

Arizona Gourds

October updates from the desert southwest...

Welcome to the October issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter. Please feel free to write me if you have any suggestions for future newsletters or feedback on this issue.

Update: Gourd Festivals and Classes

I hope to see some of you at the Ohio and New Mexico festivals. I will not have a booth at these shows, but if you stop by the class areas I do have some tools and supplies for sale. **Because I am traveling until mid month, shipping of orders placed on the website may be delayed a bit. Sorry for the inconvenience and thanks for your patience.*

Last chance to take my gourd class at the [New Mexico](#) gourd festival on Oct. 13th. I will be teaching "Petroglyphs and Ripples". See their website for registration and more information.

I have also added some new classes for January that will be held at my home in Tucson, and some late October and early November classes still have a few spaces left. Check the [classes](#) page for availability. *(I will probably be adding some more sessions - drop me a note if you are interested in a particular class or date.)* Classes will also be offered at the Wuertz Gourd Festival in Casa Grande, Arizona - February, 2007. Check [their website](#) for class registrations.)

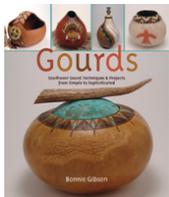


Left: River Bed Gourd
Right: Filigree Carving



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

New turquoise items have been added to the [inlay supplies](#) page. Rectangle and teardrop shaped cabochons have been added to the page and you won't find them at a better price anywhere else. In addition, some new drilled turquoise nugget strands and real turquoise heishi are also available. On the same page, you'll find some new inlaid cabochons. These cabochons are made with sterling silver and block turquoise, malachite or lapis. **I have very limited amounts of these.** I also have a limited amount of "surprise" cabochons. These are different colors, patterns, shapes and most are larger than the pieces that are pictured. I guarantee you'll enjoy the selection!



Book Update: Still projected for late 2006. The book will be 160 pages and in full color, and will include 22 projects as well as basic chapters on tools, materials and techniques. Skill level is indicated for each project, and even if you don't make each one, you will enjoy learning about new materials and techniques in each one. Lots of ideas are suggested for making each project your own unique creation. [Click here](#) to find out how to preorder your autographed copy. The first 500 will be numbered and personalized. I will also include a special mini project (that is not in the book or on my website) with all preorders.

Creativity and Composition

This month will begin a series of articles on creativity and composition, and the focus this month is on copyright issues.

These articles are just some food for thought, as many people struggle with the creative process. I am not an attorney, these are just general guidelines. If you would like to send your feedback, I will try to include some of them along with the next installment.

"Now, what do I make?"

Everyone has experienced those discouraging moments when there is a lack of all creative ideas and inspirations. Feeling this void, many people simply resort to routine copying of other people's work and ideas, never striving to develop anything that they might truly call their own. Creativity is something that can be developed through exercise, just like any other skill. With a little hard work and some artistic exercises, everyone can begin to find their own individual "voice" or style.

Copying and Copyright Issues

Copying other artists' work is not always a bad thing. Art students frequently copy the great works of masters to learn techniques and to understand the processes that are involved. In this case, the copied piece is viewed as a learning experience instead of as the end result. While an art student's copy of the "Mona Lisa" will never be accorded the same value as the original, through the process of copying, the student will have learned many skills that may allow them to develop into a recognized artist in their own right. Similarly, projects made from how-to books or patterns may be copied in order to learn the skills and techniques that are involved, but true value comes when the artist is able to translate the techniques and skills into their own original ideas. As skills and artistic self-confidence grow, dependence on copying will be minimized.

If you are a beginner, and want to start by copying designs, make sure that you have the permission of the original creator or that the work is in the public domain. (Most works of the 20th century are NOT in the public domain unless otherwise noted.) When instructions or patterns are provided in a book or other media, it is generally understood that the user has permission to copy the presented material for their own limited use, either keeping the finished item or offering it as a gift. However, it is less acceptable to copy the item many times and then offer the completed items for sale. When in doubt, check to see if the author has expressed any limitations or restrictions on the use of the material. [Copyright](#) are many books available with [free large](#) that can be used with no restrictions. Dover Publications produce a large line of inexpensive clip art books on many subjects.

