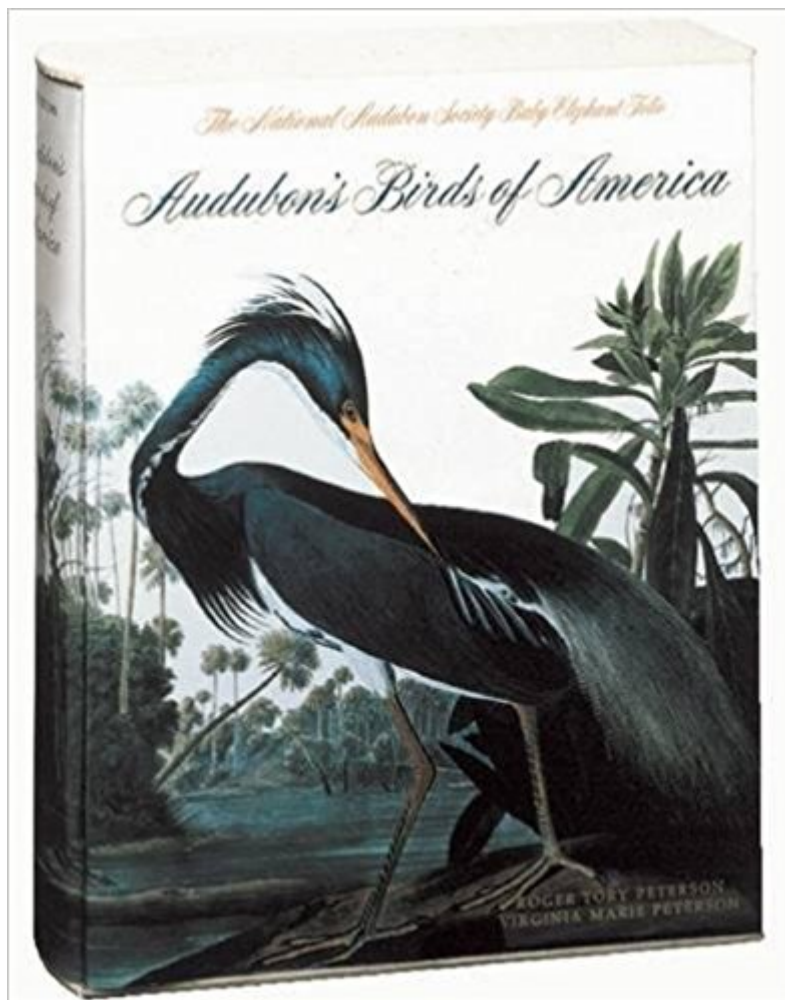




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Audubon's Birds Of America: The Audubon Society Baby Elephant Folio



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Synopsis

A magnificent new printing of this classic edition of John James Audubon's masterwork. In this latest printing of the Baby Elephant Folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America*, the thumbnail images accompanying the descriptive captions are printed in full color for the convenience of the reader. This printing also features an attractive new binding cloth, in a sumptuous teal color. The Baby Elephant Folio presents all 435 of Audubon's brilliant hand-colored engravings in exquisite reproductions derived from the original plates of the National Audubon Society's archival copy of the rare Double Elephant Folio. Although many attempts have been made to re-create the splendid illustrations in Audubon's masterpiece, nothing has ever equaled the level of fidelity achieved in this luxurious edition. Organized and annotated by Roger Tory Peterson and Virginia Marie Peterson, and issued with the full endorsement and cooperation of the Audubon Society, this volume is as informative as it is beautiful. Its fascinating introduction places Audubon in the context of the history of American ornithological art and also reproduces a wide sampling of the work of his notable predecessors and disciples, including Roger Tory Peterson's own rightfully famous paintings. A new systematic arrangement of the prints, following the modern classification of species, and descriptive captions about each bird allow us to appreciate Audubon's achievement in the light of modern ornithology.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A brilliant achievement." --The New York Times --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Roger Tory Peterson established himself as America's leading ornithologist with his best-selling Field Guide to the Birds. Like Audubon, Peterson received many honorary degrees and awards, including the Presidential Medal of Honor. Virginia Marie Peterson was a scientist and an expert on the environmental effects of oil spills.

