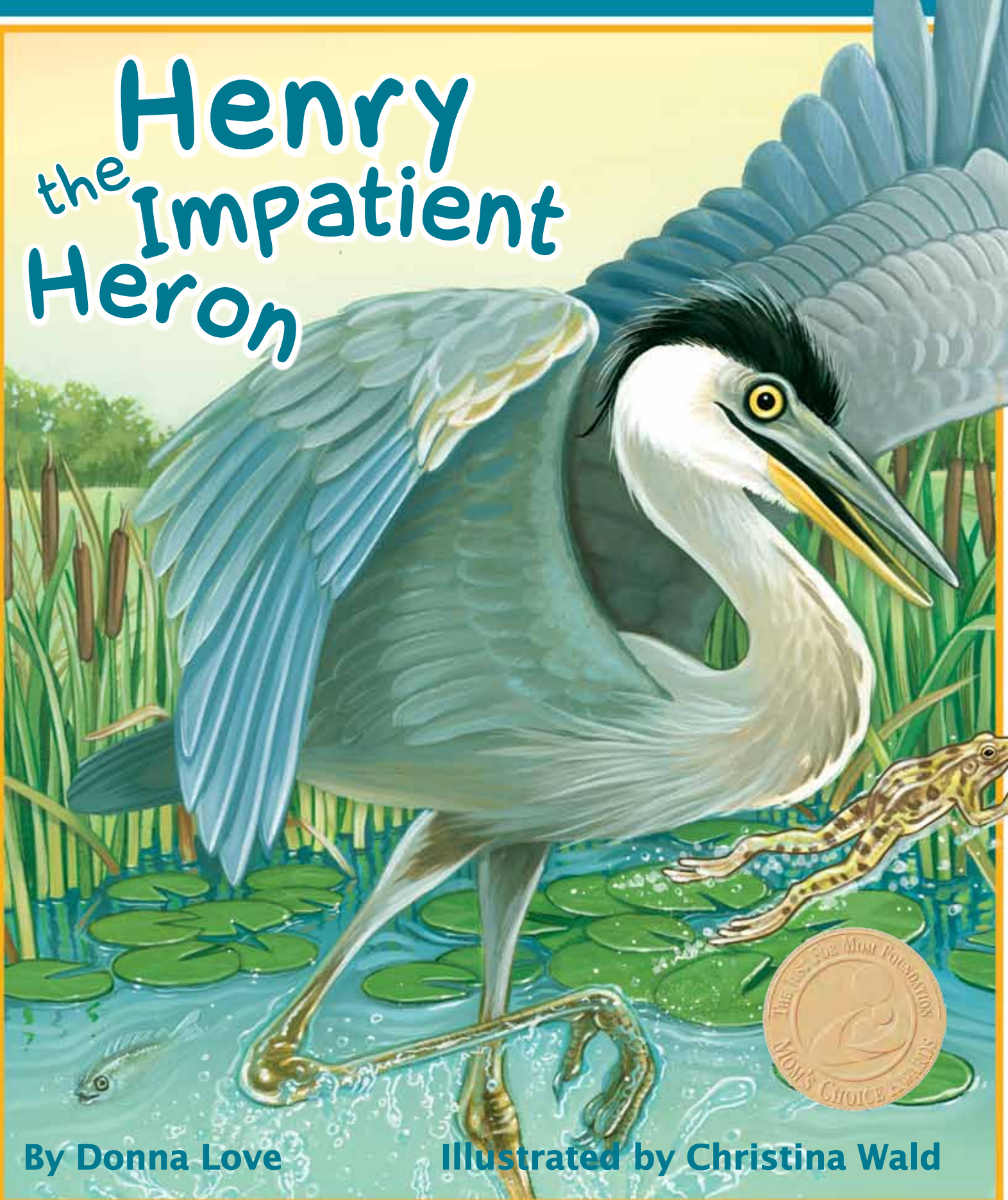


Henry the Impatient Heron



By Donna Love

Illustrated by Christina Wald

Henry the Impatient Heron



Henry the Heron couldn't stand still! He was always moving, and it drove everyone crazy! His brother and sister yelled at him for stepping on their heads, and Mom and Dad could barely get food into his little baby mouth. But herons have to stand still to catch their food, so how would Henry ever be able to eat on his own? In *Henry the Impatient Heron*, author Donna Love takes readers along with Henry as he learns a valuable lesson from the King of Camouflage! Hilarious and lighthearted illustrations by Christina Wald complement the important lesson in the text—the importance of being still! That's a meaningful lesson for both herons and children.

It's so much more than a picture book . . . this book is specifically designed to be both a fun-to-read story and a launch pad for discussions and learning. Whether read at home or in a classroom, we encourage adults to do the activities with the young children in their lives. Free online resources and support at www.ArbordalePublishing.com include:

- For Creative Minds as seen in the book (in English & Spanish):
 - Great Blue Heron Fun Facts
 - How Did Henry Hunt?
 - Heron Life Cycle Matching Activity
- Teaching Activities:
 - Reading Questions
 - Mathematics
 - Language Arts
 - Geography
 - Science
 - Coloring Pages
- Interactive Quizzes: Reading Comprehension, For Creative Minds, and Math Word Problems
