



Rex Brasher's Inspiration *Transcending Audubon*

Rex Brasher wanted to 'live-up' Audubon by not sacrificing the bird's life to paint it, but studying it alive in its natural habitat.

Throughout his childhood, Rex Brasher's (1869-1952) father, Phillip Brasher, influenced him to respect and collect nature, especially birds. Phillip was so taken with birds that he managed to raise with John James Audubon while he was creating his infamous series of bird paintings, but unfortunately, Audubon was very ill and passed away. The memory of Audubon's behavior inspired his father to a quest in the young boy's mind, motivating him to see to paint every form of North American bird. Furthermore, he wanted to 'live-up' Audubon by not sacrificing the bird's life to paint it, but studying it alive in its natural habitat.

As began this ambitious project at the age of 15, traveling by foot, boat and train all across the United States. Rex covered thousands of miles in their natural habitat and sent the detailed home to researchers later. Brasher's mentor was the famous bird artist, John James Audubon. Consequently, Rex was extremely well-versed in the work. One story describes Rex writing for his sketches after first seeing "Parrot" work and comparing the two.

By the age of 20, Rex completed a complete paintings of the species of birds (100 including species, representing geographic variations and other specimens of men and birds). Brasher managed to paint different subspecies in many cases, something that would take him very far ahead of his time. Even today many bird artists do not compare subspecies unless they are making plans for a field guide, and even then it is rare.



By 1924 at the age of 55, he completed watercolor paintings of 874 species of birds and over 350 species of trees and shrubs.





Avian
Conservation
in the United
States and
locally