In addition to the Baby Elephant Folio I recently purchased the Birds of America by Sterling Publishing (from London Museum of Natural History). Had I purchased the Baby Elephant Folio in 1996 when it was first published I would have given it an "A+". However, the book is already 15 to 30 years old (depending on Edition) and I suppose that printing/reproduction has come a long way. I can only give the Baby Elephant Folio the grade of "B" today. The colors are not true to the Havell prints in many, many prints. While they may have been adequate for the time, many prints appear washed-out and pale in color and there is consistent trouble throughout the volume of producing accurate wood colors and textures. Yellow warblers are orange. In some places the color is thin enough to see white (of the paper). The layout is good and a lot of thought went into placing birds with similar backgrounds on opposing pages. Some prints are double-wide but this is of little consequence since the binding doesn't allow a clear view of the entire print (some part of the print is always tucked-away in the center of the book). The Sterling publication, on the other hand, has superb clarity and color. The tree bark textures are crisp and are more faithful reproductions of the Havell prints. Additionally, the colors appear deep as though they were hand colored. The aquatinted tones (gradation white-grey-black) are superb and makes the grey birds look tremendous. In the Baby elephant Folio such gradations in color appear grainy and uneven. I am happy to own both and the Baby Elephant Folio brings larger prints and more descriptive text to the table. But to truly appreciate the original Audubon prints I would seek a copy of Sterling's Birds of America before the Baby Elephant Folio. Birds of America

I recently saw an exhibit of the entire collection of Audubon illustrations. That was the motivation to purchase this book. It is complete and printed on nice stock with excellent renditions of the illustrations. My only complaint is that some of the larger plates that are "landscape" are printed straddling the binding. It just ruins the illustration. The drawings that required that should have been printed either on a foldout that preserved the integrity of the print or on the long axis of the book. I would rather turn the book 90 degrees to view the intact illustration than have it broken by the binding. Disappointing, given the price of the book..

Nice book. shipping was great and delivery fast so no quibbles there. Images are not quite as accurate as with other more recent publications such as the Sterling/Sibley effort, (which is gorgeous and a bargain). Most of the images in this book are good to very good, and a few are not so good. Dark colored birds lose some of their relief and detail. It is as if many images were underexposed if they had been photos. However what I do love are the wonderful annotations by Roger Peterson on each of the 435 birds. They were carefully researched and thoughtfully written. Also, unlike some criticisms, I like the ordering of the birds by genus and species. I can see how Audubon treated similar birds. So what the reader is getting with this Abbeville production is a combo art book and ornithological treatment of Audubon's birds, which makes sense given that Mr Peterson was so involved in the production. . The intro written by Mr Peterson is also excellent. One final word of caution the book is huge and heavy, that is good and bad. good because you get large bordering on poster sized images. Bad in that one does not easily handle this thing. Lastly the binding and overall physical construction is outstanding. Comes in a beautiful slip case.

My good friend and neighbor owned a book like this, but it was the smaller version. As soon as I layed eyes on it and poured through all of its wonder, I knew that I would have to find one for myself. I put the book on my Chrstmas list and before I knew it, I was at my grandmother's house for Christmas vacation and she got it for me. The book is absolutely magnificent and beyond comparison. It greatly surpasses other Audubon books. Description: All of Audubon's work in full size, unlike other books where most of the art plates are 3x4 images. Needs a sturdy table, weighs 15.4lbs and is exercise just to move it! Foreword by Roger Tory Peterson. Book I received came in a beautiful box case. This book makes a great gift, but the person who you are giving it to, needs to be in healthy and strong shape. Book is much too large for normal sized book case.

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