Great Kiskadees are large, blocky flycatchers. They have a large head, thick neck, and straight, very stout bill. The wings are broad and rounded and the tail is medium length and square tipped.

Kiskadees are an eye-catching mix of black, white, yellow, and reddish-brown. The black head is set off by a bold white eyebrow and throat; the underparts are yellow. The wings and tail are a warm reddish brown that is particularly noticeable in flight.

These are bold, loud birds that quickly make their presence known. They sit on exposed branches near the tops of trees, often above water, where they give a piercing kis-ka-dee call and dart out to catch flying insects or pluck food—often small fish—from the water. They also eat fruit and sometimes come to feeders.

In the U.S., Great Kiskadees live in thorn-scrub and riverine forests of southern Texas, as well as along scrubby irrigation channels, open or second-growth woodlots, and suburbs. They are also widespread from Mexico through South America.