



Arizona Gourds

April updates from the desert southwest...



Printable PDF File

Welcome to the April issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

Special Notice: I will be teaching classes in Boise, Idaho from April 23-27th. Orders placed during this time will be held and filled just as soon as I return. *All orders will be filled in the order they are received.*



I got a big laugh out of this photo that someone sent me last month! They had found a website where you insert your own photo into the frame to create your own personalized "art museum" framed art!



This photo is also a great way for me to introduce my latest project packet:

"Carving with Cutouts - Cardinals, Blue Jays, and Backgrounds."

This packet is a follow up to the previously released "Wildlife Carving" packet, and is designed for those who are unable to attend one of my advanced carving classes. This packet is 13 pages and includes instructions on designing and carving gourds with cut openings. It also includes 5 Jay/Cardinal patterns and 8 background patterns.

Special Offer for April - buy an autographed copy of my "Gourds" book (now out of print, will be available in paperback late 2009) and I'll send you this new packet at a special price.

Please visit the **"Project Packets"** page to order the packet individually, or to order the combination book/packet special.

Update: Gourd Classes

I will be teaching classes at the Woodcraft of Boise, Idaho. This your only opportunity to attend one of my classes in this area in the foreseeable future. Classes will be held on Friday, April 24th through Sunday, April 26th. E-mail the Woodcraft store at: boise-retail@woodcraft.com or call them at (208) 338-1190 to learn how to register. Classes offered include Basic Gourd Power Carving, 3-D Feather Carving, Filigree Carving, Inlaid Inlay, and Advanced 3-D Relief Carving. **Because these are taught at a Woodcraft store, I will not be bringing any tools or supplies to these classes. These items may be preordered from my site, or you may purchase items from the Woodcraft store.*

My classes at the [Leiser Gourd Festival](#) just outside of Sacramento, California are sold out. I will NOT have a booth at the festival, but will have supplies available at all of my classes.

I am also teaching for the first time at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#), located in Sonoita, Arizona, from June 12-15th. Our host, Linda Hanson, is the owner of After Midnight Art Stamps, and her ranch is a wonderful scenic area located in the cooler rolling hills of southern Arizona. You can sign up for these classes on the After Midnight website. *(The stay-on-site 6 day retreat is now full, but you may sign up for any of the classes individually. If you need lodging nearby, please contact Linda for more information.)*

*If you would like to receive advanced notice of classes, please add your name to my class updates email list. Get the news first and have the best opportunity to select your classes!



[Join The Class updates List](#)

What's new on the [Arizona Gourds website?](#)



New to the website - Large Revolving Bur holders. These bur holders had spaces for all sizes of bur and the pyramid shape and turntable features lets you to see each bur easily. These are available on the [Carving Burs](#) page.

Tip: For traveling or storage, buy a see-through cube shaped plastic container. These are available at most office or discount stores and some even have nice carrying handles.

Back in Stock: [Diamond files](#), [feathered cabochons](#) and [wood hardener](#), all colors of [heishi](#), nice large [ammonite fossils](#), [turntables](#) and [wooden stands](#).



Closeout Small Drumskins.

These are perfect for small drums! Or, cut them to get 5 or 6 small jewelry pieces from each one! **While they last**, individual 8-9" skins are \$1.50 each. Irregularly shaped (but at least 8" wide) skins are now priced at 12 skins for \$10.



Sets of 3 assorted Diamond Wheels

These diamond wheel burs are good for smoothing backgrounds, making openings for inlaying cabochons, or undercutting relief carving. You'll get 3 different sizes - some have rounded sides, others are squared. Priced so you get one bur for free!

Dremel Cutting Guide and Router Bit

Use this attachment and router bit to turn your Dremel into a mini router! It's a great way to remove a lot of material very quickly and to a fairly uniform depth. You can also carve lettering and other scrolling designs. Buy these individually or as a set at a discounted price. Limited to stock on hand. (See the "Tip of the Month" below for instructions on using these.)



April Feature - More on Stains and Exterior Finishes

I got some interesting feedback after last month's newsletter article about using stains and exterior finishes.

