

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife respond to barn owl sitting in fireplace

We received a call from a homeowner with an interesting predicament. A barred owl had found its way into their chimney and was now sitting in the fireplace.

Fortunately, our Central District Manager Todd Olanyk was able to assist, carefully removing the owl from the fireplace and examining it for injuries before releasing it outside, where it quickly flew off.

If you're wondering why a barred owl would be attracted to a chimney, a look at their life history might give a clue. From February through May, barred owls across Massachusetts begin laying eggs. Barred owls do not build their own nests. They are cavity nesters, meaning they typically will select a hollow tree or use the nest of a hawk or squirrel to lay their eggs.

This particular barred owl might have been looking for a cavity to nest when it found itself in a chimney with no easy escape. To help prevent wild animals like birds, bats, raccoons, or squirrels from entering your home, we recommend placing a metal cap with a screen on your chimney. mass.gov/news/barred-owl-rescued-from-fireplace.



Credit: Marcus Scherer