



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### Blue Crane or Heron, *Ardea Coerulea*... View near Charlestone S.C.

**Stock#:** 95582  
**Map Maker:** Audubon & Havell, Jr.  
**Date:** 1836  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 34.75 x 26.5 inches (sheet size)  
**Price:** SOLD



#### Description:

#### *A Triumph of Composition and Execution.*

This exquisite Havell edition double elephant folio aquatint by John James Audubon portrays a mature Little Blue Heron male, distinguished by its slate-blue plumage, elegantly positioned in the foreground. Behind this striking figure, a white juvenile gracefully resides amidst the grassy wetland backdrop near Charleston, South Carolina.

Compared with Audubon's other images of members of the family *Ardeidae*, his *Blue Heron, or Crane* is particularly successful. The mature bird has a level of personality and refinement not found in his images of, say, the Tricolor Heron, Reddish Egret, or Green Heron.

The original drawing for the plate is held at the New-York Historical Society and can be seen [here](#). A decade earlier, in 1821, Audubon had made [another drawing of the Little Blue Heron](#), also held by the Society. The transformation between the two drawings substantially illuminates Audubon's progression as an artist during the 1820s.

In Audubon's *Ornithological Biography*, the Blue Heron's behaviors and habits are well documented. According to Audubon, these birds were often spotted along the soft mud banks of the Floridian rivers and lakes, and they showcased a particular fondness for fiddlers and small crabs. Their elegant hunting technique — a calculated and measured approach towards their prey, followed by a swift and accurate strike — is a testament to their keen senses and agile physiques.



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**Blue Crane or Heron, *Ardea Coerulea*... View near Charlestone S.C.**

**Little Blue Heron**

The Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) is a small to medium-sized wading bird distinguished by its slate-blue plumage, which becomes deeper and more vibrant as the bird matures. Juvenile Little Blue Herons are white (as with the juvenile to the left of this image), leading occasionally to confusion with other white herons or egrets, but they transition to their iconic blue coloration as they age. The species has a long, slender neck and bill, the latter of which is slightly decurved. Preferring freshwater or brackish wetlands and estuaries, they hunt for a variety of prey, from small fish to crustaceans and insects. Their methodical foraging technique involves slow, deliberate steps to stalk their prey before striking swiftly. The Little Blue Heron can be found across the southeastern United States, the Caribbean, and Central America, migrating further south in winter.

**Detailed Condition:**

Hand-colored engraving with aquatint on a double-elephant folio sheet of wove paper watermarked: "JWhatman 1836." Some minor invisible repairs to a few edge nicks.