

**Abstract:** Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 15, tells the story of Byssa, Meropis and Agron, the three children of Eumelos who, after having repeatedly offended the gods, were transformed into birds: an owl, a plover, a ‘night raven’ and a mysterious *byssa* (almost surely a night owl comparable to the *byxa* of *Metamorphoses* 10), qualified in the text of the only manuscript as ‘the bird of Leukothea’. Scholars generally have been puzzled by this association, since Leukothea was a sea goddess, and no plausible explanation has been given so far. It might therefore be supposed that Λευκοθέας of the manuscript is corrupted; the proposed emendation is λευκόθριξ, ‘of white plumage’, with reference to the typical color of the White or Barn Owl (*Tyto alba alba*), whose features have been associated with Latin *strix* and could be connected also to Antoninus’ *byssa*.

**Keywords:** Antoninus Liberalis, White owl, Strix, Byssa, Nocturnal birds.