- English and Spanish Audiobooks
- Related Websites
- Aligned to State Standards (searchable database)
- Accelerated Reader and Reading Counts! Quizzes
- Lexile and Fountas & Pinnell Reading Levels

eBooks with Auto-Flip, Auto-Read, and selectable English and Spanish text and audio available for purchase online.

Thanks to Susan Bonfield, Environment for the Americas, home of International Migratory Bird Day and Cathy Wakefield, Conservation Education Coordinator, The Nature Conservancy, Mad Island Marsh Preserve for verifying the accuracy of the information in this book.

Donna Love is an award-winning author who lives in Montana, where her husband is a district ranger in the Lolo National Forest. Some of Donna's other books include *The Glaciers Are Melting!*, *Loons*, *Diving Birds of the North*, and *Awesome Ospreys*, *Fishing Birds of the World*. *Awesome Ospreys* became a Skipping Stones Press Honor Award Winner in 2006 for promoting ecological understanding and cooperation around the world. Donna has a gift for explaining nature to children through her books.

Christina Wald has illustrated for a wide variety of toys, games, books, and magazines. Some of her other titles include *Little Red Bat*, *Habitat Spy*, *Big Cats*, and *Look, Find, and Learn: Animals of the World*. Christina enjoys the research aspect of these projects, saying that each new book is a fascinating new learning experience. She lives in Cincinnati with her husband and two cats. When not illustrating, she enjoys movies, travel, and reading.