Darienne and Ed McAuley of Canada offered this very helpful tip: "The bottom portion of many of our gourds is painted black. Ed always dyes the portion with Fiebing's black dye first and then follows it with the paint. This way, if the paint should chip a bit, it won't show." (See photo at right) *Great idea!*

Mary Gayle Van Ingen of Oregon uses wood stains to color her gourds, and sent several photos of some of the different results. "Here are examples of wood-stained gourds so you can see the possibilities. They are sooo easy to use and not the least bit messy. Applying the stains takes nothing more than a small piece of rag and your finger. No preparation work is required. It is, however, a good idea to seal them to protect them from scratches, water, and other nicks and scrapes. You may notice that the kind of coiling I do is different than what is usually seen. Mine goes down from the rim instead of upward." *Beautiful!*





The stain Mary Gayle uses is Woodburst Brand, which is sold in woodworking stores. If you have further questions, you may contact her at allagourd@comcast.net. Here is information from the [Woodburst company](#):

The vibrant, transparent colors that make up the Woodburst® product line are unlike any you've ever experienced. The primary, intermixable colors of red, yellow and blue are just the beginning for Woodburst®. They may be blended to produce custom effects or added to lacquer, polyurethane or other oil-based stains to achieve an unlimited palette. In addition to the primary colors, Woodburst® offers 37 ready-to-go colors like bing cherry, golden oak, grass and smoked pearl. The transparency of Woodburst® stains comes from the use of pigments that are crystalline. The crystals filter out all light except for the color you seek. These crystals are suspended in a tung oil base that is actually good for wood. In fact, tung oil, which is produced from the nut of the tung tree (Aleurites fordii), has been used for centuries as a wood preservative. All Woodburst® woodstains are now lightfast, making them great for outdoor or indoor use. Our indoor stains have more pigment than outdoor stains, to allow for a variety of colorful or subdued applications.

Just for Fun:
Jennifer Zingg of Kentucky made this great gourd sculpture entitled "**Beach Bathers**". Jennifer has one of the sites featured on the "Top Gourd Sites" listing (you can see others via the button at the right), or you can visit her website at: www.jennysgourds.com



Jenny shows her work at several galleries. She was selected by the Governor of Kentucky to

Reader's Mailbag

Wow, Bonnie, what service. That was great. Got my order and extra surprises yesterday and was so proud of them I worked until 2AM this morning. They are wonderful. I have so many ideas now.

I reread my filigree pattern instructions and now I am ready to do some filigree gourds. Last night was just practice even tho I did finish my project I had started. Those burrs are just what I needed. They are great tools to have. Now I will be doing more detail "stuff" on my gourd art.

Can not say enough good things about my tools and material I get from you, Bonnie, and your service is so swift. I didn't expect my order

create 11 female musician sculptures for the 2009 Governor's Awards in the Arts. It is the first time that an artist using gourds has been selected.



until the end of this week. You made my week start out wonderful!!!!

Gale in Alabama

Hulusi 1 - There's a Beau



hulusi and koudi



Here are some more You Tube videos to enjoy. These feature the gourd hulusi, a Chinese gourd flute. (The word "hulu" in Mandarin means "gourd". I saw these played in China when we visited and even bought one to bring home (pictured above). I have to admit I can't play it at all. I just don't seem to have much musical ability!

Tip of the Month: Tool Tips - Using a Dremel Cutting Guide & Sawing with Burs

Dremel cutting guides work well as a mini router. (The cutting guides have straight sides; do not use angled grout removal attachments.) The cutting guide will not fit onto a flexshaft, it must be used directly on the Dremel tool. To attach, unscrew the small plastic piece from the end of the Dremel tool (the same piece that is removed when attaching a flex shaft) and screw the attachment onto the end of the tool. Use a regular collet and collet nut, as keyless chucks are a bit too large for use with the attachment. **The attachments are usually packaged with a spiral drywall cutting bit, which are very aggressive cutting. DO NOT use these bits on gourds, use a small router bit instead.*

For stability as you cut, grasp the tool firmly at the bottom of the cutting guide and hold it so you can see into the large viewing window as you are cutting. The thumbscrew on the side of the guide allows for depth adjustments. Start by cutting shallower than you need; you can always adjust and cut deeper later if necessary. Plunge the bit into the gourd, and begin cutting by moving the tool sideways while keeping the guide pressed firmly against the gourd. Start in the center of the area to be removed and work your way out from there. Note that the wide base of the cutting guide will not allow you to cut inside curves such as on the neck of a bottle gourd. You can very quickly remove a large amount of material from backgrounds. Because you are working on a rounded surface, you will not get a perfectly flat cut, but it will be generally even.

Sawing with burs. Have you ever needed to cut something quickly when having a perfect cut is not important? You can do quick and easy sawing with certain burs, and it works great when you don't have a mini saw handy. Try using the combo purpose **Filigree Burs or Carving Drill** for this purpose. The filigree burs are designed as a combination drilling and cutting bur. Simply drill through the gourd and then carefully push the bur sideways to cut. I use these for fast cutouts and then I'll trim the edges as necessary with an exacto knife or a hand file. With some practice you can do some intricate cutting, and the burs are very inexpensive as well. The carving drills work in a similar manner.

