

***Price Guide***  
*for the Audubon*  
***Leipzig and Loatess***  
***Editions***

*of*

**John James Audubon's**

***Birds of America***

***by Ron Flynn***

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796 Holly Creek Dr.  
Holland, Michigan 49423

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1st Edition, 1<sup>st</sup> Printing

The author's Audubon websites:

<http://www.audubonprices.com>

<http://www.auduboninfo.net>

<http://www.audubonimages.org>

On the cover: M. Bernard Loates Edition Virginia Partridge print

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## **The Audubon Leipzig Edition and Price Guide**

The Audubon Leipzig Edition is a limited edition facsimile reproduction of some of John J. Audubon's original *Birds of America* prints. Production on the Leipzig Edition began in 1972 in Leipzig, East Germany (under Communist control). Originally, 1000 copies of each of 40 different Audubon Havell prints were to be produced. Of the 1000 sets, 500 sets were to be bound into 2 book volumes, and the remaining 500 copies of each print were to be sold loose. One book volume contained 20 vertical images, and the other volume had 20 horizontal images. It is not certain whether the original printing was completed in Leipzig, Germany. Beyond that, there is more confusion and unanswered questions about this East German produced edition than factual information.

After production ceased in Leipzig in the 1970s, I have heard many accounts stating that an unknown number of sets were produced in Switzerland, Holland, London, or another German city, sometime during the 1980s. I've seen a 2 volume bound set for sale that was published in London 1972/1973 for \$2900, and was listed as the Leipzig/Ariel Edition, though I believe the above dates were on the title page and not the actual date of publication.

Originally, the 40 prints were bound into two very large volumes. Each print measured about 27" x 37-1/2", which is true DEF size. All text pages in the book volumes were printed in German and English, but the prints themselves are true facsimiles of the original Audubon Havell Edition. Original bound volumes occasionally turn up for sale in the U.S., but are regularly listed for sale by European and Australian booksellers. Single bound volumes generally range in price from \$1000-\$1750 USD. Two volume sets are priced from \$1750-\$3000 USD. A complete review of the Leipzig Edition prints can be found later in this Book..

### **Collotypes -**

The Leipzig Edition is printed on heavy cardstock like paper, without a gloss. The prints are collotypes. A collotype is an outdated printing technique that was commercially developed around 1868, and all but abandoned after World War II. The collotype was the most accurate and beautiful photomechanical printing method of its time. Its process begins by drying a layer of light sensitive chrome gelatin on a glass plate (similar to the emulsions used on photographic glass plates). This gelatin coated glass plate becomes the printing plate. Like chromolithography, collotype is a multi-plate printing process.

The dry collotype plate is placed in contact with a reverse negative image, and exposed to light. The areas of the gelatin layer that are exposed to light dry and are able to hold ink for printing. The areas of the gelatin layer that are not exposed to light do not dry and are capable of absorbing water and repelling ink. This is similar to the techniques used in printing a stone lithograph. The printer will prepare a reverse negative image and a gelatin coated glass plate for each collotype base color in the final print. The successful reproduction of the original image rests with a colorist's analysis of the base colors and the subsequent layering of different colored plates during the printing process. Generally, between 500-2000 impressions can be made from each collotype glass plate. Under magnification, a modern offset lithograph is made up of millions of tiny colored dots. However, a collotype appears as small areas or blobs of colors.

### **Leipzig Review -**

Below is my complete review of this edition as originally published in 2005 (and updated in 2007) in my *Modern Audubon Birds of America D.E.F. Editions* article at [www.auduboninfo.net](http://www.auduboninfo.net) . Please excuse any repetition.

**LEIPZIG EDITION** -The paper is heavy, almost like a cardstock. It is quite smooth, without gloss, and is a light grayish white color. The prints are collotypes, and there is no color dot pattern at all. The paper has no watermark, and there are no embossed seals or other stamps to identify the prints. However, the 6 examples I own have a row of perforated holes along one long margin. These holes would have been used in the bookbinding process. The color lines are very sharp. The colors, however, do not have the natural depth or translucency, as in a real watercolor painting. The colors seem a bit dreary and dull, and are more opaque, as a result of the collotype printing process. The prints are very interesting, but come across more like a commercial illustration rather than an artistic rendering.

These prints are more widely available in Europe than in the US. However, a few U.S. dealers sell individual prints from time to time. Leipzig prints are now found for sale on eBay every once in a while.

