

Carving *Whimsical Birds*



By Laura Putnam Dunkle

Carving Whimsical Birds



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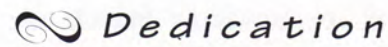
First and foremost my appreciation and thanks go to the Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed me beyond anything I could hope or think. He is my closest companion and continues to guide me daily. Next, many, many thanks to John Fackelman and family for support and dedication and tireless energy to bring this book to publication. Also many thanks to my son, Aaron, whose talent and wisdom helped enormously.



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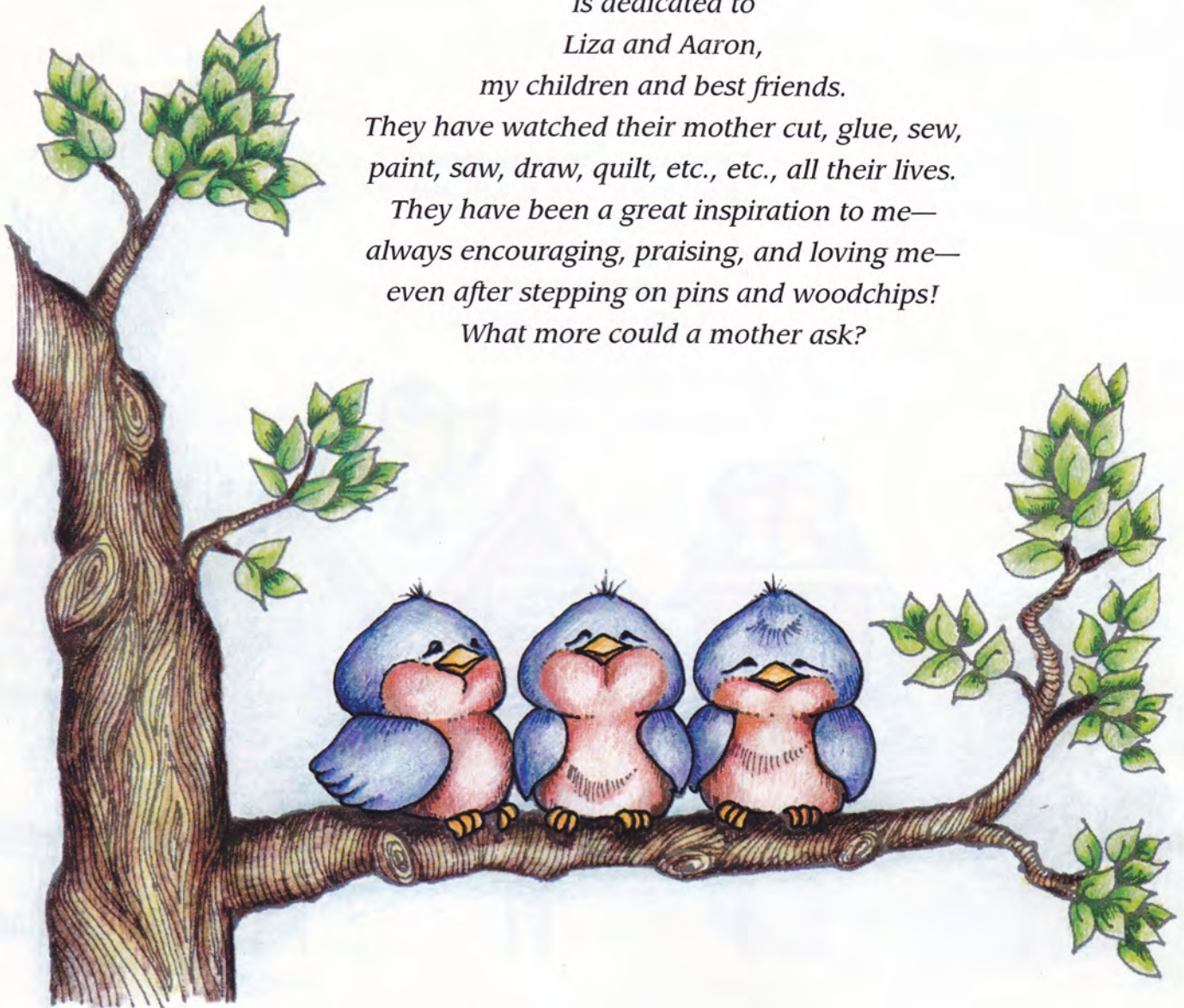
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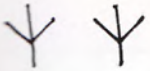
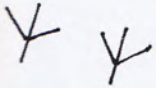
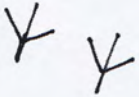
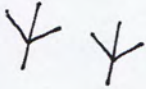
*This book, my first carving endeavor,
is dedicated to
Liza and Aaron,
my children and best friends.*

*They have watched their mother cut, glue, sew,
paint, saw, draw, quilt, etc., etc., all their lives.*

*They have been a great inspiration to me—
always encouraging, praising, and loving me—
even after stepping on pins and woodchips!*

What more could a mother ask?





