STOW LAKE GREAT BLUE HERON COLONY CHRONOLOGY: 1993-2019
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All nests at Heron Island unless otherwise indicated.

1993  Nest # 1:  2 hatched, 2 fledged

1994  Nest # 1:  3 hatched, 3 fledged

1995  Nest # 1:  0 hatched
          (Parents sat on eggs for six months before giving up.)
          Nest # 2:  3 hatched, 3 fledged

1996: Nest # 1  2 hatched, 2 fledged
          Nest # 2  2 hatched, 2 fledged
          Nest # 3  2 hatched, 1 fledged
          Nest # 4  3 hatched, 0 fledged

1997: Nest # 1:  4 hatched, 4 fledged
          Nest # 2:  4 hatched, 4 fledged

1998: Nest # 1  3 hatched, 3 fledged

1999: Nest # 1:  4 hatched, 4 fledged
          LATE NEST # 2:  4 hatched, 4 fledged (July-August 1999)
          LATE NEST # 3:  3 hatched, 0 fledged (July-August 1999)
          (Parents abandoned chicks in August)

2000 - Nest # 1  (Heron island)  3 hatched, 3 fledged (April-June, 1999)
          Nest # 2  (Strawberry Isl.)  3 hatched, 3 fledged (April-June, 1999)
          Nest # 3  (Heron Island)  3 hatched, 3 fledged (July-Aug. 1999)
          Nest no. 4 (Heron Island)  3 hatched, 3 fledged (July-August 1999)
          Nest no. 5 (Heron Island)  2 hatched, 0 fledged (July-Aug. 2000)
          (Parents abandoned chicks in August)

2001 - Nest #1  0 hatched
2002 - Nest # 1
   (Heron island)  3 hatched, 3 fledged (hatch date: March-fledged May, 2002)
Nest # 2
   (Heron Island)  4 hatched, 4 fledged (hatch date: April )
Nest # 3
   (Strawberry Isl.)  2 hatched, 2 fledged (hatch date: May)

2003 - all nests on Heron Island
   Nest #1  2 hatched, two fledged
   Nest #2  2 hatched, two fledged
   Nest #3  4 hatched, four fledged

2004 Season- 10 chicks fledged from all four nests
   Nest #1
   Nest #2
   Nest #3
   Nest #4

Total chicks fledged as of 2004: 71 chicks in 11 seasons

2005- 10 chicks from 4 nests
   Nest no. 1  3 hatched  2 fledged
   Nest no. 2  3 hatched  3 fledged
   Nest no. 3  3 hatched  3 fledged
   Late Nest 4  2 hatched-June 20th, 2 fledged August 2005
   Arrived at Stow May 10, 2005-constructed new nest
   Sitting on eggs May 20, 2005

Total chicks fledged: 10

2006- total 16 chicks from 6 nests
   Nest no. 1  -2 chicks- 2 fledged
   Nest no. 2- 2 cks-2 fledged
   Nest no. 3 – 2cks-2 fledged
   Nest no. 4-4 cks hatched-4 fledged
   Late nests: left side of tree: July 8, 2006
   Nest no. 5 -3 cks hatched –3 fledged (left side of tree)
   Nest no. 6- 3 cks hatched- 3 fledged (right side of tree)

Best season ever.
2007 – 14 chicks from 6 nests

2008 – 3 nests 8 chicks

2009 – 3 nests 10 chicks

2010 – 6 nests 10 chicks

2011 – 3 nests 10 chicks

2012 – 2 nests 4 chicks

2013 – 6 chicks fledged from 3 nests
   Nest #1 - 2 chicks
   Nest #2 - 2 chicks
   Nest #4 - 2 chicks
   Nest #3 - abandoned

2014 – 3 nests – all failed in April 2014

2014 – 1 nest – 3 chicks fledged by Sept. 8, 2014
The same pair from the nest that failed, built a new nest on top of old center nest and produced three chicks on or around June 30, 2014. We know it is the same pair because the male in both nests has has a tongue injury causing the tongue to protrude like a pencil below its beak.

2015-1 nest- 3 chicks fledged on May 20, 2015- Heron Island
The same male that built the successful nest last year returned with a partner and occupied last year’s nest. The pair hatched 3 chicks which all departed by May 20, 2015 from Heron Island.

Three other pair of herons constructed nests on Heron Island-none were successful.

2015- 1 nest near Waterfall at Stow Lake- 2 chicks fledged on August 4, 2015
Two pair of herons from Heron Island moved over to the Island near the Waterfall at the end of April 2015. Both pair constructed new nests in a Monterey Pine tree. One nest was abandoned in early June, but the other nest was successful. This is the first time that the Great Blue Herons have nested on this tiny island; there are only two trees on the island. Note: there were originally three chicks in the nest, but one disappeared after a few days.

2016- 4 nests on island near Waterfall.

nest #1- 3 fledged
nest #2- 3 fledged
nest #3- 3 fledged
nest #4- 2 fledged


2017 - 5 nests near the waterfall
14 chicks fledged from 5 nests, 2 additional nests were occupied and later abandoned.

Nest #1- 4 chicks
Nest #2- 2 chicks (originally 3 chicks, one died after hatching)
Nest #3- 3 chicks
Nest #4- 2 chicks
Nest #5- 3 chicks

2018-6 nests near the waterfall.

Nest #1- chicks-nest and chicks fell on 4/9/18. Chicks did not survive.
Nest #2- 2 chicks fledged.
Nest #3- 4 chicks fledged.
Nest #4- 2 chicks fledged.
Nest #5- 3 chicks fledged.
Nest #6- 3 chicks fledged.
Nest #7- 3 chicks fledged.

*6 successful nests: -17 chicks fledged.
**Most chicks fledged in one season in history of colony.

2019 – 8 nests, 21 chicks

Nest #1- 3 chicks hatched, 3 fledged
Nest #2- 4 chicks hatched, 4 fledged
Nest #3- 2 chicks hatched, 2 fledged
Nest #4- 3 chicks hatched, 3 fledged
Nest #5- 2 chicks hatched, 2 fledged
Nest #6- 2 chicks hatched, 2 fledged
Nest #7- 2 chicks hatched, 2 fledged
Nest #8- 3 chicks hatched, 3 fledged

*21 chicks fledged in 2019.
**Best Year Ever In 26 Years!

GRAND TOTAL: 232 CHICKS FLEDGED AT STOW LAKE.
Notes:

a. Original nest from 1993 - fell into Stow Lake and sunk on Jan. 24, 2000 (This nest appears in 'Heron Island' video on YouTube.)

b. Nest from 1996 fell into paddle boat on December 31, 1997 - now on display at Audubon Canyon Ranch, Exhibit Hall.

c. Heron Island at Stow Lake is located opposite Stow Lake Boathouse

d. Great Blue Herons began nesting in 1993 at Stow Lake. The colony was discovered by field ornithologist Nancy DeStefanis.

e. To date, Great Blue Herons have nested successfully on three islands at Stow Lake: Strawberry Island, Heron Island and Waterfall Island.

For more information: Please contact Nancy DeStefanis, Executive Director, San Francisco Nature Education: info@sfnature.org

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