## **A Leipzig 4<sup>th</sup> Edition –**

It is generally thought that the original Leipzig Edition consisted actually of 3 editions. Of the 1000 sets of 40 different prints, 500 sets were issued in Leipzig, Germany, 250 sets were issued in Switzerland, and 250 sets were issued in London, England.

Sometime in the early 1990s additional “Leipzig” prints began turning up on the market. These prints are virtually identical to the original 40 Leipzig Edition prints. It is not known where or how many prints of each image were produced. These prints are collotypes and on the same paper as the originals, and perhaps they were produced in Leipzig in the 1970s, before that plant was shut down. Though unconfirmed, I have talked to 2 dealers who speak of a Leipzig Volume III, containing 10 upper tier images. I am aware of the following “Leipzig like” prints that have turned up on the market here in the US in the last 5-10 years. All of these prints have a printed credit line at the bottom left that includes the words “4<sup>th</sup> Edition.”

Plate # 1	Wild Turkey male
Plate # 41	Ruffed Grouse
Plate # 102	Blue Jay
Plate # 231	Long Billed Curlew
Plate # 251	Brown Pelican
Plate # 301	Canvas backed Duck
Plate # 331	Gooseander
Plate # 366	Iceland or Jer Falcon
Plate # 431	American Flamingo

## **Leipzig prints on eBay -**

A few Leipzig Edition prints turn up on eBay every once in awhile. I have seen perhaps 75-125 Leipzig prints sold on eBay over the last several years. This is not a sufficient quantity to include an eBay Price Range column in the Price Guide tables below.

However in November 2008, a complete set of 40 individual Leipzig prints was auctioned on eBay. I have included in the Price Guide tables a column listing the realized eBay auction price for each print at that time. I think these prices are only indicative of the interest in those auctions at that time, and are not a guide for what the same print might sell for on eBay in the future. I purchased 6 Leipzig prints on eBay in 2005 for under \$50 each, but they were not the most popular upper tier prints in that Edition. Prior to 2008, I saw numerous Leipzig prints sell for as little as \$10 on eBay. and only the upper tier prints occasionally went for over \$100.

### **The Price Guide**

These prints are widely available in Europe, but are not so popular in the US, where many modern facsimile and reproduction editions are readily available. US dealers occasionally acquire a 2 volume set or a single volume, and sell the prints off individually. As you can see from the Price Guide tables below, dealers' prices are found in a wide range, especially for the few upper tier prints. Trimmed, rippled or otherwise damaged prints should be deeply discounted from the price listed below.

#### **Column Headings –**

Havell Plate # - Plate #s are listed in Roman numerals as they appear on the upper right corner of each print. Plate #S are also listed in Arabic numerals for your convenience. They should not be confused with Part #s that appear at the upper left corner of each print.

Name – This is the name the print is commonly known by.

Dealers Retail Price Range – Shows the lowest and highest dealer retail price (rounded off) that was found for each print in this edition.

November 2008 eBay Prices – See Leipzig Prints on eBay (above)

**Volume I – Vertical Images**

Havell	Havell	Name	Dealers Retail	November 2008
Plate #	Plate #		Price Range	eBay Prices
8	VIII	White-throated Sparrow	100-200	\$10
12	XII	Baltimore Oriole	150-400	\$29
20	XX	Blue-wing Yellow Warbler	200-350	\$13
26	XXVI	Carolina Parrot	150-275	\$283
33	XXXIII	American Goldfinch	200-450	\$46
53	LIII	Painted Bunting	200-350	\$50
56	LVI	Red-shouldered Hawk	250-400	\$37
62	LXII	Passenger Pigeon	150-350	\$29
75	LXXV	Le Petit Caporal	100-350	\$10
87	LXXXVII	Florida Jay	250-500	\$135
111	CXI	Pileated Woodpecker	125-300	\$145
121	CXXI	Snowy Owl	150-450	\$78
127	CXXVII	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	100-400	\$37
142	CXLII	American Sparrow Hawk	200 500	\$58
177	CLXXVII	White-crowned Pigeon	100-300	\$74
206	CCVI	Summer or Wood Duck	200-400	\$77
354	CCCLIII	Scarlet Tanager	150-350	\$14
364	CCCLXIII	White-winged Crossbill	100-350	\$10
367	CCCLXVII	Band-tailed Pigeon	150-400	\$82
416	CCCCXVI	Ten Woodpeckers	225-650	\$58

