

Great Gray Owl

< 1870

none, IA

none

on list, no specific record; Allen 1870

Record Number: 81-FX
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Allen 1870: "158. *Syrnium cinereum*, Gray -- Great Gray Owl."

VOTE (1981): 1-IV, 3-V, 3-VI

VI, not based on an observation.

IV, no data.

V, no details.

Allen, J. A. 1870. Catalogue of the birds of Iowa, in White, C. A. Report on the Geological Survey of the State of Iowa. p 424.

- 158. *Syrnium cinereum*, Gray—Great Gray Owl.

164. (370). *Scotiaptex nebulosa* (Forster). Great Gray Owl.

The Great Gray Owl is a resident of the far north and only occurs in Iowa as a casual straggler in winter. It was listed by J. A. Allen in White's Geology of Iowa, 1870 (p. 424), and it has been "reported on Dec. 17, 1893, near Omaha, by I. S. Trostler" (Rev. Bds. Neb., 55). T. M. Trippe records (Proc. Bost. Soc., xv, 1872, 233): "Syrnium cinereum. A very large bird was killed at Oskaloosa, in Mahaska county, which, from the description given me by the person who shot it, must have been this species."

Walter G. Savage writes from Hillsboro, Van Buren county:

"In 1860 my father shot one. I have not known them to occur since. There is no mistake in this owl. My father shot it in a tree standing in our dooryard one night, and it was nothing else but a Great Gray Owl." David L. Savage, writing in 1894, says: "A friend in Van Buren county shot a Great Gray Owl a few winters ago. This is the only time I ever heard of this species being found in Iowa, but the identity is certain."

Anderson 1907
pp 261-262

Scotiaptex nebulosa nebulosa (Forster). Great Gray Owl

A casual visitor. Anderson (1907) recorded that it was listed by J. A. Allen (White's Geology of Iowa, 1870, p. 424), and it was reported by I. S. Trostler on December 17, 1893 near Omaha (Rev. Bds. Neb., p. 55). Trippe (1872) stated that a very large bird was killed at Oskaloosa in Mahaska County, which, from the description given him by the person who shot it, must have been this species. Walter G. Savage writes from Hillsboro, Henry County: "In 1860 my father shot one. I have not known them to occur since. There is no mistake in this owl. My father shot it in a tree standing in our dooryard one night, and it was nothing else but a Great Gray Owl." David L. Savage, writing in 1894, says: "A friend in Van Buren County shot a Great Gray Owl a few winters ago. This is the only time I ever heard of this species being found in Iowa, but the identity is certain."

A sight record is listed hypothetically by DuMont (1931) because substantiating evidence, in the form of a specimen, is lacking. Four were seen under favorable conditions by A. J. Palas and John Woodmansee in Polk County, December 24, 1922. Nauman reports that one was found during the winter of 1920-21, four miles north of Sigourney, Keokuk County. It was discovered by several boys, high in a tree, and one of them succeeded in hitting it with a thrown club. The bird was caged for several days and during that time Nauman identified it as unquestionably of this species. He noted the great size, large facial disc, yellow eyes, and the lack of ear tufts. (There is some slight discrepancy as to the date of capture. Nauman's report to the writer stated about February 10, while his report to the U. S. Biological Survey gave April 25. He mentions that the ground was covered with snow.) There are no Iowa specimens.

DuMont 1931
p 86

