



Arizona Gourds

March updates from the desert southwest...

Welcome to the March issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

It's probably hard to believe for those of you in the colder climates, but here in the desert southwest it is already time to begin planting the yearly gourd crop. I don't grow many gourds myself - I just don't seem to have the time or patience for it. One year I grew a few bottle gourds and they climbed all over the side of our house and into the trees. It was a challenge to get all the vines down without destroying the trees, and the gourds were scarred from swinging through the branches as they grew. The next year I made sure the vines stayed on the ground and they did just great - that is, until one night when a herd of wild javelinas came through the yard and ate them! Now I buy most of my gourds



One of the gourd chomping Javelinas!

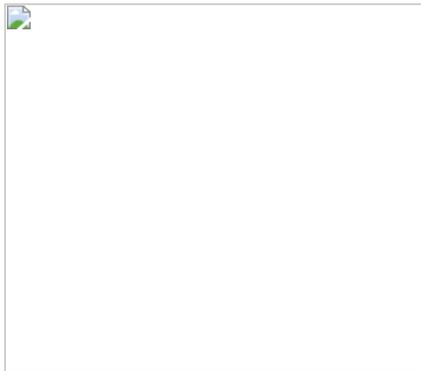
This young fellow in my back yard was just 1 of about 7 or 8 in the herd that day.)

Fun Facts about this Desert Dweller:

The Javelina or Collared Peccary is the only wild, native, pig-like animal found in the United States. They are called Javelina because of their razor-sharp tusks (Spanish for javelin or spear.)

You may smell a peccary before you see it. The prickly pear is ideal food for them due to its high water content. They have poor eyesight and good hearing.

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



Coming Soon.....

I'm working on resin coated agate slices that can be stitched into gourds or used as basket starts. The resin coating is cut close to the agate slice and is drilled with holes about every 1/4" (see closeup) OR, they can be left undrilled so you can drill them in any special way you require.

When they are ready to go, you'll find them on the [kits and supplies page](#).

Update: Gourd Classes

I'm looking forward to my upcoming East Coast Classes! I will be teaching weekend classes at the Gourd Gallery in Sugarloaf, NY, April 14-15. Contact Devon Cameron at gourdgallery@frontiernet.net for more information. I'm looking forward to meeting lots of new people and seeing some familiar friends.

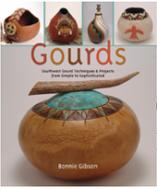
Advanced Carving workshop - A two day workshop on high relief and advanced carving techniques taught by Bonnie Gibson and Phyllis Sickles. The March session is now full, but please send me an email if you are interested in taking the class in the future. If there is enough interest, we will schedule it again.

I will be teaching classes at the **Welburn Gourd Festival** again this June. I will be teaching sessions on Power Carving, Inlaid Inlay and Filigree Carving. Be sure to join the class updates list; I'll send out a notice as soon as I am aware that the festival classes have been posted.

The last few years some classes have filled up in just a few days, so be sure to plan ahead.



[Join The Class updates List](#)



All books I ship are **autographed**. (Please click on the book cover for ordering information.)

My sincere thanks go out to everyone that has purchased a copy of my Gourds Book, and a special thank you to all of you that have taken the time to write me such lovely notes! I hope that it will become one of your most well-thumbed books. (Thanks also to those who so kindly posted a review on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).)

March Feature: Wuertz Gourd Festival Report



Thanks to Bonnie Cox of Peoria, AZ for these two photos. The top photo is her first place entry in the gourd hat category. It was even prettier in person, I wish I'd had the chance to take a photo of her wearing it! She also took the bottom photo of me at one of the gourd classes.



Piles of gourds for sale! The gourd bins were outside, the vendors and competition were inside the fairgrounds buildings. (Thanks to Bill Duncan and Russ Conley for some of these photos!)



Some of the "gourdster" race cars. Have you ever seen a Cub Scout Pinewood Derby? These gourd cars were built on a pinewood derby base and raced down a similar track. The racing competition was fierce! These are the racers from the Adult division.



One of the People's Choice Award Winners by Sandee Toone of Texas



Gourds by my booth partner, Irene Oliphant.

The competition area was filled with hundreds of entries. There was some fabulous art on display!

Tip of the Month: [Patina Paint](#) Tips

Some of you have asked for some tips on using the patina paints more effectively. Remember, part of the fun of using these paints comes from the unpredictability of the finished results. The finished results will vary greatly depending on your methods of application and to a lesser extent by environmental conditions.

1) Be sure you shake the paint to mix it thoroughly. The paint contains real metal particles that must be dispersed in the solution for best results. Apply at least two coats for the best results. The more metal that is laid down, the more dramatic the end appearance will be after the oxidizing solution is applied.

2) Apply one thin coat of the metallic glaze paint and let that coat dry. It will lose its glossy appearance as it dries. This paint is slow drying but impatient crafters may use a hairdryer to speed things up! Apply a second coat and WHILE IT IS WET, apply the oxidizing solution. You can apply it in many methods including dripping, brushing, sponging, spraying, or splattering. (It looks nice when you leave bits of the metallic paint uncoated or the whole surface will oxidize.) The amount of time it takes to see the final results will vary depending on temperature, humidity and thickness of metal application. Sometimes the best results won't show up until hours later, so don't despair if you don't get the results you desire immediately. Misting the area with water will reactivate the solution - this is effective when the solution dries too quickly in hot, dry climates. (Additional layers of paint may also be added over top if you accidentally apply too much solution and lose all of the metallic effect. I sometimes use a scrap of sponge to blot on some metallic highlights.)

3) Once you are satisfied with the results and the surface is completely dry, apply a finish. I have found that a matte spray finish gives great results and maintains the natural, dusty look of oxidized paint.

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

Featured Gourd of the Month: ***Swimming Upstream***

It was an wonderful honor when this gourd won several ribbons at the recent Arizona Gourd Society Competition which was held at the Wuertz Festival. This gourd won 1st place in category, Best of the Master's Division, Best of Show and a People's Choice award.

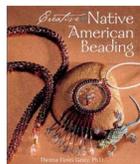


Above: One side of the gourd - the gourd has different patterns all around each side.



Above: Unfinished view. This was before any painting but after the carving was complete. The trout

Featured Books of the Month:



[Creative Native American Beading](#)



[Native American Beadwork](#)

"Creative Native American Beading" and "Native American Beadwork" are books by Theresa Flores Geary, an avid gourder as well as a beader. Some of you may have met her at the New Mexico Gourd festival last fall and have seen her jewelry sized gourd creations. While these books don't deal specifically with gourds, if you have interest in beadwork you will enjoy the projects and techniques in these books.

I have tried the beaded ears of corn and the beaded plates and covered pottery and enjoyed the projects.

(Theresa will also have a new book out later this year "Beadwork Glossary" that will feature several gourds with beadwork.)

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have been carved from gourd scraps and added.

Left - Another view from a different side.



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