**Volume II – Horizontal Images**

Havell	Havell	Name	Dealers Retail	November 2008
Plate #	Plate #		Price Range	eBay Prices
32	XXXII	Black-billed Cuckoo	100-450	\$61
72	LXXII	Swallow-tailed Hawk	150-350	\$46
191	CXCI	Willow Grouse	175-450	\$69
217	CCXVII	Louisiana Heron	275-750	\$128
249	CCXLIX	Tufted Auk	225-450	\$10
255	CCLV	Red Phalarope	100-250	\$26
256	CCLVI	Purple Heron	250-750	\$170
262	CCLXII	Tropic Bird	100-350	\$26
276	CCLXXVI	King Duck	200-450	\$20
297	CCXCVII	Harlequin Duck	150-450	\$26
307	CCCVII	Blue Crane or Heron	250-950	\$170
321	CCCXXI	Roseate Spoonbill	300-900	\$141
327	CCCXXVII	Shoveler Duck	200-550	\$60
361	CCCLXI	Dusky Grouse	200-450	\$20
371	CCCLXXI	Cock of the Plains	250-450	\$39
386	CCCLXXXVI	White Heron	400-900	\$148
387	CCCLXXXVII	Glossy Ibis	200-450	\$87
392	CCCXCII	Louisiana or Harris Hawk	300-550	\$69
397	CCCXCVII	Scarlet Ibis	250-400	\$130
429	CCCCXXIX	Western Duck	200-350	\$30

## The Audubon Loates Edition and Price Guide

M. Bernard Loates is an accomplished artist in his own right. He is also a master lithographer from Canada. From 1987-1999, he created and published 31 different double elephant folio sized reproductions of Audubon's work. Each reproduction image was a limited edition of 1000 prints. A complete review of this edition and its prints can be found later in this Book.

The prints were produced by multiple passes on a single color press. The paper is a medium heavy coated acid-free paper that was smooth, but not glossy. Apparently, some early prints were printed on a 100% cotton rag watermarked paper. Some of the Loates prints I own, according to their literature, were supposedly printed on this watermarked cotton rag paper. However, mine were printed on the coated paper. It is not known how many prints of the early images were actually produced on the watermarked cotton rag paper.

Though these prints bear a close resemblance to the Audubon originals, they are reproductions and the artist is Loates, not Audubon. The only text printed on any of these prints is the modern name of each bird. The prints have no part numbers or plate numbers. There is no printed credit for either Audubon or Havell. Loates added colored backgrounds to some of the images, and took artistic license in creating the remainder.

These limited edition prints were released in a myriad of confusing editions from 1987-1999. Unsold prints from one edition were merged into the next edition. At the end, it was not clear if any of the 1000 prints of any of the 31 images had actually sold out. After 2000, huge unsold hoards of these prints turned up, and were being sold by dealers, discounters and wholesalers. Over the past 5 years or more, and maybe still today, you can find them being sold for outrageous prices on the Internet poster websites like [www.art.com](http://www.art.com) and the Internet investment website [www.intca.com](http://www.intca.com). Very few Audubon print dealers sell these prints.

In the early years people paid thousands and thousands of dollars for these prints. Sadly today, they are lucky if they can find a buyer that will give them \$50-\$100 apiece for them. I'm certain that more than 50 people have contacted me over the past few years wanting to sell their small collections of Loates prints. I've had to deliver the bad news on the worth of their "investment" far too many times. My advice to them, as it would be to you, is to sell your Loates

prints on eBay for whatever you can get for them and write off the loss. Start them with an opening bid of \$9.95, or at most \$24.95, and have NO reserve. If you want to buy Loates prints, be patient and shop on eBay. It seems there are a few up for auction on eBay every so often.

As recently as December, 2008, and continuing into March, 2009, eBay seller "ahintofhistory" has been trying to sell large quantities of these prints in 30 day eBay listings with "Buy-It-Now" or "Best Offer" pricing. Their prices, however, have been generally well above the eBay price ranges shown in the table below, but somewhat lower than dealer retail price ranges in the same table. In a 30 day listing of all 31 Loates prints, they might sell 2-3 to unknowing buyers.