**Do you have a tip or tutorial we can feature here? Please [contact me](#).*



Router bits have two large flanged teeth for fast cutting of wood or gourds. This router bit shape will cut flat bottomed areas and is great for removing a lot of material quickly.

Dremel adjustable depth Cutting Guide



Filigree Burs and Carving Drill - [located on the Carving Burs page](#)

Reader's Mailbag



Gourd Raffle Winner!

Last September, I taught classes at a retreat sponsored by the Florida Gourd Society. I donated a gourd which was created as a sample during one of my classes. The Florida Gourd Society recently raffled it to raise funds. The lucky winner was **Rosemary Hale from Palatka, FL.**

Photograph by Jim Swallow

You are just TOOO quick, girl!! I just placed this order on Sunday night and already had it in my hands this afternoon -- so fast!! I love all of the unique stuff you have on the site, and at such reasonable prices. BTW, those buffalo teeth are really something else! And that fossil I got is gorgeous!!
Patty P - Nebraska

Reader's Mailbag

My order arrived today and as usual was perfect. Once again, WOW I can't believe how fast you process an order.

*I absolutely LOVE your work. Wish I lived closer so I could take some of your classes. Also love your website and your book. Saw some of your work, loved it and decided to take up gourds as a hobby. Am still new to the art but LOVE IT. Thanks for the inspiration. **Dean H, Colorado***



I LOVE seeing what people create after taking a class or reading one of my tutorial packets!
Left: Gourd by **Brenda Saffioti or Arkansas** - (a unique and lovely interpretation of the filigree technique!)
Right: Filigree Gourd by **Dynva Todd of Washington.**

Featured Gourd of the Month:

Red Tail Hawk Feather - Petroglyph Wall

This gourd has carved ripples, a red tail hawk feather and some filigree carved accents. It also has a large area that has been carved and textured to create a realistic appearing rock wall with painted petroglyphs. An added lid makes a nice accent.



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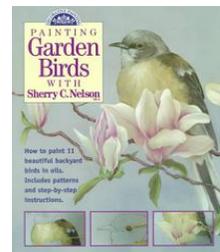
Featured Books of the Month:



[The Amazing Art of Pyrography](#)



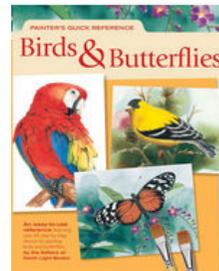
[On Feathered Wings: Birds in Flight](#)



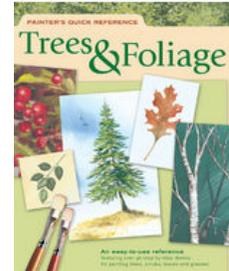
[Painting Garden Birds](#)



[Painters Quick Reference: Flowers & Blooms](#)



[Painter's Quick Reference: Birds & Butterflies](#)



[Painter's Quick Reference: Trees & Foliage](#)

The Amazing Art of Pyrography is a very in depth, large volume covering many aspects of woodburning. The book does have one chapter dealing specifically with gourds, and also on unusual items such as dried wood fungus, paper, etc. but most of it deals with burning on wood. This book was written by the originator of the Detail Master burning system, but other burners are discussed. (Only available from third party sellers, but their prices are lower than the original cover price of 49.95.) I bought my copy years ago and found it to be very helpful.

I have a copy of **On Feathered Wings: Birds in Flight**. What a treasure of amazing photos of birds in flight! The photography is fantastic. Most of

Thanks for checking out the latest news! Feel free to pass the newsletter link along to your friends.

<http://www.arizonagourds.com/April09.html>

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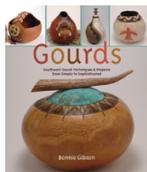
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Note: It is important that you add bonniegibson@qwest.net to your "safe senders" list, as many emails bounce each month due to spam blockers.

If your email address changes, just sign up again with your new address - no need to email me the change, as I purge non-working addresses monthly.



(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

Gourds Southwest Gourd Techniques & Projects from Simple to Sophisticated
by Bonnie Gibson

the birds are raptors, but there are chapters of waterfowl and songbirds as well.

I'm into birds this month! **Painting Garden Birds** deals with painting birds using oil paints - but there is plenty of information that is applicable for painting with acrylics, and for painting on gourds or other surfaces..

The Painter's Quick Reference Series Books are good resource books from North Light Publishing. They have wonderful painting books (many of which deal with nature) and I own several different titles. I've not been disappointed with any of them. Others in this reference series include **Cats and Dogs, Landscapes,**

**Please visit the book page links shown at right to view collections of related titles. Each topic includes a variety of suggested books about each subject.*

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