

Louisiana State Flag

Pelican State • Capital: Baton Rouge • Statehood: 1812

Overview

A mother pelican tears at her breast to feed her young with her own blood, a medieval emblem of sacrifice adopted here as state symbol. Beneath, the motto: Union, Justice, Confidence. Against a simple blue field, it is strikingly tender, almost devotional.

Flag specifications

Adopted: 1912-07-01
Designer: Legislative adoption
Ratio: 7:11
Blue field with pelican in nest feeding chicks above motto ribbon.

Colors

  

#002D72 #FFFFFF #FFD700

Symbolism

pelican feeding young	Represents charity and self-sacrifice.
blood drops	Added in 2006 to emphasize sacrifice.
motto	'Union, Justice, Confidence.'

Historical timeline

- 1812: Louisiana admitted as 18th state.
- 1912: Flag officially adopted.
- 2006: Blood drops formally required in design.

Notable facts

- Pelican is Louisiana's state bird and symbol of charity.
- Flag is one of the few depicting an animal feeding its young.
- The pelican represents self-sacrifice and care for others.
- The banner below the pelican displays the state motto.
- The motto 'Union, Justice, Confidence' reflects core state values.
- The blue field symbolizes loyalty and justice.
- The current flag design was officially adopted in 1912.
- The pelican motif has been associated with Louisiana since colonial times.

Seal deep dive

pelican

A brown pelican depicted feeding its young by piercing its own breast.
Meaning: Self-sacrifice, care, and devotion to the people

stateSeal

The pelican emblem derived directly from the state seal.
Meaning: Louisiana's identity as a nurturing and protective state

motto

The motto 'Union, Justice, Confidence' displayed on a banner beneath the pelican.
Meaning: Commitment to unity, fairness, and trust in government

Vexillology notes

Design type: Emblematic animal flag

Complexity: 5/10
Readability: 8/10

Printable reference sheet for classroom use.