

Breeding Birds at Ibis Pond

	Name	Food	Nest	Eggs	Incubation	Nesting Period	Broods	Courtship, etc.
Heron s & Egrets - breed at 2 - 3 years old	Great Egret	Mostly fish, but also crustaceans, frogs, salamander, snakes and aquatic insects.	Male builds platform and either he or both will complete.	1-6 pale greenish-blue	23-27 days by both	21 - 25 days	1 or 2	Includes stretching neck, pointing bill skyward, circular flights, and calls. Patch of skin on face turns neon green and long plumes grow on back.
	Snowy Egret	Fish, insects, and crustaceans.	Male starts and female takes over - male brings sticks.	3-5 (2-6) pale greenish- blue	24-25 days by both	21-25 days	1	Includes pointing bill up, raising plumes and pumping head up and down while calling. Also circular flights, flies high, then tumbles down. Grows curvy, wispy plumes on their heads, necks and backs. Bare skin on face changes from yellow to reddish.
	Great Blue Heron	Variable - mostly fish, but also frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, rodents, birds, insects, etc.	Male brings sticks - female builds nest.	3-5 (2-7) pale blue	25-30 days by both	49-79 days	1 or 2	Includes stretching neck with bill pointed skyward, circular flights w/ neck extended, stretching neck with head and neck feathers erected, then snapping bill.
	Little Blue Heron	Mostly fish and crustaceans. Also, insects, tadpoles, frogs, snakes, etc.	Male brings sticks - female builds nest, male may assist.	3-4 (1-6) pale bluish green	22-23 days by both	35-49 days	1	Neck stretching and bill snapping. Pairs may nibble at each other's plumage, and cross and intertwine necks.
	Tricolored Heron	Mostly fish. Also insects, tadpoles, frogs, lizards.	Male selects site and brings female sticks. Female builds nest.	3-4 (2-7) pale blue green	21-25 days by both	15 -21 days		Male displays on nest site with neck stretching and head bowing. Also circular display flights.
	Green Heron	Mostly fish and crustaceans. Also, insects, tadpoles, frogs, grasshoppers, snakes.	Male starts and female takes over - male brings sticks.	3-5 (2-7) pale green to bluish	19-21 days by both	16-17 days	1 or 2	Includes stretching neck forward and down and snapping bill, and pointing bill up while swaying back and forth. Both may perform display flights.
	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Mainly crabs, also mollusks, frogs, insects, and fish. Inland, more variable.	Both - male carries sticks to female then both complete nest.	4-5 (2-8) pale bluish green	24-25 days by both	30-43 days	1	Includes neck stretches with bill pointed up, crouching with plumes erected, and giving a loud call. Pairs greet each other with raised crests, calling, touching bills and nibbling at each other's feathers.
	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Mostly fish, but variable and includes crustaceans, aquatic insects, frogs, snakes, clams, mussels, eggs and young birds.	Male starts and female takes over - male brings sticks.	3-4 (1-7) greenish blue	24-26 days by both	29 - 34 days	1	Includes stretching neck up and forward with feathers ruffled and slowly bowing while raising feet alternately. Also giving hissing buzz at lowest point in bow.
2 years	White Ibis	Crustaceans - crayfish and crabs, but also snails, frogs, worms, small fish.	Male brings sticks - female builds most of nest.	2-3 (5) pale blue green (to white) blotched with brown.	21 days by both	21 days	1	Male will conduct ritual preening, leaning and grasping sticks in bill, and will point bill skyward and lower head on back.

Coots & Rails 1 yr.	American Coot	Mostly leaves, stems, and seeds. Also insects, tadpoles, small fish and eggs of other birds.	Floating nest set in dense stands of reeds, cattails, grasses, etc. Built by both. Several platforms may be built - one or two used.	8-12 buff pink or gray, with brown or black spots	23 - 25 days by both	6 hours!	1 or 2	Male pursues female through water. Swims with head and neck lowered, wings arched and tail raised to show white patches.
	Common Gallinule	Leaves, stems and seeds of grasses and sedges - some insects and snails	Floating bowl of grasses and sedges anchored to vegetation.	3-15 gray or buff with speckles & splotches	19-22 days by both	begin to swim shortly after hatching	1 or 2	Male chases female, both stop, bow deeply and preen. May also lower head and raises tail, exposing white patches under tail.

American Alligator (Largest reptile in N.A.) up to 14 feet and 500 lbs, 80 teeth that are replaced when worn down.	Adult eats fish, turtles, snakes, small mammals and carrion, mostly in the water.	Reaches breeding age at around 10 years. Mates in late spring. Female builds mound of grass and mud - up to 3 feet high, then digs a depression with back legs in top of mound to deposit eggs.	35-50 eggs - incubated at 82-86 F = females 90-93 F = males	Incubated by outside temperature for a little over a month.	Young begin to squeal just before hatching telling female its time to remove top vegetation. She carries them in mouth or on back to water.	Male attracts female and wards off other males with a loud roar. Male butts against female and taps her snout with his. Female aggressively defends young in first year. Young eat insects, shrimp, tadpoles, frogs, and small fish. Alligators can live 35 years in the wild.
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