Carving basswood eggs is a great way to start carving. The eggs are super for beginners and experienced "old-timers" alike. Ladies and gents, I am very fond of these eggs—they don't break when you drop them and they won't break your budget, either. Eggs are also a great way to get young people started in carving. These little birdies are a great confidence builder. Once you produce one of these cute little chirpers, you'll want to make a whole flock. And they're so simple, I can almost guarantee you'll have a good-looking group in no time.

Consider this...

- You don't need to pre-cut any wood
- You can take them with you anywhere
- They are not hard to find
- They come in a variety of sizes
- They are inexpensive
- They don't take long to carve
- They make great gifts
- You end up with a great surface for painting
- There are no eyes, noses or mouths to carve—just a beak

Adding to my fondness for these cheery little nestlings is the fact that they can be displayed in lots of ways—just think about what birds do and their environment. Here are some things you can do with these cute little guys. And don't

forget to check out the gallery on page 2 for more ideas.

- Place them in a nest or use a real one (abandoned, please)
- Mount them on dowels and put them in live plants
- Find that perfect birdhouse and mount them on a perch
- Put them in a bird cage
- Mount them on corks for bottle stoppers
- Purchase a wreath and fix a nest in it
- They look great on driftwood or a branch
- Create a scene
- Mount them on a wooden slab or plaque
- Carve a tree stump and mount your bird
- Nest a flower pot and perch a bird

So now that you know why I love chirpers and what you can do with them, let's take a look at how they're made. I'll tell you about the supplies and tools you'll need, and then I'll show you step-by-step how to make a bluebird. You'll also find information on detailing a number of other species of birds, plus lots of other notes.

Laura Putnam Dunkle
author

CHAPTER 1 • Gallery...







CHAPTER 2 • Before You Begin... ∞

Supplies

- carving knife
- basswood eggs
- height gauge
- various paint brushes
- thumb guard
- permanent fine line markers, brown and black
- sharpening strop
- soft lead pencil
- acrylic craft paints
- flat acrylic spray

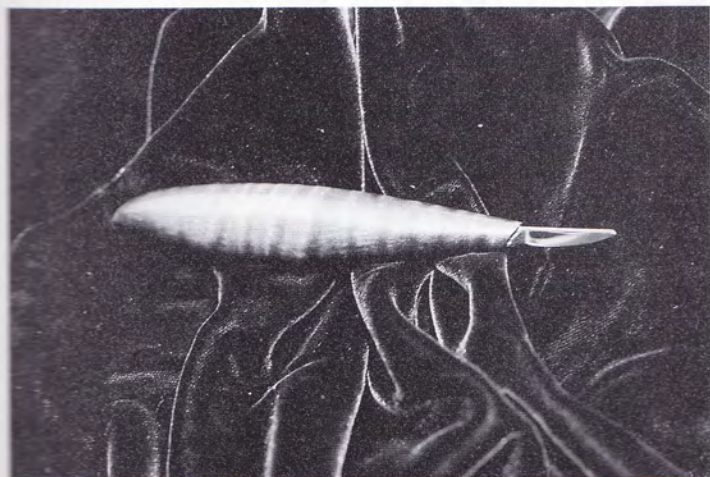
Optional Supplies

- sock caps (pattern included) cotton knit/ribbed knit
- basswood forms in apple, pear or finial shapes, or a sugar pine turning
- craft straw hats
- clay for flowers
- hot glue and gun
- beads eyes (eagle, crow & owl) 4 mm
- tacky glue
- nests, flower pots, etc.

Inspiration

Sources of inspiration for carving whimsical birds can come from anywhere. Children's books, coloring books and nature books or magazines are good sources for ideas. You can also get ideas from ceramics, figurines, collector shops and greeting cards.

Keep your eyes and your mind open. You'll soon become so clever you will astonish yourself. You can do it. Use your imagination and there's no limit to the



whimsical birds you can dream up.

Don't be shy or afraid to ask questions. You know ignorance can be fixed; stupid is forever. Sometimes I feel rather forward, but you'll be surprised how people will be more than willing to share their special techniques with you. Craft people are usually the friendliest, most genuine people I have ever met. And what a great way to make new friends!

Supplies and Tools

You won't need many supplies for carving whimsical birds from basswood eggs. The most obvious supplies are the basswood eggs themselves. You can find them at many carving and wood craft supply stores. The eggs in this book come in three sizes: pigeon, hen, goose. After you are comfortable carving basswood eggs, you may want to try other forms: apples, pears, and finials also make nice carvings.