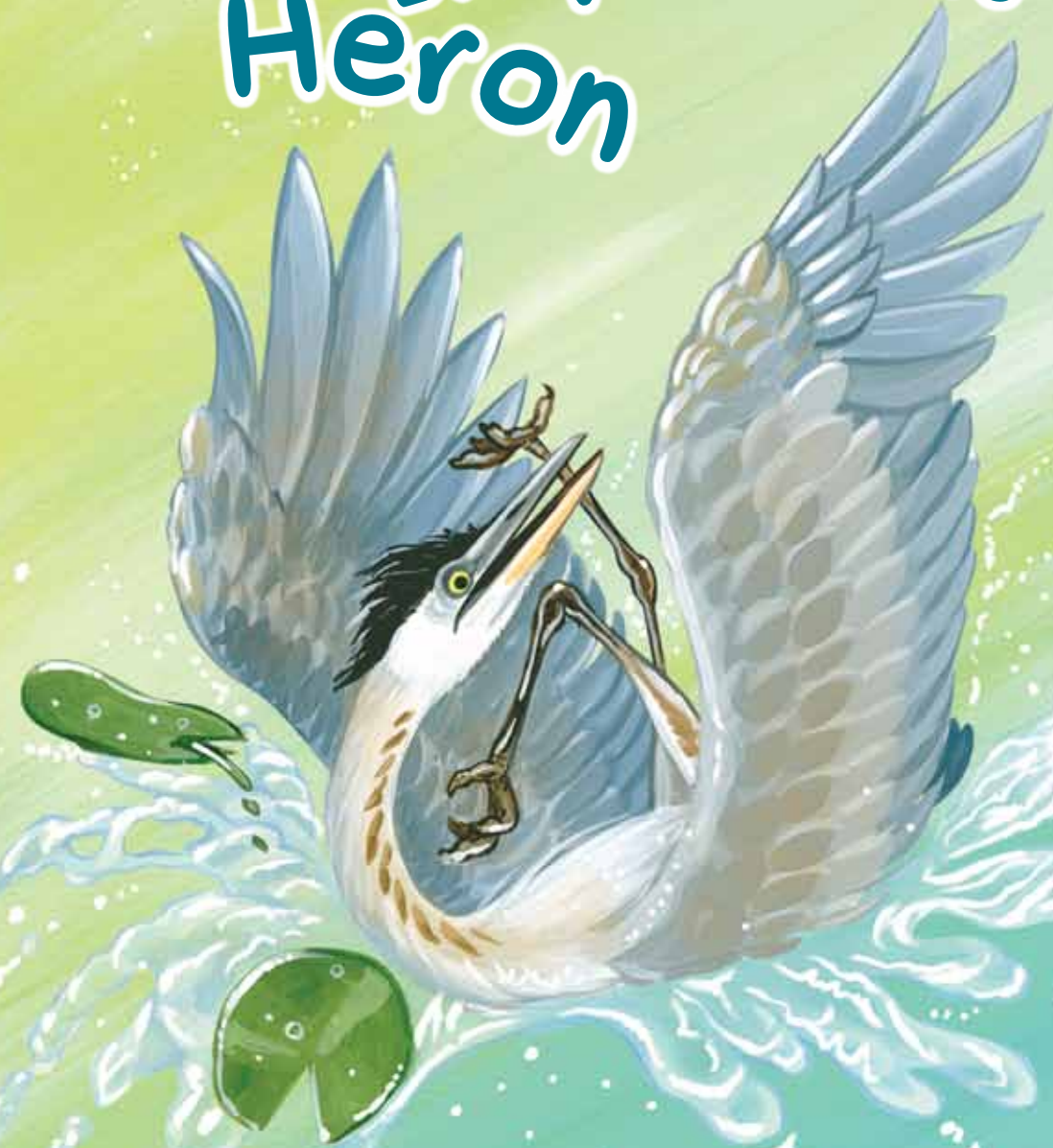


Donna Love




Christina Wald

Henry the Impatient Heron



By Donna Love
Illustrated by Christina
Wald



Henry was a young heron, a Great Blue Heron that lived near a pond. His long, thin legs were great for wading, and his long, pointed bill was great for catching fish. But the young heron had a problem. He couldn't stand still.

Other herons stood still for hours, legs stiff, bodies rigid, necks poised to strike out at a fish or salamander or tasty frog that might swim by. They stood still so long that the fish and the salamanders and the frogs forgot the herons were there.

But the young heron was impatient and had been that way since he hatched. The other chicks in the rookery waited patiently in their nest high in the tree for mom or dad to return with food. Henry hopped and squawked about, too anxious to stand still.

