



Fig. 1. Signal Valley, Lyngen Fjord, with breeding locality for Eagle Owl (*Bubo b. bubo*) on the slope to the right. The mountain to the left is Oterlind. Signaldal (Lyngenfjord), med lokalitet for hubro (*Bubo b. bubo*) i skråningen til høyre. Til venstre Oterlind.

## Eagle Owl (*Bubo b. bubo* (L.)) breeding in 69° Lat. N. in Norway.

By HJ. MUNTHE-KAAS LUND.

(Med et norsk sammendrag: Hubroen (*Bubo b. bubo* (L.)) ruger ved 69° n. br. i Norge).

In northern Norway there are extensive areas where no ornithologist has as yet set foot. When in 1953/54 I was in charge of the zoological department of Tromsø Museum (69°40' N., 8°15' E.) I had occasion to undertake a number of travels into the districts inland. One of the observations made there, which I myself consider most important, was that the Eagle Owl was found breeding in several places in the county of Tromsø, north of 69° lat. north, *i. e.* 2° further north than hitherto supposed in Norway.

### Authorities

HELLAND (1899 p. 345) writes on the distribution of the Eagle Owl in "the county of Tromsø": "The Eagle Owl (*Strix bubo*) occurs *e. g.* in the Maalselv valley." This information must either have been overlooked, or doubted by ornithologists

in the following fifty years. As far as I know it is only LØVENSKIOLD in the recent Norwegian literature on ornithology who does not quite exclude the possibility that the Eagle Owl can breed north of the county of Nordland. He writes (1947 p. 379): "Breeds to the north to somewhat above the polar circle. In Troms and Finmark it hardly breeds, but it occurs scatteredly and in small numbers, *e. g.* in east and west Finnmark up to 70° northern lat."

On its distribution in Europe BARTH writes (1953 p. 9): "The Eagle Owl, *Bubo bubo bubo*, breeds in Scandinavia and Finland and in Russia almost to the polar circle and southwards to the Pyrenees, Sicily, Greece."

It seems, however, as if the Eagle Owl breeds somewhat further north in Finland. HÖRTLING (1929 p. 352) thus writes as follows about the Eagle Owl: "Throughout the country sparsely breeding from Åland and the skerries and South Finland up to Lappland (Muonio, Kittilä, Turtola, Kolari, Sodankylä), seen even further north; . . ." The northernmost locality given here is Muonio which is situated in 67°55' northern lat.

#### Data collected and own observations.

On 13. March 1954 I made a journey to Frihetsli (68°50' N. 9° E.) the farm situated farthest into the Divi Valley. The farmer JOHAN STENVOLD, who lived there, told me that this year they heard the Eagle Owl for the first time on 6. March. There have been regularly breeding Eagle Owls in this valley in many years; in 1945 an Eagle Owl was shot in the near vicinity of the farm.

The northernmost place where I know with certainty that the Eagle Owl is regularly breeding is in Signal Valley, Storfjord District about 69°10' N. 9°20' E. In the spring of 1953 EYOLF ROGNLI shot an Eagle Owl near Kvesmenes. I saw the skin of this bird in the summer of 1954; the wing length was about 43 cm. I was informed by several farmers that the Eagle Owl through many years has had a fixed breeding place on a mountain slope on the north side of the valley which is accessible only with difficulty.

In December 1954 I again visited North Norway, and HELLAND's statement that the Eagle Owl occurs in Målselv Valley

was corroborated. It was Capt. KVAMMEN, Rundhaug in Målselv, who informed me that the Eagle Owl was breeding in the Stygg Valley and had its quarters here, in about 69° N. 8°E.

It is also possible that the Eagle Owl breeds or has bred much farther north, viz. in Burfjord Valley in Kvenangen District about 69°55' N. 11°20' E. This supposition is based on a letter which I received from a radio listener, after a broadcast which I gave on the Eagle Owl. It was RUTH KAASEN JENSAAS, who on February 9th, 1954, wrote as follows: "... Today I heard about the Eagle Owl, and I know a little about this big bird from my childhood. My home was situated quite close to a large mountain and from here we often heard the Eagle Owl in the evenings in winter. Nobody believed that such birds had been killed either in Troms or Finnmark. But my father and I believe that several persons from the same place have shot such birds. We had three stuffed birds which were standing in the drawing-room at home. These were Eagle Owl, Snowy Owl, and Tawny Owl<sup>1)</sup>. All these had been shot by my father in Burfjord-Valley, also called "Kaasenvalley". The birds have disappeared now, and nobody knows where they ended during the devastations of the Germans in 1944. But we who were grown-ups at that time remember very well what an Eagle Owl looks like. A very beautiful bird . . . ."

### NORSK SAMMENDRAG

#### Hubroen (*Bubo b. bubo* (L.)) ruger ved 69° n. br. i Norge.

Tidligere trodde man at hubroen i Norge ikke ruget lengere nord enn ved polarsirkelen (66°33' n. br.) i Nordland Fylke.

På reiser i Nord-Norge har forfatteren i 1954 funnet at hubroen ruger, og i mange år har ruget, flere steder i Troms Fylke. Det nordligste sikre rugested er i Signaldal ved 69°10' n. br. Andre rugesteder er i Dividal og i Målselvdalen.

Det er også meget mulig at hubroen har ruget, og kanskje fremdeles ruger i Burfjorddalen ved 69°55' n. br., men denne mulighet har ennå ikke blitt undersøkt.

<sup>1)</sup> Author's remark: Most probably Short-Eared Owl.

**Literatur.**

- BARTH, EDV. K. 1953: »Ugler« in »Fuglene i Norden« by T. HOLMSTRØM, P. HENRICI, E. ROSENBERG and R. SØDERBERG. Norwegian edition by FR. ØKLAND. – Oslo.
- HELLAND, AMUND 1899: Norges Land og Folk, topografisk-statistisk beskrevet, vol. XIX. Tromsø Amt. Part I. – Kristiania.
- HORTLING, IVAR 1929: Ornithologisk Handbok. – Helsingfors.
- LØVENSKIOLD, HERMAN L. 1947: Håndbok over Norges fugler. – Oslo.