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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
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DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF STATE MUSEUM

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Louisiana State Museum – Baton Rouge Presents
19th-Century Master Artist John James Audubon
Revealing an American Wilderness: Audubon's Birds of Louisiana

Opens November 30, 2007

Baton Rouge, LA - The Louisiana State Museum in collaboration with the Louisiana Office of State Parks, presents *Revealing an American Wilderness: Audubon's Birds of Louisiana*. This stunning exhibition of prints by John James Audubon presents twenty species of birds that Audubon drew during his time in New Orleans; West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana; and Natchez, Mississippi.

The dynamic poses and vivid colors of the hand-colored engravings communicate the diversity of American wildlife. Equally impressive are the prints' dimensions: at two by three feet, each bird is rendered life-size. From the statuesque white pelican to the delicate ruby-throated hummingbird, visitors will catch glimpses of nature's splendor.

"Once visitors view this world-class exhibition in Baton Rouge, I believe they will be inspired to follow in the steps of Audubon in Louisiana's own backyard," said Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu, who oversees the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. "Our state provides several opportunities to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty and abundant wildlife of the state."

John James Audubon (1785-1851) was born in present day Haiti and raised by his stepmother in France. At the age of 18, Audubon was sent to America, both to manage the family estate in Pennsylvania and to avoid conscription in Napoleon's army. Arriving in 1803, Audubon was immediately captivated by the beauty of the unspoiled American wilderness.

In the fall of 1820 Audubon embarked on a commercial flatboat departing Ohio and headed south for New Orleans. After several expeditions into the woodlands of Louisiana, Audubon recorded his travels in *The Birds of America*, and *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*. In 1834 the State of Louisiana acquired a collection of Audubon's *Birds of America* prints, which later became part of the Louisiana State Museum's permanent collection.

“Audubon combined his love of nature with his artistic talent to produce some of the most beautiful and lifelike depictions of birds ever created”, said Louisiana State Museum Director, David Kahn. “He was famed for his exacting attention to detail and his practice of depicting wildlife in their native habitats.”

In addition to the prints, visitors will also be able to view bird specimens on loan from the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science.

Revealing an American Wilderness: Audubon's Birds of Louisiana will be on view November 30, 2007 – March 2, 2008 at the Louisiana State Museum - Baton Rouge located at 660 North 4th Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Admission is \$6 for adults/\$5 for students, seniors, and active military. Children under 12 and Museum members admitted free.

The Louisiana State Museum, a complex of national landmarks housing thousands of artifacts and works of art reflecting Louisiana's legacy of historic events and cultural diversity, is part of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, which is overseen by Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu. The Museum network includes five properties in the famous French Quarter: the Cabildo, Presbytere, 1850 House, Old U.S. Mint and Madame John's Legacy. Other sites include Baton Rouge, Patterson, Natchitoches, and Thibodaux.

For more information about the Louisiana State Museum please call 800.568.6968 or visit <http://lsm.crt.state.la.us>.

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