As far as knives go, I have been spoiled! I started with X-Acto knives, which I used for a year. I switched to Dunkle Knives, and they are now the only knives I use. They are hand-made, and they are so comfortable that I can carve for many hours at a time without my hands getting tired. These knives hold their edge like no other knives I have ever used. With my Dunkle Knives I have no need to file or sand my carvings because the knives cut so clean... No kidding.

Remember, though, that a dull knife is dangerous. I use Herb's Yellowstone Edge Control System for stropping my knives—one to two strokes on the strop in each direction, every hour or so. Then I go back to carving.

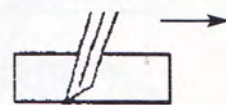
Note: Remember to keep the blade dead flat on the strop.

I do use a crooked knife occasionally. Crooked knives are knives with curved blades designed to make grooved cuts. They allow me to get into areas that a straight blade can't go. I use a micro-gouge for the eye sockets only.

A height gauge, which I simply call a wooden gizmo, gives me a perfect horizontal line around the egg. You can mark the gauge for different egg sizes, depending on what egg you're using and which bird you're carving.

The paint brushes I use are mostly flat brushes. They have a precise edge, and they make a perfect curve and can get in the tightest spots. Try to buy artist

Strop away from edge



Correct



Before You Begin...

brushes of natural fibers. I've found that those synthetic brushes just don't do the job. A good brush makes a big difference.

Remember to wash out your brushes with soap and water every time you finish painting. If paint dries in the ferril (that part by the metal holding the hairs), it ruins the brush. (Don't throw a ruined brush away, though—it's still valuable. I'll tell you more about that in Chapter 5.)

Permanent markers give great detail. As you can see in the gallery photos, all of the eyes and the fine lines on my finished chirpers are drawn with permanent markers. The markers are fine line markers #01 or #03. I use Pilot or Micron Pigma markers; Sharpie markers tend to run when spray is applied. I usually use black markers, but brown is nice on light-colored or baby birds. Brown also makes great spots on robins and sparrows.

I try to find flat acrylic spray or satin finish spray. Cover the egg with a very light first coat and let it dry. Two more light coats should do it. Krylon or Deco-Art Americana sprays work well. Delta Ceram-Coat makes a water-based satin varnish that you can brush on—perfect for use inside.

The paint and optional supplies like straw hats, beads, hot glue and a hot glue gun can be purchased at most craft stores. The small flowers are made from clay and flower molds. The flowers are oven-baked (follow the directions on the product label), hand-painted and hot-glued to the hats and bases.

I have included the pattern for the sock caps you see on some of the birds (see Chapter 9). The caps are made from cotton knit or neck ribbing because it stretches. You can purchase this kind of material at any fabric store. These little caps seem to be very popular and add a fun look to the finished chirpers.



Wood Cuts

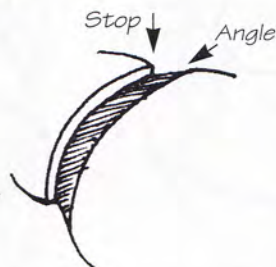
I have developed my own style of carving. After learning some of the techniques of many experts, I just adjusted them to my own style. You can develop your own style, too, by adjusting the following techniques to what is comfortable for you.

Two-thumb push cut

I have discovered that by holding my egg in my left hand and my knife in my right hand, I can add my left thumb to the back side of the knife blade. This gives me total control of every cut I make. (You may want to purchase a leather thumb guard to use on that left thumb for more comfort.) Many times, this method has kept me from cutting myself. The question I get asked most is... "How many times have you cut yourself?" Answer..."Never!" No scars yet!

Stop cut (scoring or slicing)

This is a cut made straight down into the wood to act as a "stop." This cut is used in combination with the angle cut.



Angle cut

Using the side of the blade, make a cut at an angle right into the stop cut. Make sure to clean off all of the chips at the stop cut to avoid the wood breaking where you don't want it to break.

Shaving (paring)

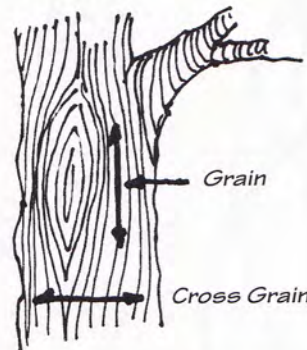
This is my descriptive term for removing as little wood as possible. Your knife must be sharp! I use the two-thumb pushing method and make rows of shaving around the egg in a continuous motion. I make little strokes that overlap the previous row of cuts, creating the hand-carved look. Some of you may prefer sanding the entire bird. I prefer not to. I spent time putting those carved strokes there; I don't like to sand them away.

Wood Grain

I have found that the grain of the wood (the striped pattern) on basswood eggs is consistent. The grain of the wood is the direction in which the tree grows. Look at your egg, you will observe one side has vertical stripes (fig. 1); the other side has wavy, oval lines (fig. 2). I choose to carve on the striped side, especially with the detail and fine work on the beak.

Make yourself familiar with the direction of the grain on the egg itself (fig. 3). By carving in the direc-

tion of the arrows, you will avoid taking out chunks of wood or removing wood you don't want to remove. Cutting across the grain usually causes the knife to drag. If you carve with the grain, you will have fewer problems. *Note:* Some basswood has very close grain. It will be smoother but harder to carve.



Eggstraordinary Note

Never, never carve toward the hand holding the egg. Try to keep that left index finger behind the egg. A knife can cause major damage. But don't be fearful. Developing a healthy respect for your carving tools will help you to eliminate accidents.

Most accidents happen because of carelessness or fatigue. Remember to give yourself a break occasionally. Stop. Have a cup of coffee. Step back and admire what you have done. The more you carve, the better you get.... So keep carving. You can't buy experience; you have to work to get it. So let's get hopping.

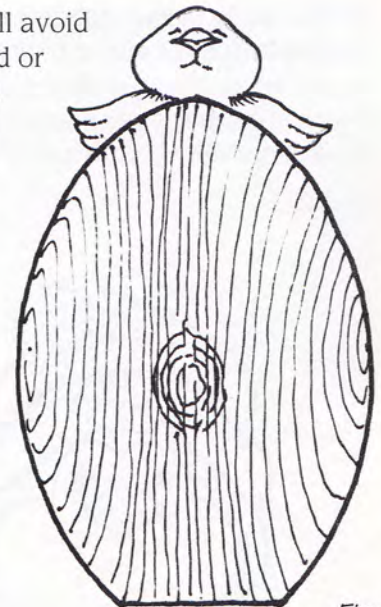


Fig. 1
Yes



Fig. 2
No

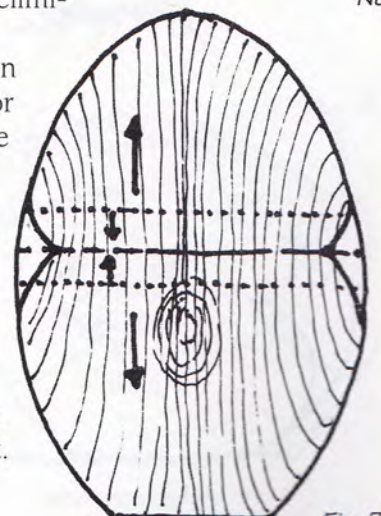


Fig. 3

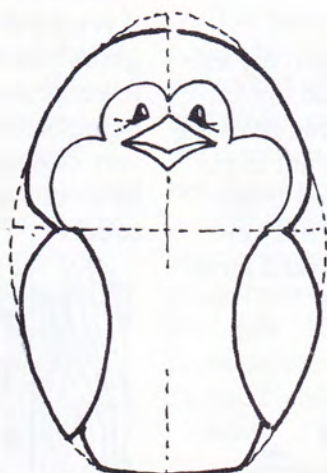
∞ Variations on a Theme...

In this book, I only present step-by-step instructions and patterns for carving whimsical birds from basswood eggs. You should be aware, however, that there are other basswood shapes out there that make marvelous chirpers. These drawings give you

an idea of how to carve whimsical birds from pear-shaped and apple-shaped basswood pieces. (You'll also find that basswood eggs are available not just in hen and goose sizes, but also in wren, ostrich and, even, dinosaur sizes.)