If you really like these prints and want to buy one to hang and display as decorative art in your home, then do so. I'd guess that if you contacted this eBay seller and offered 25% below their Buy-It-Now price, they'd accept. DO NOT buy these prints for investment. There is a huge supply of unsold prints out there in the hands of dealers and collectors who paid too much, and are stuck with them.

## REVIEW

Below is my complete review of this edition as originally published in 2005 (and updated in 2007) in my *Modern Audubon Birds of America D.E.F. Editions* article at [www.auduboninfo.net](http://www.auduboninfo.net) . Please excuse any repetition.

**LOATES EDITION - M. Bernard Loates is an extremely talented artist and a master lithographer. However, when it came to marketing and distributing his works, the job was poorly done. I have viewed many websites and communicated with at least 12 sellers and dealers of Loates prints, and no one agrees as to how many different prints were actually produced or how they were printed. The Loates Edition actually consists of up to 5 different editions, depending if you count an "Introductory" edition separately, or if the "After" edition is a separate edition. There was a Masters edition, but it was smaller than DEF size and will not be discussed in this article. Also, to add to the confusion, unsold prints from one edition were merged/moved into the next edition. Some early prints were supposedly printed on 100% cotton rag watermarked paper. No one knows how many different prints or how many prints of each image were supposedly printed on this paper. Whenever I contact a seller or dealer whose literature or website claim he is selling prints on watermarked 100% cotton rag paper, I find that early promotional material is being used, and that the prints actually for sale are on plain coated acid-free paper. Some sellers speak of the secret Tryon printing method, or of prints being entirely produced using hand inked steel engraved plates, and others mention hand coloring or painting was done in their promotions. I believe that published reports and**

advertisements claiming that Loates originally issued 1000 limited edition prints of 29 different images in a set (there were actually 31), printed on watermarked 100% cotton rag paper, and all produced using a hand engraved steel plate with up to 60+ separate inking with hand coloring, were erroneous in many ways. Where are they all? I've talked to people who swear they have a Loates print on cotton rag paper, and there probably were some done on this paper, maybe as a test. Maybe the quality of the prints on cotton rag paper was not good enough with all that inking, or maybe the cost of that type of paper proved to be too much? However, no one knows how many were produced on watermarked 100% cotton rag paper. I suspect very few. I am not sure if every Loates print began as a black inked steel plate engraving, similar to the Audubon Havells, and then printed in up to 60 single color printer passes. If so, the effort was wasted and obliterated with all the inking. They look like color offset photo lithographs. I own 12 Loates Edition prints. I have never seen a Loates print that was on 100% cotton rag watermarked paper, or printed with hand inked steel engraved plates, or hand colored or painted. According to seller's website charts, three of the Loates prints I own were supposedly printed only on 100% cotton rag watermarked paper, but mine were not. Therefore, I will discuss and describe the Loates Edition using my personal observations, what I own and find today in the marketplace, and what seems likely to be accurate.

From 1987-1999, M. Bernard Loates produced and published 31 different DEF sized Audubon reproductions. These are all reproductions of Audubon's original watercolors, and not the Havell prints, despite claims that they are Havell reproductions. The prints are a group of interpretive drawings by Loates that resemble Audubon's original work, but do not have Audubon's name on them. Therefore, these prints are "after Audubon" reproductions, and Loates is the artist. Overall, the Loates prints are very similar to the Audubon watercolors. They are easily recognizable to anyone familiar with Audubon's work. Tryon Mint of Canada produced 1000 limited edition copies of each of Loates' images, though this cannot be verified. The DEF images, that I know of and have seen, are printed on a medium weight acid-free paper that is generally white in color. The paper has been coated and is smooth to the touch, but not glossy. Several of the prints I own are on a different color paper that is a shade or two darker, towards gray, from the others. The modern name of the bird (not the name it was known by during Audubon's time) is printed at the center below the image. There are no part or plate numbers, and no other printed credits, as you would see on an original Havell print or a facsimile.

