

Wood Duck attempts to nest in a chimney? On 25 Apr a neighbor called to report that she had a duck in her family room. I found that a bit hard to believe and thought that I may have misunderstood her. "Could you repeat that?" I asked. She said, "a duck, D U C K, duck!" I told her I would be right over. I brought along a fish landing net. On entering her family room, I saw a female Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) perched on her couch. I quickly netted the bird and released it unharmed. I looked at the fireplace and saw that the drape type screen was only one inch from being completely closed. I did not think that the bird came down the chimney, so we checked all the windows in the house. All were closed and unbroken. I went back to the fireplace and opened the very flexible screen. Inside I found duck feathers indicating that the duck did come down the chimney. The draft on the chimney was open. The fire place chimney was built of large stones and was very rustic. It is my assumption that the female Wood Duck was examining this chimney as a possible nesting site and became trapped. The woman's house is located in the Town of Pompey, Onondaga County. About a quarter mile away is a valley flooded by numerous beaver dams. Summer Wood Duck are not uncommon in this valley. Nesting sites are scarce, however. Last year a Wood Duck nested in a roadside maple over a quarter mile from the beaver ponds. I checked Bent's Life History to see if there were any records of chimney nesting Wood Duck. He listed none but he had two records of Wood Duck nesting in barns. There was also a record of a Wood Duck nesting in a broken off tree top. The nest was six feet down. Bent also listed a Wood Duck nest in a rock fissure.

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