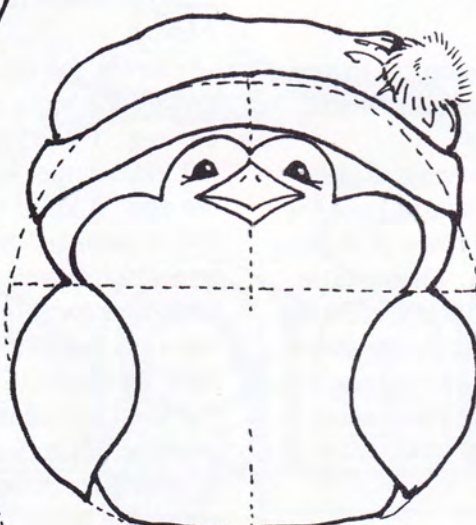
Pear Shape



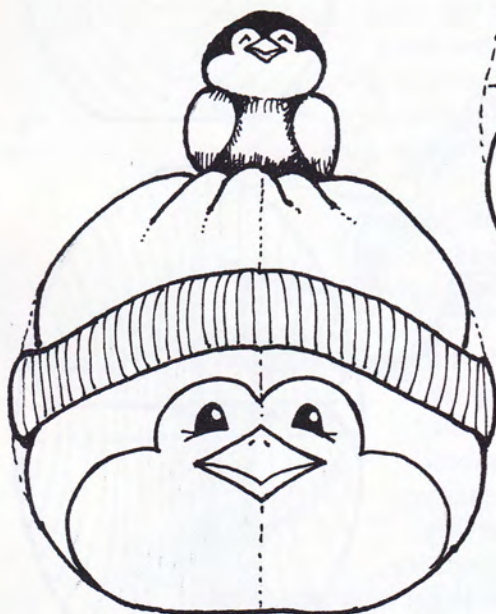
Hen Egg



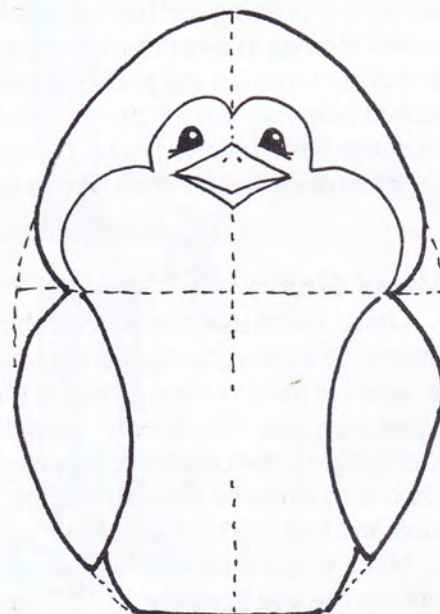
Pear, head only



Apple, upside-down head



Apple, upside-down-head



Goose Egg

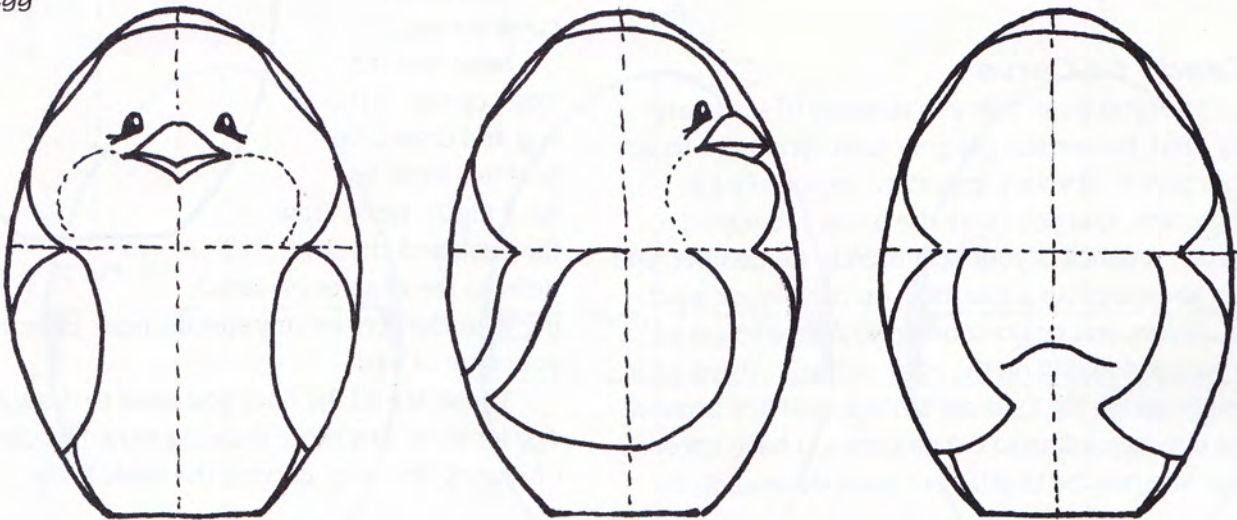
CHAPTER 3 • Basic Patterns... ∞

These are the basic bird patterns. The hen and goose egg patterns are shown here; the pigeon pattern is on page 13. Also available on the market are ostrich and dinosaur eggs. You may enlarge these basic sizes to fit these larger eggs. The

