



CHAPTER 1: TIDAL CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER

Section 1: Hickey Creek Swamp

Near the Caloosahatchee River, a male yellow-crowned night-heron builds a nest. He weaves together sticks and twigs. Inside, grass and leaves make it soft. The nest is hidden in the branches of a cypress tree.

The male greets the female bird. As part of mating, they bow, raise the feathers on their necks and call softly to each other. They also fly in circles. After a short time, the female lays three pale blue eggs in the

nest, sits on them for three weeks, and they hatch.

Mother and father both work to feed the babies. First they find crabs to eat. Then, they fly back to the nest. They bring the food they have swallowed back up from their stomachs and feed it to their babies. When the babies are three or four weeks old, they learn to fly and to catch their own meals.

A northwest wind pushes cold weather, and the wind blows one young heron away from his family.