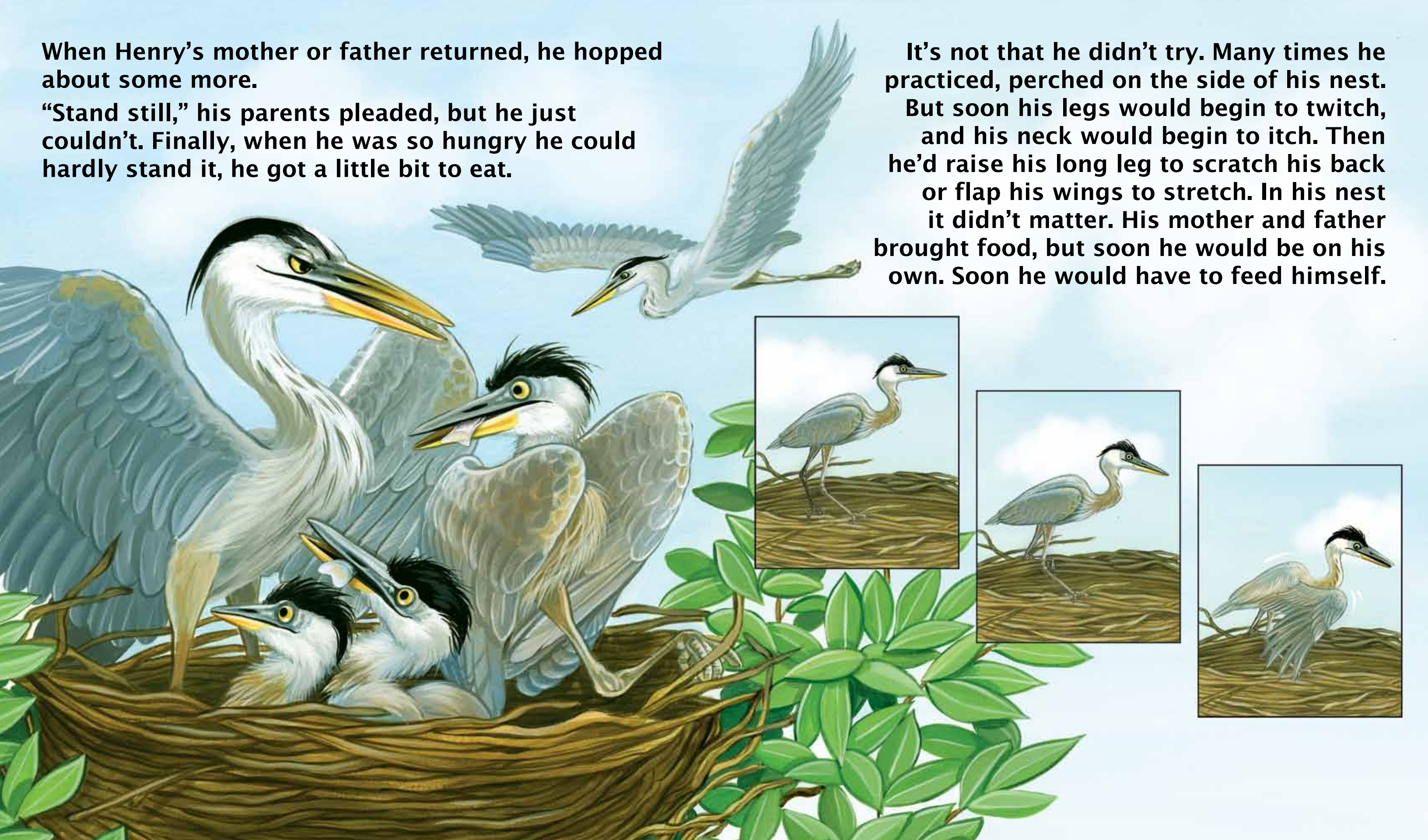
His brother and sister said, “Stand still, you’re stepping on our heads.” But he couldn’t.



When Henry's mother or father returned, he hopped about some more.

"Stand still," his parents pleaded, but he just couldn't. Finally, when he was so hungry he could hardly stand it, he got a little bit to eat.

