

Archaeological Institute of America-Milwaukee Society Trowels and Owls Challenge

Hello AIA-Milwaukee Members and Friends! You've probably seen this AIA "owl logo" at our lectures and in various AIA publications.



Did you know that this logo is based on coinage from ancient Greece? Between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE, the mint in Athens produced coinage featuring a depiction of the goddess Athena on one side and the owl with the Greek characters Α Θ Ε (A T H E for Athens) on the other. In Classical mythology, the owl was Athena's animal companion. Coins like the one shown below were usually made of silver from the mines of Laurion in Attica near Athens, and gained the nicknames of "Owls of Laurion" and "Silver Owls."



The AIA-Milwaukee Society invites you to explore the world of owls in our "Trowels and Owls" Challenge! We'd love to see what owls you've seen, either in the wild or in art and architecture. So email us your pictures and descriptions at: archaeologymilwaukee@gmail.com

The rules of this challenge:

1. Photos **MUST** be your own. Make sure that photo files are not too big to be emailed.
2. If you are submitting a photo of an owl in the **wild**, then see if you can **identify it** and provide the **common and scientific names** (e.g. Great Horned Owl; *Bubo virginianus*)
3. If you are submitting a photo of an owl in **art or architecture**, then please include **where you saw it** (e.g. a gargoyle on the UW-Milwaukee campus, etc.) in your description. You must have seen your example **in person**, not in a book or someone else's photo.
4. For "Owls in the Wild" or "Owls in Art" share one interesting **owl-related fact** with us!
5. If interested, please give us **permission to share your photos and facts** on our AIA-Milwaukee Instagram and our society website!
6. The **deadline** for submissions to this challenge is **October 16th**.

Need help identifying an owl in the wild? Check out the Merlin app from Cornell University or the web-version at <https://www.allaboutbirds.org>.

Looking for some owl-related inspiration? Or curious about those haunting owl hoots you hear at night? Then check out this awesome TED talk on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLotSkXF-Ug>

Check out AIA-Milwaukee's other posts on Instagram and follow us at @aiamilwaukee

Examples from AIA-Milwaukee Vice-President, Emily Stanton



A circa 6th century BC owl vase at the Archaeological Museum of Ancient Corinth in Greece
Image credits: Emily Stanton, 2012



A young Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) tests its wings in Shorewood, WI.
Fun facts: One of the terms for owl in Welsh is a delightful onomatopoeia, *Gwdihw* (pronounced Goo-dee-who). And Irish Gaelic provides an adorably descriptive term for owls with ear-tufts like the Great Horned Owl in the photo: *ceann cait* (pronounced roughly as kyee-on koi-t), which means “cat’s head.” Image credits: Emily Stanton, 2020