Primary Maker: Pierre Vase
Title: Northern Bald Ibis (Geronticus eremita)
Date: ca. 1554-1565
Medium: Watercolor, black and brown ink, gouache, and white lead pigment over black chalk on ivory paper, laid on paper, formerly mounted on an album page
Dimensions: Overall (irregular): 9 3/16 × 8 3/8 in. (23.3 × 21.3 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Nathaniel H. Bishop
Object Number: 1889.10.1.1

Classification: DRAWINGS

Curatorial Remarks:
This critically endangered species was reduced to 50 breeding pairs in 1999; its range was confined to North Africa, breeding only in Morocco. Until the seventeenth century it enjoyed a broader distribution in Asia Minor and Europe, where Eskrich found it in the Jura Mountains. He portrayed it one-third lifesize. Recently, conservationists have boosted populations, attempting to re-establish the birds in Europe by flying with them on their miraculously-remembered migration routes in an ultra-light aircraft. Several years ago, seven birds appeared in Palmyra, Syria, after having been extinct there for decades, although the country’s civil war has put these individuals at even higher risk.

Physical Description:
Avian study
Inscribed: Text in Greek, French, and Latin including following credits: at lower left: "L'autheur. / B. Textor."; at lower center: "Le peintre. / Pierre Vase, aliâs Cruche. / L'escrivain. / Thomas Huilier."

Markings: Inside cover of Album 1 contains a printed catalogue description reading: "Drawings of European Birds, a Collection of upwards of 200 Drawings, most beautifully executed colours, of European Birds, taken from Nature, and most faithfully copied with a view to be published; but from the death of the artists M. la Grese, and M. Petit, they never were engraved. Most of them are accompanied with their names, in 4 large vols. oblong folios, formerly in the Duke of Devonshire's Collection"

Related Objects: