

Do you enjoy the newsletter? We appreciate when you share it with your friends! Bookmark and Share here:



Arizona Gourds

September updates from the desert southwest...

Printable PDF File

Printable Stencils Patterns

www.mys...

Create & Print an Array of Stencils- Download Free Toolbar!



Love the sunsets we get in Arizona during our monsoon season! Last month's photo was a hit, so thought I'd include another one.

Fall is fast approaching, and here in the Southwest, it means only one more month of hot weather! Our first freeze probably won't arrive until November, but for many of you, September may mean the end of your growing season and a new gourd crop! Now is the time to clean a bunch of gourds both inside and out and set them aside so you'll have something to work on over the winter. Weaving and painting are good indoor gourd activities, so you want to have plenty of ready to go gourds before the cold weather sets in.

In August, we had the fun of attending a family reunion in Estes Park, CO. I was able to visit the Rocky Mountain National Park for several days, and really enjoyed the cooler weather and beautiful scenery. I did take the time to stop in one gallery to see gourd art, and I taught my sister in law how to weave a small twined basket with waxed linen and a small ornamental gourd. I took a ton of photos of plants, animals and scenery. You never know when you will need reference material! Here's a typical pose of me during our trip.)



This is the subject I was photographing. It's an Amanitas mushroom. This is one of the most poisonous families of mushrooms and are responsible for more deaths than any other mushroom - but they sure are pretty when you see them growing in the forest!



Instantly watch TV episodes & movies
amazon Prime
 TRY IT FREE >

Free 30 day trial of Amazon Prime!

*ALL Amazon purchases made through site links and the search box help support Arizona Gourds and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts websites, and it costs you nothing extra!

Just type what you are looking for into the search box below. **Can't see the search box? Please disable your ad blocker for the Arizona Gourds domain.*

Search Now: GO
 Search New and Used amazon.com

*My "Beetle Garden" gourd will be featured on the cover of the October Crafts Report magazine, which is due out very soon. If you are interested in subscribing, **click on the banner below for special rates** on both print and the digital (online) subscriptions. Single copies are available at some newsstands or art venues. *(Can't see the link? Please turn off your ad blocker for the Arizona Gourds domain.)*



Update: Gourd Classes

No Classes currently scheduled. I hope to start teaching again this fall. I will notify the class updates list and post in future newsletters when new classes are scheduled. I just signed up to teach at the Wuertz Festival in February 2014. Thanks to those of you that volunteered to help me at the festival, I will be in touch with you as the date approaches.

[Join The Class updates List](#)

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

New to the website - Teardrop earrings, NEW styles of feather earrings and NEW LARGE SIZE painted bone feathers and inlaid stone feathers on the [embellishments page](#). I've taken photos with earrings next to pendants so you can see the size difference. These make great sets. (Email me when you order if you have color preferences, or let us choose for you.) Perfect for gourd masks or beautiful and inexpensive gifts!



All feathered cabochon colors (red, blue, green) are now back in stock.

*Tip: want a fuller looking cabochon? Glue additional pheasant feathers on the back (use Tacky glue) before applying to the gourd. You get tons of these feathers on a typical pheasant pelt. *Pelts and Cabochons are on the [Special Embellishments Page](#).*

Thank you! Your purchases made from Arizona Gourds and from our Amazon links enable us to keep these free newsletters and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts site available. **We sincerely appreciate your orders.**

Feature - Woodburning Gourds

I often joke that there are two kinds of people that woodburn: The artistic woodburner (as are most of the artists who shared photos below) and the "slash and burner", those who turn their burner on high and set their shirts, trash cans, and gourds on fire! We all develop our own style with time. Most of my burning is fairly simple, and is used to create borders and bold lines. Other people have more patience and a more delicate touch. They are looking to create depth through shading, not just through burning hot and deep.

