on the nest, and regurgitated food which the young took from its throat and from the nest.

The nest and its contents survived the rigors of severe storms with strong winds on 11 and 21 April, despite the fact that the old pine, riddled with woodpecker cavities, swayed in less intense winds.

DesGranges (1979, Pp. 192-201 *in* Proc. 1977 Conf. Col. Waterbird Group) and Krebs (1974, Behaviour 51: 99-134) suggested that aggregations of herons allowed the birds to locate food rapidly, and both authors discussed the importance of rookery life to the breeding success of herons. In 1962 Allen (*in* Palmer, 1962) noted that "the development of real estate and so on, cause abandonment of heronries". The nest I observed succeeded in fledging young without the benefits of a heronry and demonstrates an adaptation of this species to the effects of the destruction of large areas of natural habitat.—Marsha S. Winegarner, Route 2, Box 180, Lake Placid, Florida 33852.

Florida Field Naturalist 11: 19-20, 1983.

## REVIEWS

**Nesting birds of Sanibel-Captiva and the barrier islands.**—Hal H. Harrison. 1981. 52 pp., softbound \$2.95. **Roseate Spoonbills and other wading birds of Sanibel-Captiva.**—Griffing Bancroft. 1981. 55 pp., softbound. \$2.00. Both available from Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, P. O. Drawer S., Sanibel, FL 33957.—The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation has recently instituted a new series of publications on the natural history of the Sanibel-Captiva area. Twenty are planned. The present two are of particular interest to birders.