

STEVEN BATTELLE

Certificate of Authenticity

This coin has been personally inspected and determined to be an authentic ancient coin .
If deemed a forgery by the ACCS, IGC, NGC, or PCGS, it may be
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Thessaly, Larissa 350-325 BC, AR Drachm

B074683 / U02225 5.7 Gm 19 mm

Obv: Head of nymph slightly left, wearing ampyx. Rev: Horse grazing right, raising left foreleg. SNG Dewing 1396. Very Fine

Thessaly is the largest region of Greece completely surrounded by mountains with Larissa as the most important town in the region. The city was named for the daughter of Pelasgos and located on the right bank of the Peneios river. The region is named for the Thessalian tribe that entered the area about 1000 BC. In ancient times, Larissa is where young men would cut laurel from the Laurel plant, as transformed by the daughter of Pinios, to cleanse themselves before continuing on to the Olympics. The Thessalians became powerful in the 6th century BC through their control of the "Amphictyonic League", which was in charge of maintaining Greek temples and shrines, most importantly Delphi, with the power to pass legislation on religious matters and even declare religious war and thus gained political power. Larissa began issuing coins in 475 BC. Thessaly avoided involvement in the many Greek wars between Sparta, Athens and Thebes in the 5th and 4th century BC, but could not avoid being taken over by Phillip II of Macedonia, Father of Alexander the Great. The area around Larissa was extremely fruitful; it was agriculturally important and in antiquity was known for its horses. The city finally moved closer to the rest of Greece. The name Larissa, inherited from the Pelasgian settlers— an alternative name for the district was Pelasgiotis— was common to many Pelasgian towns: the ancient Greek word larissa means "stronghold". In Greek mythology the water nymph Larissa was a daughter of the primordial man Pelasgos. Larissa is thought to be where the famous Greek physician Hippocrates and the famous philosopher Gorgias of Leontini died. When Larissa ceased minting the federal coins it shared with other Thessalian towns and adopted its own coinage in the late fifth century BC, it chose local types for its coins. The obverse depicted the nymph of the local spring, Larissa, for whom the town was named. Larissa is depicted in an unusual 3/4 facing portrait, with hair flowing towards the edges of the coin. The reverse depicted a horse in various poses. The horse was an appropriate symbol of Thessaly, a land of plains, which was well-known for its horses. Sometimes there is a male figure; he should perhaps be seen as the eponymous hero of the Thessalians, Thessalos.