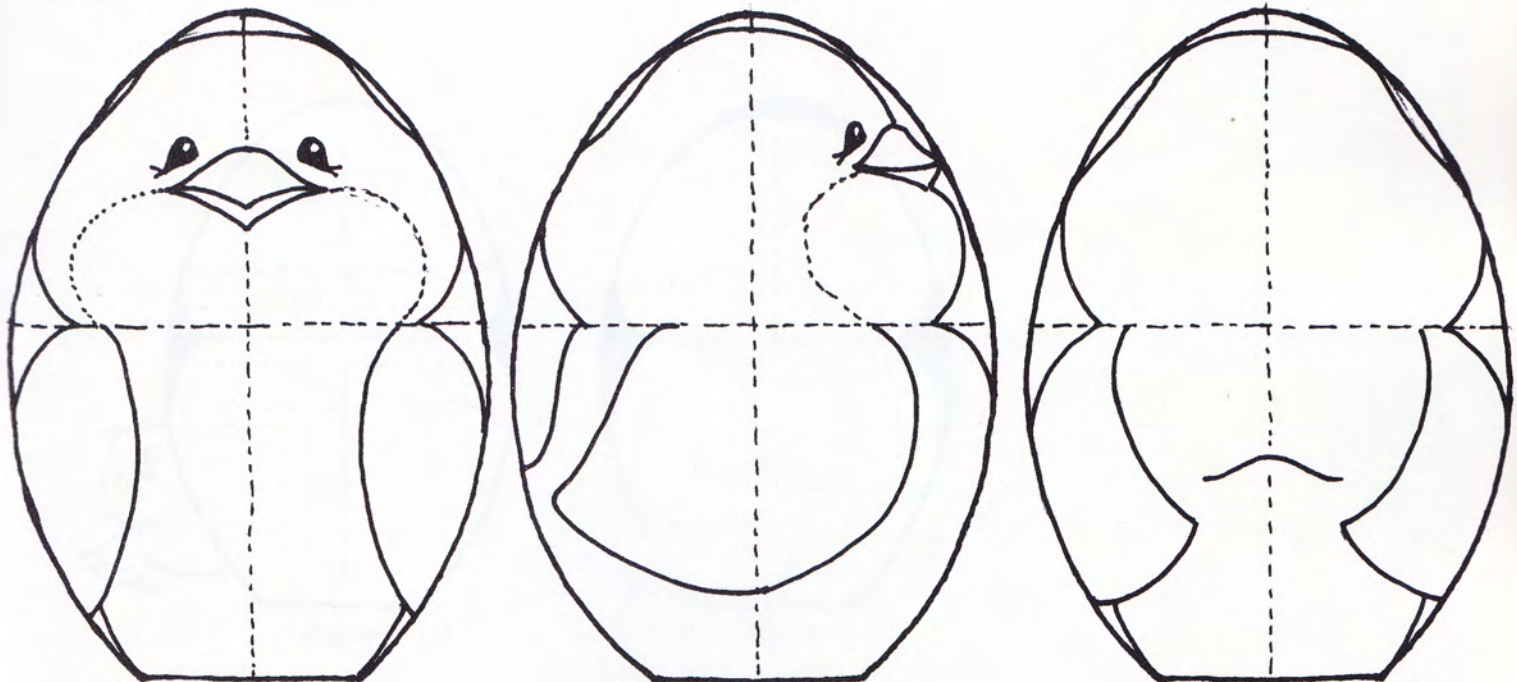
patterns can also be adapted to apples, pears and other basswood shapes.

This basic pattern can have many variations. Use your imagination and have great time creating your own birds.

Hen Egg



Goose Egg



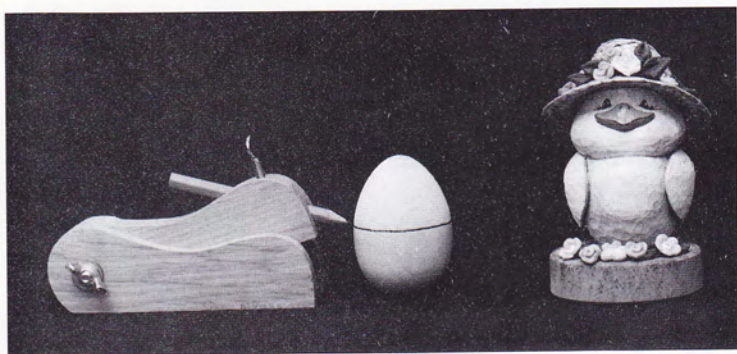


Fig. 1

Ready to Carve

I bet you think that you're ready to start carving. But, before you get your knife, you have to get your pencil. It's very important, especially for beginners, that you mark the areas you intend to carve. A pencil is your best friend! Remember, you can always erase a line, but you can't erase a cut.

