

Great Gray Owl

1860

Hillsboro, Van Buren Co., IA

Walter G. Savage

Anderson 1907

Record Number: 81-FW

Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Anderson 1907

VOTE (1981): 1-III, 1-IV, 5-V

V, no description.

V, few/no details.

IV, Bird shot -- no specimen, no description.

V, no details, although may be IV -- somewhat persuasively written.

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

Bent, A. C.: Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey (Part 2).
Bull 170 US Nat Museum, Washington, 1938. p 219

Casual records.—Great gray owls have many times been taken or observed in winter south of what seems to be their normal range. Among these records are the following: One reported as seen on the Humber River, Newfoundland, on August 28, 1899. One taken at Stratford, Conn., on January 6, 1843; another taken at North Haven in March 1907, while a third was reported as seen near the latter point on February 4, 1934. In 1887 one was recorded as having been shot near Mendham, N. J., "many years ago", and another was reported to have been killed in Sussex County in December 1859. One was reported as found in the smokestack of a steamboat at Erie, Pa., about 1900. There are two incomplete records for Clark County, Ohio, and an unsatisfactory record for Huntsburg. A specimen was taken near Fowler, Ind., during the winter of 1897, and another was collected at Hoveys Lake, Posey County, "some years before 1913." One was taken at Hillsboro, Iowa, in 1860, and another was captured alive at Sigourney on April 25, 1921. A specimen was taken at Omaha, Nebr., on December 17, 1893. There are a few records for Yellowstone National Park, Wyo., and one was collected at Wells in April 1899. In southern Idaho a specimen was taken in December 1910 at St. Anthony. One was taken at McCloud, Calif., on September 26, 1913, while there are three records from Quincy, one being a specimen collected on May 12, 1894.

Closely allied races of this owl are found in northern Europe and Asia.