If you are a beginner, you may have started with one of the soldering iron style burner from the craft store. Many people still use these and like them. The two biggest drawbacks for this type of burner is a slow heat recovery time, so burning is slower, and that your hand is so far away from the burning tip, which gives you less control. Many have moved up to a transformer based woodburner. (*I do sell two types of burners on my [woodburners page](#), but there are many brands out there and most are good.) The bigger concern are the actual handpieces. **Handpieces are often interchangeable between units if you have an appropriate cord or adapter plug. This way you can use handpieces/pens from other brands.** Ask your gourd friends which burner they have, if they like it, and why or why not. Go to a show and test a few, or try those owned by others at classes you attend. Look for a burner that 1) Fits your budget 2) Offers good customer service if repairs are needed 3) Has handpieces/pens that are comfortable to hold and don't heat up in your hand excessively.

I personally prefer fixed tip handpieces instead of interchangeable tips. On some brands, the interchangeable tips don't stay tight and the heat goes into the handpiece body instead of the tip. Other brands work well, but you have to wait for the pen to cool down before you can change tips, and you have to mess with a screwdriver or tool to change them. It does cost you less to buy just one handpiece and some replaceable tips, but if you change tips frequently it can be frustrating. Other brands have handpieces with fixed tips where the handpiece itself detaches from the cord. These are less expensive than those that have a cord permanently attached. Some pens have metal bodies,

some have plastic. Plastic bodied pens with cushioned grips are easier to hold for long periods of time. Choose a pen that allows you to get your fingers as close to the tip as possible. (Try holding a pencil up near the eraser and write with it that way, and you'll see why you want your fingers low.)

Thanks to the artists that participated below. I appreciate that they allowed me to share their lovely work with you. Please note that there is a lot more information I could provide, but the space of the newsletter won't allow it. Perhaps we'll have some future articles. Check out [this link](#) for more information on techniques and tools. First, a brief description of burner types.



This is the basic [soldering iron style woodburner](#) that is commonly found at craft stores. The advantage is the low price; the disadvantage is that it is slow to generate heat, and it only has one heat setting - on or off. Your hand is farther away from the tip so you have less control as you burn.

Here are two types of woodburners that are transformer based with a rheostat for adjustable heat settings. (*Disclaimer - These are two brands that I sell on the [woodburner page](#) of the Arizona Gourds website, but there are many other good brands of burners that work just as well!) Prices, quality and power vary from brand to brand. Ask around or try different brands before you buy.

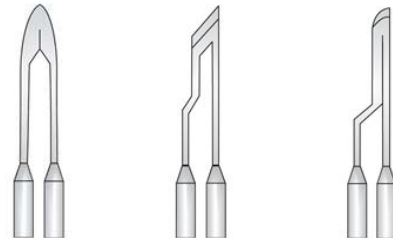
The burner in the middle is shown with a burning pen that has multiple replaceable tips. This model has a thick handle which is similar to the soldering iron style, but the transformer produces heat much faster than the simple basic burner shown to the left. The burning unit on the right has a cord with detachable handpieces. Instead of changing tips, you simply plug in a different handpiece. The handle on this type of pen is thinner.



Darlene McLallister of NY says this is her first woodburning project.

This is a good start! If you are just learning, outlining is the best place to start. Once you feel comfortable making lines and turning corners smoothly, then you can progress to shading.

These are the most common shapes for burning lines. L to R: The **SPEAR** is my favorite shape, because you have two burning edges. If one side gets dirty, quickly flip to the other and continue working. The **SKEW** is an angled straight tip with a squared off heel. They come in different widths depending on the manufacturer. The **KNIFE** is similar to a skew, but has a rounded heel. The rounded heel works well when you don't want the heel to dig in as you drag the pen. (Burning is usually done with a dragging stroke).



Here's another example primarily done with burned lines by **Roy Cavaretta of TX**. Roy says his interest in pen and ink drawings was a factor in becoming hooked on woodburning gourds.

The small circles on the feather tips and the rim were done with a specialty tip, either a **BALL** or **CIRCLE** burner. Ball burning pens (below left) are just what they sound like, where a solid metal ball (different sizes are available) is the actual burning surface. Circle burners (below right) are similar, but use a round metal tube (different sizes are available) to burn a perfect round circle with an unburned center. *There are many different specialty shapes available for special applications such as fish scale tips, wax kistkas, etc.



Left: Here is another gourd by Roy. This one adds the element of shading in the dark stripes of the zebras.

You can do shading with the line drawing pens shown at the top if you turn them on their side and use the flat part of the tip instead of the edge. However, the pen is not at a good angle for that type of





burning, so if you do a lot of shading you will probably want to add one or two shading pens. They come in several different shapes, but the tip is usually bent at an angle so you can hold your hand comfortably while you work. In addition, the heat that is generated off the tip will rise straight up and is less likely to make your hand get hot.

Here is an example of a spear tip **SHADER**. You can see from the side view how the tip has been bent so that it is easy to burn with the flat surface. The spear shape had a point to get into fine areas. There are many other shapes but they all have the bent tip. Below, a square shader, a round shader, and a spoon shader (cupped shape tip).



Above: "Happy Trails" by **Christine Garrison of CA.**

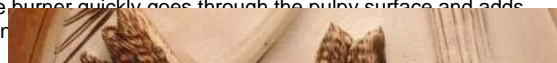
Right: Woodburned deer and leather tooling by **Alice Moore of WV**



Left: Mountain Lion by **Michelle Green**. Michelle writes: "This is one of my favorite woodburned pieces. After several attempts, I finally learned that "less is more" and stopped charring the dark areas, instead highlighting the lighter areas and darkening the black areas with dark stain and repeated layers of woodburning. I used diluted acrylic paint to highlight and subtly (I hope) color the eyes and nose. I love the way woodburning on the texture of the gourd gives such a soft furry look to the surface. A few white highlights to make the eyes shine were the final touches. The surrounding area was carved out to leave a rough textured background."

Below left: Another piece by Michelle. ***This one throws in a whole new problem: burning on a carved area. Carved areas are much softer than the gourd shell, and you need much less heat.***

Michelle says: Here are a couple of views of a deeply carved gourd woodburned on both the hard shell surface and the carved surface. Once I figured out how to have a lighter hand at burning the hard outer shell, it was easier to control burning on the carved out surfaces, and that kind of opened up a whole new world. This gourd has very little staining aside from the three layers on the lower right where it goes from the hard shell to a middle layer to a third layer; the three colors there were done with ink dyes. One cool thing about burning on the carved out surface is that the heat from the burner quickly goes through the pulpy surface and adds more depth to the carving.



Right: Here's another example



another example of burning on a carved area. In this case, I was attempting to create texture just as much as color. Many bird carvers burn feather barbs before painting their carvings. The texture of the burned lines will show through the paint. This piece is from my [Wildlife Carving project packet](#).



Right: "Hiding" by Julie-Ann Wallewein of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Julie writes: "This piece reflects walking around sloughs and marshes as a young girl. You never know what could be hiding there."



Left: Woodburning on this gourd purse was done by Kristin Johnson of KS. Kristin is one of the few people I know that can produce amazing work using a simple soldering iron style burner.



Writing Tip

Script writing with a woodburner is very difficult to do unless you have an unsharpened, rounded tip pen. **WRITING TIPS** are generally unsharpened wire that works similarly to a ball point pen. The round shape keeps the tip from digging in deeply, so that you can move the pen in multiple directions (like a regular pen) without it catching or digging into the surface. Some writing tips are made from thinner wire or are ground down a bit to make a finer writing tip.



Woodburned owl gourd by Toni Goldenberg of OR.

Many people add a bit of color to their burned pieces with colored pencil, paint or dyes.





Below Right: Gourds by Sandy Taylor of GA



Ginny Watts of TX stresses the importance of going slow and steady on a low heat setting. "Don't get ahead of your burn line and pay attention. Experiment and find what works best for you. And of course, practice, practice, practice, you WILL get better with practice!"