When a piece has been copied directly from a pattern or instructions, it is also expected that the proper credit will be offered. For example, a project completed from a pattern should carry a disclaimer such as "Original design courtesy of Jane Doe". Never pass off another person's design as your own original work. Similarly, pieces made from patterns should not be entered into competitions that are judged in part on originality.

Specific techniques cannot be copyrighted, but every effort should be made to use them in original ways. For example, no one can claim the exclusive use of a broad technique such as decoupage, weaving, carving or woodburning. An artist does hold the rights to the finished product and exact copies should not be made by others without permission.

An artist will often use reference materials or view a work that inspires them. This is acceptable, but reference material should be modified or altered so that it is not a direct and recognizable copy. An artist might need to view a photograph of an eagle in order to place the feathers in the correct pattern or to determine the color of the eyes; but the finished artwork should look significantly different from the reference photograph. While the subject should be recognizable as an eagle, it should be interpreted with your own style. Reference material can be altered in a variety of ways. Change the position of the subject, modify the direction of the light source, adjust the background images, or use a different palette of colors. Try to find a fresh or innovative way of portraying the reference material. In some cases, you may be able to contact the photographer and obtain permission to use their images in your artwork.

Please note that these are general guidelines; you may search the internet for more specific information on the Visual Intellectual Property/Copyright attorney. More information is also available in this book by [Audi Crawford](#):

Note: You can find an interesting article on pirated content on this website. Look for the link to issue 45.

http://www.craftmarketer.com/craft_business/archives.htm

Would you like to see your tip or tutorial featured here? Please [contact me](#).

Tip of the Month: Pattern Transferring Ideas

Have you ever struggled with the process of transferring a flat pattern onto a curved gourd surface? Graphite paper works ok, but often the pattern will slip or look distorted because the paper pattern just doesn't want to conform to the shape of the gourd.

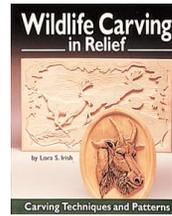
Here is an innovative way to use a household item for easier transfers - use Glad® "Press and Seal" plastic wrap for your leftovers and also in your craft work. Lay the plastic wrap over your design and trace with a felt tip permanent marker. Next, place graphite paper on the surface of the gourd (make sure the graphite side is down!) and tape the film over the top, making sure it is stretched tightly against the surface. Trace with a stylus or ball point pen. Some of my gourd friends tell me that you can actually omit the graphite and burn the design right through the film, working from the center of the design outwards. I haven't tried it yet, but lots of people I've talked to swear that it works great and saves a lot of time. **Note:** Burning through plastic may release toxic fumes. Be sure to wear a vapor rated respirator if you try this.

Featured Gourd of the Month:
Rufous Hummer

This gourd uses several interesting techniques and was a lot of fun to create. The lid features a Rufous hummingbird, hand carved from basswood and perched on a manzanita stick. The gourd itself has faux basketry carving, inlaid turquoise cabochons, patina paints, copper leafing and inlaid beads.



Featured Book of the Month:



[Wildlife Carving in Relief](#)



I really liked this book by Lora S. Irish. I recently got a chance to flip through a copy and thought it was a great resource for all levels of carvers. Most people have a hard time visualizing patterns in 3 dimensions, but this book does a nice job of explaining about carving at different levels to achieve the illusion of depth.

The book has 30 outline and shaded patterns, step by step techniques, plus tips on burning fur and feathers. .

Want to see more carving books? Click [here](#) to see some of the more popular titles including the ["Complete Book of Gourd Carving"](#)



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<http://www.arizonagourds.com/Oct06.html>

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