

### 3 Freshwater Marsh Creatures

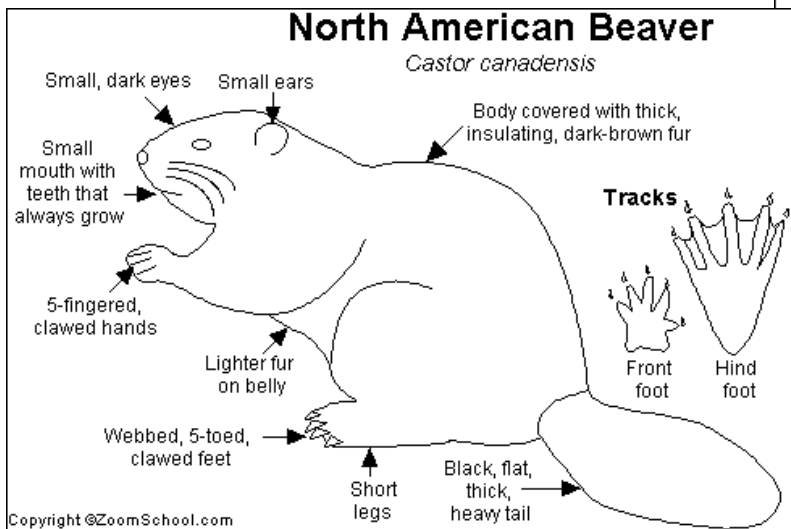
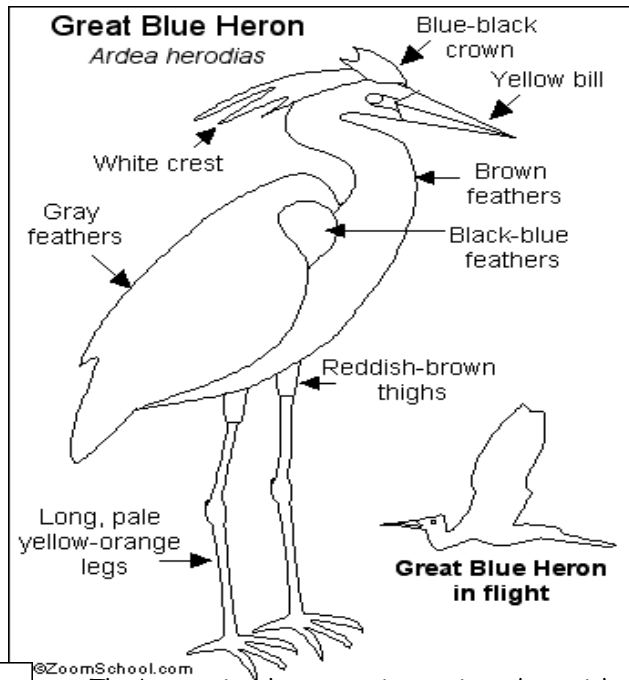
The Great Blue Heron is a wading bird from North America. The largest of the American herons, it lives in swamps, marshes, shores and tide flats. The Great Blue Heron flies with long slow wing beats and has a deep, raspy call that sounds like "frahnk, frahnk, frahnk".

The scientific name (genus and species): *Ardea herodias*.

Size: About 4 feet tall and has a wing-span of up to 6 feet.

Diet: Fish, lizards, frogs, crawfish, rodents and insects. The heron hunts in shallow water and uses its long sharp beak to spear food. Great Blue Herons have been known to choke eating prey too big for them to swallow.

Nests: Herons nest in colonies called rookeries. They lay 3-7 pale green colored eggs in a clutch (a set of eggs laid at one time).



The beaver is a large, semi-aquatic rodent with a large, flattened tail. It is a strong swimmer and can swim up to 5 miles per hour. The beaver can swim underwater for up to 15 minutes. Young beavers are called kits.

Size: Body is about 3 feet long, tail is one foot long and they weigh 30-70 pounds.

Diet: Tree bark, leaves, roots, twigs, and water plants.

Lodges: Beavers do not hibernate over winter, they will stay in their underwater lodge where they have stored enough food to last until spring.

Mosquitoes go through four distinct stages of development during a lifetime: Egg, pupa, larva, and adult. The full life-cycle of a mosquito takes about a month.

Eggs: 40–400 white eggs are laid in standing water or very slow-moving water.

Larvae: Hatch after a week and breathe air through tubes they poke above the surface of the water. Larvae will molt four times; after the fourth molt, they are called pupae.

Pupae: Live near the surface of the water breathing through two horn-like tubes (called siphons) on their back.

Adult: An adult emerges from a pupa when the skin splits after a few days. The adult lives for only a few weeks.

