

Sam

Barred Owl (*Strix Varia*)

Gender: Female

Age: 8



Fun Facts About Barred Owls:

- The most serious predatory threat to Barred Owls are Great Horned Owls. Though the two species often live in the same areas, a Barred Owl will move to another part of its territory if a Great Horned Owl is nearby.
- Fossils of Barred Owls that are at least 11,000 years old have been found in Florida, Tennessee, and Ontario.
- Barred Owls don't migrate, and typically stay within a six mile radius of their home.
- Young Barred Owls climb trees by grasping the bark with their bill and talons, flapping their wings, and walking their way up the trunk.

Typical Barred Owl Species Behavior:

- Barred owls roost quietly in forest trees during the day; however, you may hear an occasional call in daylight hours. At night they hunt small animals & rodents, and give the typical Barred Owl call which sounds like: "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?"
- **Habitat:** Heavily wooded areas near water and wooded swamps. They require dense foliage for daytime roosting, and large trees with cavities for nesting.
- **Diet:** Barred owls prefer mice, but will also eat small mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, and insects. Primarily active at night, hunting during the day can be seen on dark cloudy days or in mating season. They may perch over water and drop down to catch fish, or even wade in shallow water in pursuit of fish and crayfish.
- **Lifespan:** The oldest recorded Barred Owl in the wild was at least 24 years old.

Why is Sam in Captivity?

Sam was found in April of 2011 in Alabama as an orphaned nestling with injuries to her right wing and wounds on her lower back. It is believed that she fell out of a tree and was attacked by a dog. She began her rehabilitation journey at the Alabama Wildlife Center for a short time until she was transferred to the Southeastern Raptor Center at Auburn University. Sam had surgery to place pins in her wing to align the fracture. After removing the pins and going through physical therapy, it was determined that she was unable to move her right wing well enough to fly and could not be released back to the wild. She was transferred to the Organization for Bat Conservation on July 10, 2010, and then to the Stage Nature Center in February 2018.

What Makes Sam Special?

Sam (short for Samantha) was raised by people from a very young age. She had fallen out of the nest when she was found injured, and today she is considered an "imprint" who appears to really love people! Imprints like her often identify with people more than they do other members of their species. According to her records, Sam was a little stubborn and not so easy to work with when she was young. Today however, she greets people by calling out when she hears or sees them and is one of the sweetest birds we get to work with. A little known fact about Sam is she started her life as "Sampson" until it was discovered she was female!

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6685 Coolidge Highway
Troy MI 48098
Ph: 248.688.9703