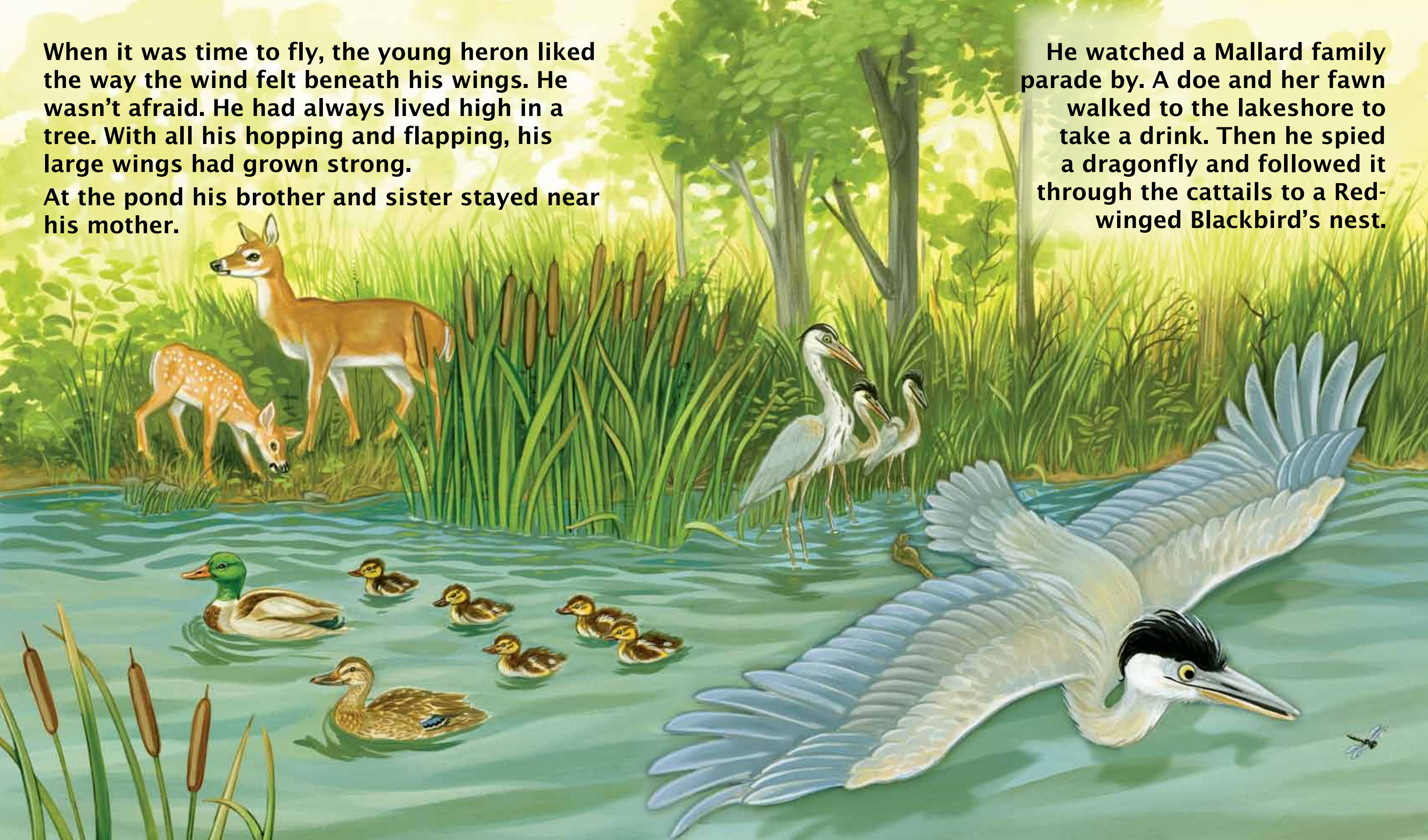
It's not that he didn't try. Many times he practiced, perched on the side of his nest. But soon his legs would begin to twitch, and his neck would begin to itch. Then he'd raise his long leg to scratch his back or flap his wings to stretch. In his nest it didn't matter. His mother and father brought food, but soon he would be on his own. Soon he would have to feed himself.



