



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Brown Pelican, *Pelecanus Fuscus*. Male Adult

Stock#: 97451mp2
Map Maker: Audubon & Bien
Date: 1860
Place: New York
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 25 x 36 inches
Price: \$ 12,500.00



Description:

Brown Pelican, Pelecanus Fuscus. Male Adult, drawn from nature by John James Audubon and chromolithographed by Julius Bien in New York, in 1860, is a wonderfully composed, true-to-life image of a breeding adult male perched on the branch of a Red Mangrove. This chromolithograph is likely based on a watercolor made by Audubon in the Florida Keys around April or May of 1832.

In the 1830s, the Floridian landscape was a rich tapestry of biodiversity, providing a fertile ground for ornithological studies. Audubon's journeys, as recounted in his writings, took him deep into Florida, where the Brown Pelican, a bird of significant interest, made its home. While the species found sanctuary across the southern shores of the United States, from Cape Hatteras to the far reaches of Florida, by Audubon's time, their numbers had noticeably dwindled, particularly in places like Charleston's inner bay where they



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were once abundant. Nonetheless, certain areas, like the inlets south of St. Augustine and the Keys of Florida, especially Key West, remained vibrant hubs of pelican activity. Audubon's account conveys a vivid picture of these birds – their habits of fishing, resting on mangroves, and their curious interactions with human settlements.

The Brown Pelican, a distinctive coastal bird recognized by its long bill and a large throat pouch, holds a unique place in the natural history of the United States. Once abundant along the U.S. coasts, its population suffered a dramatic decline in the mid-20th century primarily due to the pesticide DDT. The chemical caused pelicans to lay eggs with thinner shells, leading to large-scale nesting failures. Recognizing the alarming decline, conservationists and government agencies took action. In 1970, the Brown Pelican was listed under the Endangered Species Act. Subsequent efforts, including the banning of DDT in 1972, played a pivotal role in the species' recovery. By 2009, having made a remarkable comeback, the Brown Pelican was officially removed from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife. Today, it stands as a testament to successful conservation efforts, once again dotting U.S. coastlines and serving as an emblem of resilience and revival.

Detailed Condition:

Chromolithograph on wove paper. Lined with archival tissue. A few edge tears expertly mended.