Before you begin carving, you need to get an accurate drawing on the egg's surface. Using your height gauge (fig.1), draw a horizontal line around the egg, according to the pattern you have chosen. This line may be in different spots depending on

your pattern and the egg you're carving. I prefer to put a mark on my height gauge at the exact spot for the "hen egg," then I measure a goose egg and mark the gauge "goose egg." This way I have a consistent marking for the next time I carve an egg.

Now, find the exact center of the egg and draw a vertical line front and back (fig.2). Next, draw the beak and cheeks.

Refer to the chapter on detailing your chirpers for any specific beak patterns for your type of bird.

Those are all the lines you need to draw on the egg for now. Any more drawing would be carved off during first step, carving the basic body.

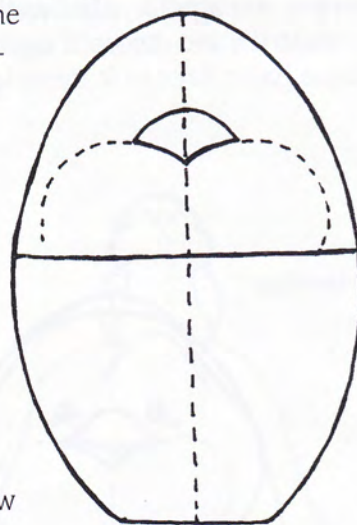


Fig. 2

Carving the Basic Body

Let's get hopping... Run the knife around the neckline twice, making a stop cut. In an upward stroke make 1/16" cut to the neckline (fig. 1). Score the neckline again, cleaning off all the chips. Make the second round of cuts another 1/16" deep toward the neckline (fig. 2). Repeat the same

process to the top half of the egg (fig. 3 and fig. 4). I turn my egg upside down to do this; it works best for me. Score neckline again. Do a third pass cutting both sides sharply in to the center, rounding off all of the edges (fig. 5). Finally, taper, clean up, and round off the point of the egg (unless a "tuft" is needed).

