

The nocturnal Raptorial birds forming the family of STRIGIDÆ or owls, are divided by Mr. Gray into four sub-families.

The SURNINÆ, or Hawk owls, have the head small in proportion, without tufts, and with the facial disc imperfect above the eyes.

The University Museum possesses *Surnia Ulula*, the hawk owl, a moderate sized species abounding in the fur-countries, and occasionally seen in our district.

*Nyctea Nivea*, the Snowy owl, a well known and very handsome bird; and one example out of several, we might perhaps hope to obtain, of the genus *Athene passerinoides*, one of the birds popularly confounded under the name of the little owl.

The sub-family BUBONINÆ, have the head broad and somewhat flat, with usually two prominent tufts; the facial disc being imperfect above the eyes.

The most conspicuous example is *Bubo Virginianus*, the great Virginian horned owl, one of the larger sized, of very beautiful and characteristic form. Besides this, we have two species of *Ephialtes*, small owls of interesting character:

*Ephialtes Asio*, the American Scops eared owl, or little screech owl, and *Ephialtes Nudipes*, the naked footed owl, which latter may probably belong to a different genus.

The sub-family of the SYRNIINÆ, (the name of which comes too near in sound to the first,) has the facial disc complete above, the tuft often absent, and when present, of fewer feathers. It affords us two fine species of *Syrnium*:

*Syrnium cinereum*, the great cinereous owl, a magnificent bird inhabiting deep woods, abounding in the fur countries, and occasionally visiting this more southern district, of which the University has recently obtained a pair from Mr. Passmore; and,

*Syrnium nebulosum*, the barred owl, one of the commonest species in our neighbourhood.

There are also in the collection two species of *Otus*:

*Otus Wilsoni*, the American long eared owl, which has generally been confounded with *Otus vulgaris*, the European long eared owl, but is abundantly distinct, and,

*Otus Brachyotus*, the short-eared owl, common to both continents.

The remaining sub-family, consists of the STRIGINÆ, Barn owls, a race entirely without tufts, with the facial discs complete, generally of a somewhat triangular figure.

Not to leave the group without illustration, a European specimen of *Strix Flammea*, the common barn owl, or white owl, stands with the others. This species is said to belong to America, as well as Europe, but Audubon, gives reasons for supposing the American form to be distinct, and judging from his fine figure compared with the European bird, there is no doubt that he is right. The American specimens have hitherto been found exclusively in the south, whereas the European bird might rather be expected to inhabit more northern regions. Eleven species of owls now in the University Museum, have been procured around Toronto in a short period, and it may be reasonably hoped that further additions will be contributed to the collection from the same neighbourhood, as well as from other parts of the Province.

The University collection contains in almost every instance, a pair of each species, displaying well the sexual differences in size and plumage.

W. H.