All of my Loates prints have a copyright (dated either 1987 or 1988) printed vertically at the lower right edge of the image (though a copyright date is not necessarily the date of printing). Loates prints are identified by various embossed seals at the left and right, below the image (see examples below). Loates prints are advertised as being individually signed and numbered by the artist. However, only 8 of my 12 prints are signed and numbered. Mine are signed M. Loates. My Loates prints were all produced using offset color lithography. Whenever I contacted a seller/dealer claiming their prints were multiple inked steel plate engravings on watermarked 100% cotton rag paper, ALL relented and said that what they actually had for sale were offset color lithographs and they were using original press releases as a basis for their claims. Some sellers claim that

individual prints were printed in over 60 colors or passes on a single color press. This seems excessive, but if true however, it is perhaps to the detriment of the finished print on non cotton rag paper. The color lines are very sharp, and colors are generally bright and natural. The color dot matrix pattern, under magnification, is quite similar to the Princeton-Audubon prints. Thus, I would guess that a 300 dot screen was used for the images. I understand that the printing inks were specially and carefully mixed by expert colorists. However, background colors and some colors in prints with habitat scenes or scenic views were often muted and unnatural looking. In these areas there was a loss of detail. Whether this is the result of poor ink color or over saturated printing or inking, I cannot say.

Some websites claim that they have sold Loates prints for \$1500-\$3000 each. However, as I survey what is for sale today, I find that Loates prints retail from around \$200-\$800. The market for these reproduction prints seems to have collapsed. Fewer and fewer dealers are selling them. They are being sold on the giant poster website, [www.art.com](http://www.art.com), at outrageous prices. Retail dealers, who cannot hold the line on their retail pricing, readily discount these prints. Loates prints have been regularly found for sale on eBay for a couple years or so. It is quite rare if one sells for over \$100, and most bring less than \$50. It is interesting to note that prints sold on eBay, which claim to be printed on 100% cotton rag paper, sell for no more than those printed on the coated commercial paper.



Images of various Loates Edition embossed seals measuring about 1/2" - 1" high

## The Price Guide

### Explanation of Column Headings -

Havell Plate # - Roman and Arabic plate numbers in these columns are listed for the reader's convenience only. NO plate or part numbers appear on any of the Loates Edition prints.

Modern Name – The modern name is printed at the bottom of each print. There are NO printed credits to either Audubon or Havell on any Loates print.

Dealers Retail Price Range – Lists the highest and lowest dealer retail price (rounded off) found for each print from all sources.

eBay Sales Price Range – Lists the highest and lowest realized auction price (rounded off) found for each print on eBay.

The Audubon Loates Edition and Price Guide

Havell	Havell	Modern Name	Dealers Retail	eBay Sales
Plate #	Plate #		Price Range	Price Range
7	VII	Common Grackle	100-250	15-35
12	XII	Baltimore Oriole	175-300	20-50
17	XVII	Carolina Turtle Dove	200-350	35-55
20	XX	Blue-winged Warbler	100-275	15-40
26	XXVI	Carolina Parakeet	225-450	40-90
47	XLVII	Ruby-throated Humming.	250-400	25-50
56	LVI	Red Shouldered Hawk	150-300	20-45
76	LXXVI	Virginia Partridge	200-350	30-55
81	LXXXI	Osprey	350-500	50-95
91	XCI	Broad-winged Hawk	125-250	20-55
97	XCVII	Screech Owl	150-300	20-45
111	CXI	Pileated Woodpecker	200-400	35-60
142	CXLII	Sparrow Hawk	150-350	15-45
167	CLXVII	Key West Quail Dove	175-300	15-60
201	CCI	Canada Goose	200-400	45-65
206	CCVI	Wood Duck	200-350	40-65
211	CCXI	Great Blue Heron	400-650	50-110
216	CCXVI	Wood Ibis	250-400	40-75
226	CCXXXVI	Whooping Crane	250-450	40-85
231	CCXXXI	Long-billed Curlew	200-375	45-75
242	CCXLII	Snowy Egret	350-500	40-90
251	CCLI	Brown Pelican	300-450	45-90
252	CCLII	Double-crested Cormorant	100-250	15-50
261	CCLXI	Sandhill Crane	225-350	35-70
307	CCCVII	Little Blue Heron	275-425	40-80
311	CCCXI	American White Pelican	300-450	45-90
333	CCCXXXIII	Green Heron	200-325	35-55
366	CCCLXVI	Gyr Falcon	300-475	40-90
376	CCCLXXVI	Trumpeter Swan (young)	100-250	20-45
386	CCCLXXXVI	Great Egret (White Heron)	300-500	35-80
406	CCCCVI	Trumpeter Swan	200-350	35-60

## NOTES

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