



Lake Kan-ac-to, Herkimer County

Boreal Owl

18 March 1955

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES

47. BOREAL OWL IN HERKIMER COUNTY

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The considerable effect of the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas project upon state ornithology is not limited solely to nesting species, or even to the period 1980-84. Recently, through Atlas contacts, the accompanying photo of a Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) was submitted to me for verification. The original black and white photograph from which this enlarged (3x) view of the owl is taken measures 3" x 4½". The two observers, who ask that they remain anonymous, took the picture on the early evening of March 18, 1955, on the shore of Lake Kan-ac-to, Town of Webb, Herkimer Co., three miles northeast of Old Forge. The lake appears on the 1954 Big Moose Quadrangle 15 minute series (topographic). The owl was perched "head high," according to the observers, in a balsam fir.

This appears to be the earliest photographic record of Boreal Owl in New York State, preceding that taken of a bird at Pulaski, Oswego Co., March 17-18, 1962 (Bull, *The Birds of New York State*, Doubleday/Natural History Press, New York, 1974), by exactly seven years. Based upon "A Review of New York State Boreal Owl Records" provided by Robert P. Yunick (*The Kingbird* 29: 181-89; 1979) and subsequent "Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee," this should be inserted as the ninth New York State report and brings the total number of reports through 1979 to 22. The Lake Kan-ac-to owl also provides a first record for Herkimer County, a third for the Adirondack Park, and the fourth for Oneida Lake Basin Region. My thanks to Merry Baker for calling this early documented record to my attention.

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