Below: These two detailed pieces are by **Bill Decker of MO**. "When looking at other peoples woodburning, I like most types ranging from rough burned over an open fire look to a very detailed fine art style of work. I think it can all be beautiful. What I enjoy doing myself is very detailed line and shading. I start by establishing a good composition for a project, but often they are works in progress that develop as I go. I also strive for a balance in lights, darks and mid-tones along with hard and soft edges, principles that apply to most art mediums. The actual burning starts with the line work to completion, followed with the shading. With shading I first establish the dark areas and burn them, then the light areas, finishing with mid-tones to tie them together. My method of burning is time consuming, but it works for me and I enjoy it. I use a Detail Master burner and a *1A pen about 90% of the time, for both line and shading." (*Small skew tip)





Below and lower left: Jenn Avery of PA is well known for her detailed woodburnings. She offers these tips for gourd pyrographers:

1 - I like to sand the gourd by hand with a fine grit-400+ to prep for a nice smooth surface.

2 - Always begin burning lightly, unless you are purposefully going for a texture. Each gourd is different and will burn differently, it is better to start light and turn up the heat as you learn what your gourd can handle, than start out too hot and scorch the gourd.

3 - Don't worry about mistakes. There really are no such things as "mistakes", only opportunities! That blotch would make a cool beetle, or some other element that actually adds to the design- trying to "fix" it will only make it more apparent that you think it is a mistake!

4 - The areas you don't burn are just as important as the areas you burn. Keep contrast in mind as you work!

5 - If you don't have a fancy woodburner- don't fret! You just have to change your tactic- go for textures, try out your pen on scraps and learn what you can make your pen do. The heat can be hard to regulate on a soldering iron type of burning pen, but you can try tricks like blowing on the tip before you touch it to the gourd, and keeping it moving and not resting the pen too long in one place.

6 - Be confident when you burn- if you burn with



Ohh

\rx#\Dld#\kdyh\0wkrp dv#qg#
7/366#\wchuw#hjh#k3r/#

Follow us on 

Do you get inspired seeing art of all different types? I post one or more art photos a day on the Arizona Gourds facebook page. Whenever possible, links are provided to the original artist's page. Remember - these are for inspiration - use them to come up with your own spin on an idea but please do not just copy other people's art.

Notice: Re-release of the

"Complete Book of Gourd Carving"

Fox Chapel will be releasing a second edition of Jim Wides and Ginger Summit's book. The new edition will include an expanded gallery section of exceptional carved gourds! They are looking for high resolution photos of new carved gourd work for the book with a deadline of mid September. If you are interested in participating, send a CD or DVD with your photos to: Jim and Ginger, 926 Gilman St, Berkeley, CA 94710. The CD or DVD should contain **publishable, high resolution photos** on either seamless white background or graduated background. They should be well lit and in focus.

LIKE ANZONA Gourds on facebook to get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourdng updates. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourdng friends.)

Arizona Gourds Newsletter Index

See all our old newsletters from the past 6 years! Articles and Tips are indexed.

[Newsletter Index](#)

The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have **about 3450 members**, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! Membership is free and easy. The site also has state groups, event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature if you need an quick answer to a gourdng question!

[Check out our two GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)

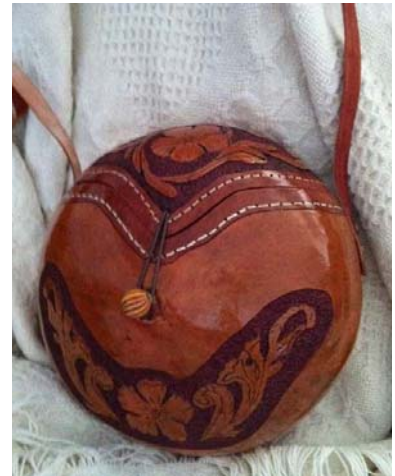


Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie - I really enjoy the Arizona Gourds newsletter. I wanted to send you a picture of the chip carving on one of my gourd lamps. I like making lamps more than anything else I've done with gourds. **Harriett Snyder - TN**

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie - I just finally finished the faux leather tooling purse I started at the Missouri workshops, and I've already started another. I really like that technique. **Linda Ashmore - AR**



Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, Last Christmas I made gourd containers to hold kitchen tools. I found these wooden spoons at the Dollar Store, and they were perfect to wood burn and put in the gourds. I used some mineral oil to coat them for food use. Was a big hit with family. Easy on the pocket too. Thanks for letting me have a place to share this idea. Smiles, **Christine Garrison - CA**



Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie , Love your news letter and thought I would send pictures of the gourd Westie I made for Wag N Train Terrier Rescue. It took 13 gourds and a pound of epoxy sculpt to make him. I also made a Dachshund for Husker Hope Dachshund Rescue and Sanctuary. **Sharon Demaree - CA**

(Before and after photos below)



Tip of the Month - Cleaning and Sharpening Woodburning Tips

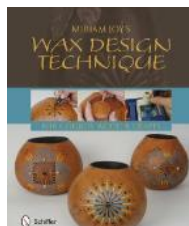
During burning, carbon builds up on the metal woodburning tip. Carbon does not conduct heat well, so a clean tip burns much better than a dirty one. It is important to clean the tip frequently, and different manufacturers may recommend different methods of cleaning; the goal is to remove the carbon without removing metal from the tip. Ask several people and you'll find they use many different materials for removing the carbon. I've heard of everything from wiping on blue jeans to scuffing with coarse sandpaper. Some people turn their burner on high to burn off the carbon, but this will definitely reduce the life of both the pen and the pen cord.



The most often recommended method the use of a leather strop with some abrasive compound. (If you must use sandpaper, don't use a coarse grit. Use only fine sandpaper to extend the life of the tip). The strop shown here has two sides. One side has sandpaper, the other has leather, and it includes an abrasive compound that is rubbed onto the leather side. Rub the tip back and forth on the leather strop until the carbon is gone. It will also maintain a nice sharp edge at the same time. Use the sandpaper side to reedge the tip if it becomes dull or has a nick or ding.. *These are available on the [Woodburners page](#), and they can also be used for sharpening/honing knife blades.



[Creative Embellishments for Gourd Art](#)



[Miriam Joy's Wax Design Technique](#)

Upcoming new book releases of interest to gourders:

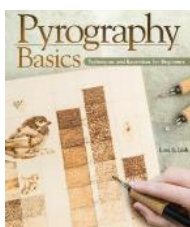
From Marianne Barnes: **Creative Embellishments for Gourd Art**. This book is scheduled for release in January 2014.

From Miriam Joy: **Miriam Joy's Wax Design Techniques**, scheduled for release in November 2013.

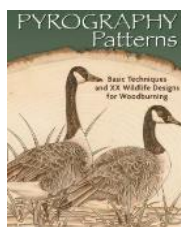
From Laura Irish: **Pyrography Basics**, scheduled for release January 1, 2014.

From Sue Walters: **Pyrography Patterns**, scheduled for release February 1, 2014 (I believe this replaces her book, *Wildlife Designs*, which is now out of print.)

*Pre-order Price Guarantee! Order now and if the Amazon.com price decreases between your order time and the end of the day of the release date, you'll receive the lowest price!



[Pyrography Basics](#)



[Pyrography Patterns](#)

Coming Next Month: Beading on Gourds

Next month we will feature BEADING. We are looking for any kind of beading, stitched, glued, whatever. If you have some tips, techniques, a tutorial or some photos to share, please send it to:

bonnie@arizonagourds.com Thanks to all of you that participate - your content is greatly appreciated and makes the newsletter shine!



Do you learn better from VIDEO? The [Pyrography Workshop DVD](#) by Sue Walters is excellent.

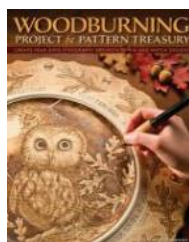
Featured Gourd of the Month:

"Asian Patina"

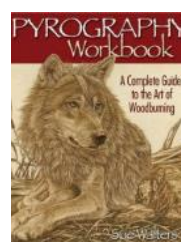
This gourd was created for my "Added Handles and Patina Textures" class. The bird is hand carved from basswood. *This gourd is now in my newest gallery location - Rogoway's Pink Door Gallery, located in the Old Town Artisans of Tucson, Arizona.



