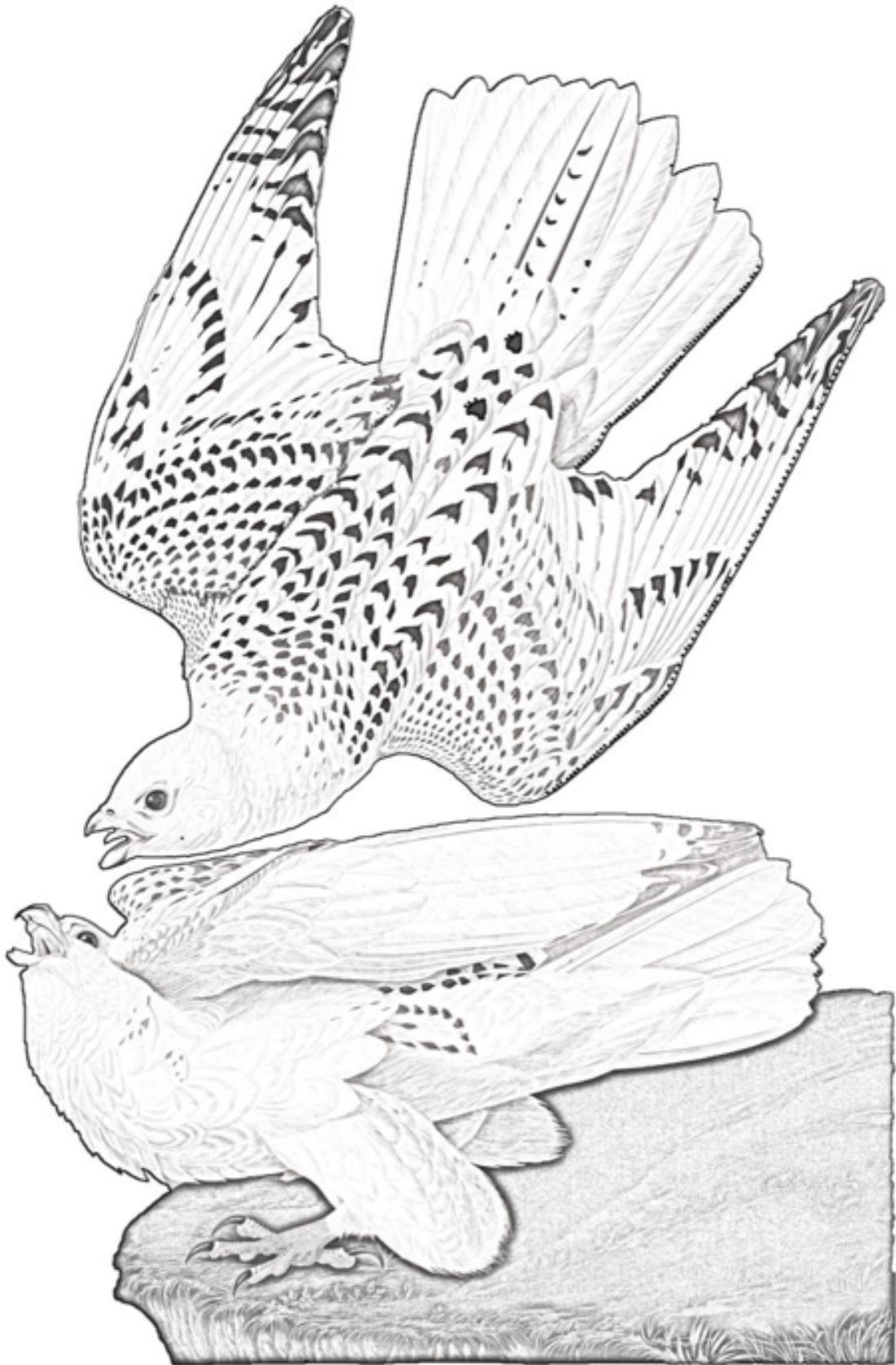


COLOR OUR COLLECTIONS



THE HUNTINGTON

ABOUT THE OBJECT



John James Audubon documented all the birds in North America in the book *The Birds of America*. The piece *Iceland or Jer Falcon* is one of the 435 illustrations in his book. Each bird is rendered as its actual size, resulting in a very large book. In fact, the book is 2 feet by 3 feet and is known as a double elephant folio.

Audubon would first make a watercolor illustration of each page of birds. Then, he would send the images to an engraver in England. The engraver would carve the image onto a metal plate and complete the printing. The prints were in black and white. A group of women would then hand paint each print. So who is the artist? Who should get credit? Audubon? The engravers and printers? The painters? All? Why?

So how was the book distributed? Well, it was a subscription service. Almost every month subscribers would get a set of five illustrations: three small birds, one medium bird, and one large bird. It was the job of the subscriber to bind their prints together if they wanted them in book form. It took 12 years for all 435 illustrations to be printed and mailed!

John James Audubon, *Iceland or Jer Falcon*, *The Birds of America*, London, 1827–38. The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

More to Explore...

BIRD WALK!

Take a walk outside. If you have binoculars, you should take them!

WATCH. Look for birds. Do you see any? If so, what colors are they? What size? Are they flying or perched on a tree?

LISTEN. Do you hear any birds chirping or singing? What does it sound like? Does it sound like a song or a musical instrument?

If you are not able to go on a bird walk, you can take one digitally. Visit the Audubon website and discover a bird that catches your eye. Discover close-up photos, learn about the bird's characteristics, and listen to the sounds and calls of the bird you chose.

audubon.org/bird-guide

Helpful Terms:

Elephant Folio – Refers to a paper size that is 24 inches tall.

Engraving – A type of printmaking where the illustration or design is carved into a metal plate.

↑ LEVEL UP

Draw your favorite bird or one you saw on your bird walk. Will you draw the bird in its natural habitat? Or will it be a close-up of just the head? It is up to you. Think about how your drawing is similar to or different from Audubon's.

QUESTION CORNER

- ◆ What bird did you find, either online or on your walk? What is one interesting fact you found about your bird?
- ◆ How were the colors you chose to color the *Jer Falcon* different from or similar to the real bird?