



John James Audubon: Writings and Drawings (Library of America)

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A landmark volume collects the writings and drawings of America's greatest artist-naturalist

The breathtaking art of John James Audubon's *Birds of America* has been celebrated throughout the world since it first appeared over 150 years ago. Less well known is Audubon's literary legacy -- the magnificent volumes of natural history he published during his lifetime, as well as the remarkable journals, memoirs, and letters left behind at his death. Now, with The Library of America's unprecedented *John James Audubon: Writings and Drawings*, Audubon the great nature writer takes his rightful place alongside Audubon the artist.

Here is the most comprehensive selection of Audubon's writings ever published, along with a spectacular portfolio of his drawings. The "Mississippi River Journal," the foremost record of an American artist's progress, details Audubon's first wilderness bird hunts. Selections from his "1826 Journal" follow him to Europe, where his abilities were finally recognized. Audubon's masterwork, the five-volume *Ornithological Biography*, is here generously represented by 45 entries. Charming, haunting, and violent by turns, these vivid intimate portraits of the habits and habitats of America's birds, from the curious mating rituals of the Wild Turkey to the sublime spectacle of the migration of the now vanished Passenger Pigeon, changed American nature writing forever. The "Missouri River Journals" evoke the vanishing American Indian and the hardships of frontier life. An extensive selection of letters charting almost 20 years of Audubon's artistic development, along with two essays on artistic technique and a brief memoir, round out the volume. For the first time, all texts have been painstakingly prepared from original sources. General and ornithological indices will aid the reader in the field as well as in the study. Sixty-four full-color plates, and fascinating manuscript sketches, some never before published, offer a unique perspective on Audubon's art.

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