

INSPIRED BY NATURE

by Sarah Hansen, Isabella Toribio, and Ellis Xavier



TABLE OF CONTENTS



4 | INSPIRED BY BIRDS





12 | INSPIRED BY THE SEA

18 | INSPIRED BY THE COUNTRYSIDE

24 | GLOSSARY/INDEX



Inspired by

BIRDS

Painter, writer, and naturalist John James Audubon was born in Haiti in 1785. He grew up in France. John loved nature as a child. He liked to study birds the most. His father's sketches of birds inspired him to take up drawing. Audubon moved to the United States when he was eighteen. Seeing so many new birds in the American wilderness thrilled him. His interest turned into a passion.

To support himself, Audubon ran a general store. The store closed in 1819. He turned to his hobby for his job. Audubon



▲ John James Audubon

decided to paint a collection of North American birds.

Audubon traveled around North America. He was away from his family for months at a time. He worked hard, often painting one bird per day. Audubon also wrote essays.

AUDUBON'S JOURNALS

Audubon kept personal journals while traveling the United States. He wrote about the people he met and the hardships he faced. He also wrote about the nature scenes he saw.

Although Audubon made beautiful paintings, he was actually untrained in art. ►



The Birds of America was published in 1827. Audubon wasn't the first to make this kind of book. However, in his paintings, the birds look very much alive. They are always depicted in action. They fly, sing, eat, or hunt.

Audubon died in 1851. *The Birds of America* is a landmark contribution to American art as well as to the study of birds. The Audubon Society was created in his name in 1886. Its goal was to protect birds. Today, it is the largest environmental group in the world.



▲ The five-book set *The Birds of America* has watercolor paintings of 489 types of birds.

The Moth Bird

by Sarah Hansen

In one of his journals John James Audubon wrote, “My beloved birds of America... occupy all my time, and nearly all my thoughts....” Audubon’s passion for birds is contagious. Like Audubon, I think about birds all the time. I spend hours studying the paintings in *The Birds of America*. My favorite is “Brown Creeper and Californian Nuthatch.”

Audubon’s painting is so lifelike that it’s almost like seeing these birds in person.

The painting shows these little birds in a tree. The flying brown creeper shows off its beautiful plumage, or feathers. It looks like bark. The other one, on the tree, gazes at the reader. It looks like it knows it’s being watched.



► Sarah Hansen loves to bird-watch in New York, where she lives. She is a member of her local Audubon chapter and often volunteers for them. Sarah also likes to write essays about nature.





▲ Brown Creeper and
California Nuthatch

For a long time, I saw the brown creeper only in Audubon's painting. But one winter I had my mind made up to see this bird in real life. While bird-watching patiently in the snowy woods, I heard its short, high-pitched song. I put food for the birds in a tree in my backyard. The creeper fluttered from above like a moth. Its wings revealed the feathers I had only seen in a book until now. It landed on the tree. As in Audubon's painting, it looked exactly like bark.

Though the brown creeper is a common type of bird, people do not see it in the wild often. ▼



▼ The brown creeper is tiny!





Like the still brown creeper in the painting, the bird stuck to the tree trunk. Then the bird came to life. It started to feast! Its long, rust-colored tail rested gently against the trunk. Then the bird crept up to another part of the tree. The creeper moved deliberately. I had to remind myself I was not looking at an illustration.

THE BROWN CREEPER

Brown creepers can be found across North America. They like to live in evergreen forests. Those are forests with trees like pine trees. Brown creepers can be easier to spot in the winter. This is because the creeper goes to different types of forests during the winter.

BROWN CREEPER RANGE MAP