When it was time to fly, the young heron liked the way the wind felt beneath his wings. He wasn't afraid. He had always lived high in a tree. With all his hopping and flapping, his large wings had grown strong.

At the pond his brother and sister stayed near his mother.

He watched a Mallard family parade by. A doe and her fawn walked to the lakeshore to take a drink. Then he spied a dragonfly and followed it through the cattails to a Red-winged Blackbird's nest.



For Creative Minds

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Great Blue Heron Facts

A Great Blue Heron's eyes are positioned on its head so it can see behind as well as from the front. A heron can focus its eyes very fast so it can search for fish at close range, then quickly switch to a long distance view to watch for predators.

Heron's long necks and pointy beaks allow them to quickly spear fish or other small animals.



They can fly 20 to 30 miles an hour. Next time you are in a car, ask the driver to tell you when you are driving as fast as a heron flies.

The heron has a tiny bit of webbing between two of its front toes so it won't sink into marshy ground.

When flying, herons' long necks are "s-shaped."



When a Great Blue Heron preens, it uses its toes to scratch a patch of "powder down," a type of feather that helps insulate a bird. The tips of these feathers disintegrate into a powdery substance that Ornithologists (scientists who study birds) think may soak up water and/or be used to preen and clean feathers. When clean, it uses a "comb" on its middle front toe to straighten its feathers.

Great Blue Herons are large birds! When standing, they are approximately 4 feet tall. How tall are you? How does that compare to a heron?



The wingspan (from the tip of one wing to the other wing) is about 6 feet. Use a measuring tape to see how big 6 feet is. Do you know anyone or anything that is about 6 feet tall?

Hérons are a type of bird. All birds have feathers, although not all birds fly (penguins don't). In fact, birds are the only animals that have feathers. Birds hatch from eggs, breathe air, and are warm-blooded.

Their very long legs help them to walk quietly through the shallow water.

Adult Great Blue Herons only weigh about 5 pounds. How much do you weigh?

The heron's "backward facing" knee is really its ankle and heel. Its real knee is inside its body cavity hidden inside its skin and under its feathers.



How Did Henry Hunt?



Hérons are **carnivores**. That means they eat meat. But, they don't go to a grocery store for their food; they have to find it by themselves. Herons spend most of their awake-time looking for food. If you've seen a heron, chances are that you saw it standing in shallow water, hunting.

It probably looked like it was standing still doing nothing. But it was watching very closely for **prey** (animals it wants to eat) to come to it. By standing still for so long, other animals (fish, salamanders, frogs, etc.) don't realize that it is a bigger animal, and they swim up to it.



The heron quickly grabs the smaller animal with its strong beak and enjoys a tasty meal.



Food for thought: wetlands



Great Blue Herons live around wetlands all over North America from mangroves and salt marshes to freshwater swamps, lakes, and slow-moving rivers.

What could happen to Great Blue Herons if wetlands were destroyed?

What are some things that you and your family can do to prevent pollution in wetlands?

Heron Life Cycle Matching Activity:

See if you can put the herons' life-cycle events in order to spell the scrambled word.

Hérons breed in large groups called colonies. They usually build big nests high in trees or on cliff edges close to water. The male gathers sticks and the female builds the nest.



At 10 to 12 weeks the chicks leave the nest and their parents for good.



The eggs hatch after 26 to 30 days.



Chicks live in the nest for about two months and both parents feed them. That's when they take their first flight.



Females lay between two and seven pale blue eggs. Both parents take turns sitting on the eggs to keep them warm.



Answer:
Great



To my father and mother-in-law, Sam and Helen Melnick, and sister-in-law, Tana, who love to watch great blue herons along the Yellowstone River near Billings, Montana—DL

To Troy for all his support and feedback and to the herons that live around his parents' house in Lake Barkley, Kentucky—CW

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