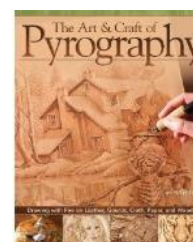
Featured Books of the Month:



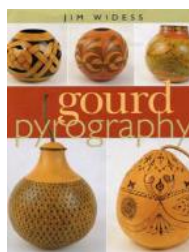
[Woodburning Project and Pattern Treasury](#)



[Pyrography Workbook](#)



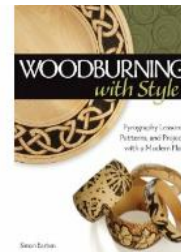
[The Art and Craft of Pyrography](#)



[Gourd Pyrography](#)



[Learn to Burn](#)



[Woodburning with Style](#)



All photos and designs copyright © 2013 by Bonnie Gibson and may not be used without express written permission.

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

<http://www.arizonagourds.com/September2013.html>

Not receiving the newsletter? You can join the newsletter mailing list by clicking on the envelope icon. If you are receiving duplicate mailings, or want to unsubscribe from the newsletter list, please send me an [email](#).

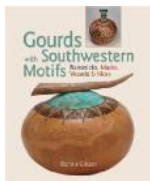
Note: Not getting the emailed notices about the newsletters? The current issue is always available from our home page.

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 here to join our newsletter mailing list](#)

[Recommend This Site](#)



Gourds with Southwestern Motifs by Bonnie Gibson

The hardcover edition is now out of print. This is the paperback version of my "Gourds" book.

All copies I sell are autographed.

(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

The titles shown are some of my personal favorite woodburning books. Some of these are how-to, others are heavier on patterns, and some are heavier on a gallery of finished pieces to get ideas from. Please read the reviews for each book. Click on the title of book cover to read reviews of each on the Amazon website.

There are many other books not listed. Artists such as Cheryl Dow and Orchid Davis have books that are out of print (Orchid Davis will be releasing a new book in the next few months) but you can buy used copies on the Amazon site.



You can use this Amazon search box link to find all kinds of books and other products. I appreciate those of you that do so; Amazon purchases made through the links on this website help to support this site.

**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.*

- Gourds - General
- Patterns and Designs
- Gourds - Misc.
- Musical Instruments
- Pyrography Books
- Carving Books
- Weaving
- Decorative Painting

Newsletter Index - article and tip index from all the past newsletters

[Newsletter Index](#)

[Arizona Gourds HOME](#)

I often get questions about shipping costs that are added to shopping cart sales. To clarify things, I've added a new page to the website,

[Shipping Policies.](#)

I am using a no-frills shopping cart program that has limitations and little flexibility. By not paying for expensive software, I can offer you lower prices on the website merchandise. **I'm not looking to make a profit on shipping; if you order lightweight items you will likely get a refund or some freebies to make up for it.** Please take a minute to look at the shipping policies page for clarification and explanation of how things work. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to email me directly. I value your business!

- Home Amazon Search Site Map About the Artist Classes
- Links Gourd Art for Sale Gourd Books Project Packets Drum & Musical
- Bone Beads Special Embellishments Glass Supplies Inlay Supplies Metals
- Misc Supplies Patina Paints Apoxie Sculpt Tools Woodburners
- Mini Saws Carving Burs Foredom Tools Rotary Tool Accessories Micro-Pro Carver
- High Speed Air Tools High Speed Dental Burs Tutorial - Carving/ Inlay Tutorial - Drum Making Tutorial - Lids
- Tutorial - E B Ornament Tutorial - Resin Inlay Tutorial - Candle Holder Tutorial - Gold Leaf Tutorial - Luffa Gourd Soap
- Tutorial - Step by Step Tutorial - Photography Tips Tutorial - Workspace Tutorial - Yerba Mate Images - Gallery A
- Images - Gallery B Gourd Puzzles Images - Before and After Images - Gourd Magic Newsletter Index
- Shipping Policies

0009