



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Summer or Wood Duck, *Anas Sponsa*.

Stock#: 97452mp2
Map Maker: Audubon & Bien
Date: 1860
Place: New York
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 24 x 37 inches
Price: \$ 7,500.00



Description:

Summer or Wood Duck, Anas Sponsa, drawn by John James Audubon and chromolithographed by Julius Bien in New York in 1860, provides an evocative rendering of these ducks in their natural habitat, perched on a Button Wood Tree (an antiquated term for the American Sycamore, based on its previous use in button-making). This work captures four distinct postures of the ducks, two males, and two females, with one female prominently nestled on a bed of downy feathers in the lower right.

J. J. Audubon's contributions to ornithological illustration in the 19th century are evident in his works' precision and observational accuracy. In this particular illustration, the careful positioning of the ducks, alongside the Sycamore and the Resurrection Fern-crowned nest, offers a clear and comprehensive view of the species in their natural environment.



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The layered development of the base watercolor composition, spanning from 1821 to 1825, indicates Audubon's iterative approach to his work. Notably, the decision to excise a previously painted flying male and then reintegrate it into the final piece exemplifies his dynamic approach to composition.

With *Summer or Wood Duck, Anas Sponsa*, Audubon provides a measured and clear representation, emphasizing both the subject's specific attributes and their broader ecological context.

Detailed Condition:

Backed on archival tissue. Minor repairs to small tears and chips in the margins. Color retouched.