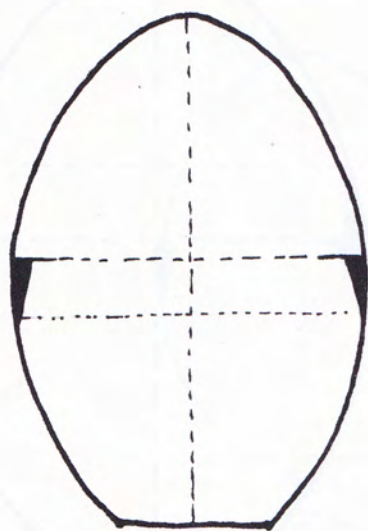


Fig. 1

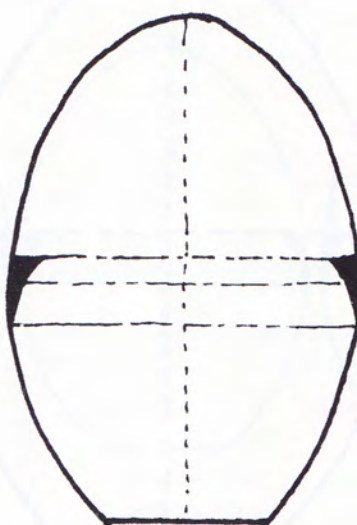


Fig. 2

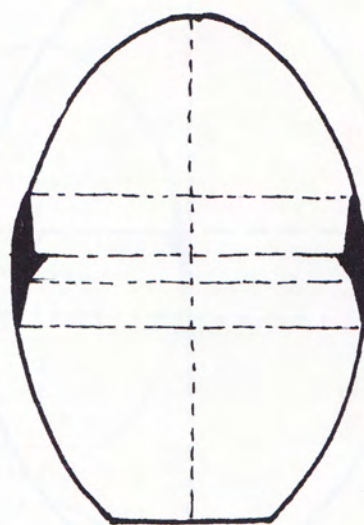


Fig. 3

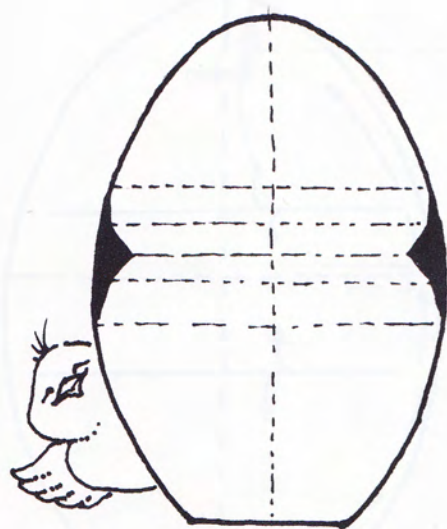


Fig. 4

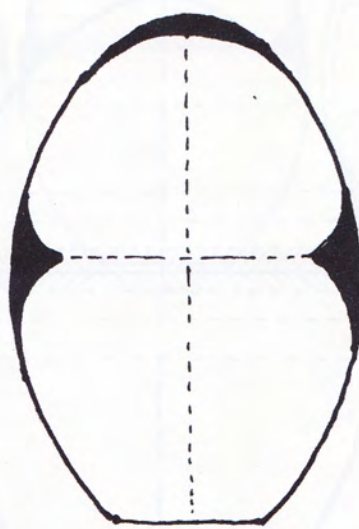


Fig. 5

Goose Eggs

Carving the goose egg is the same as carving the hen egg; however, since it's much larger, I thought it would be helpful to show the carving and the grain direction for you. Fig. 6 shows the grain lines of the goose egg. Carve in the direction of the arrows. Fig. 1 through fig. 5 show the basic steps.

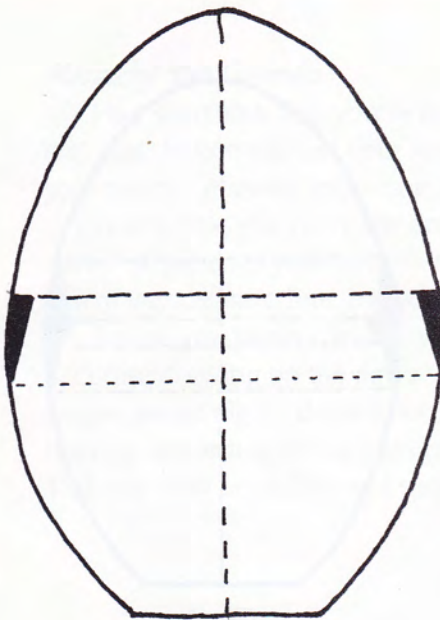


Fig. 1

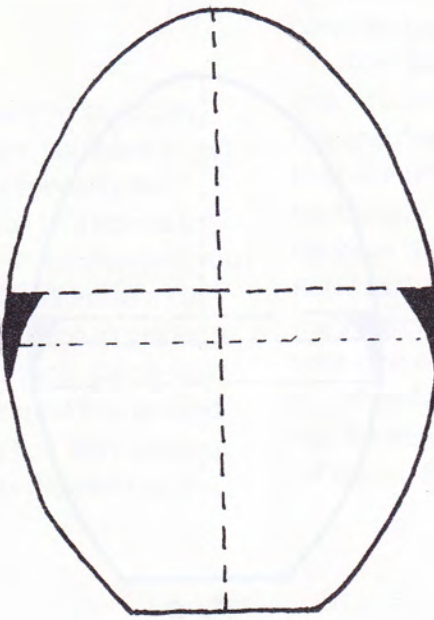


Fig. 2

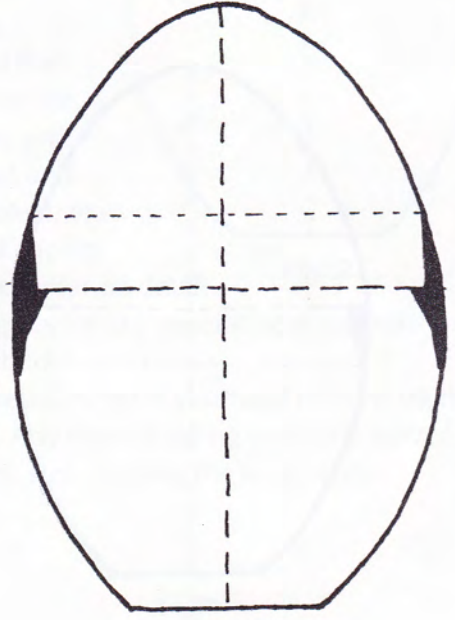


Fig. 3

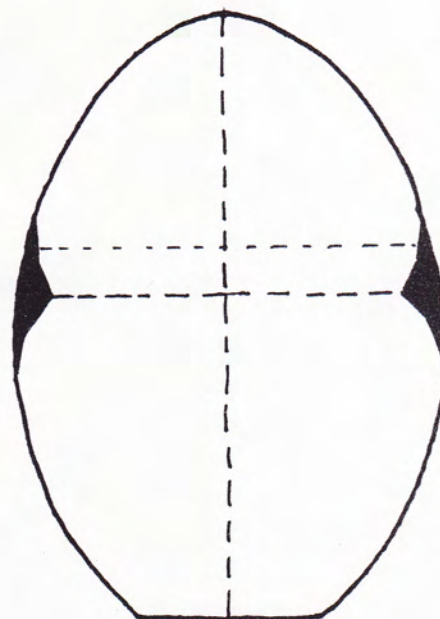


Fig. 4

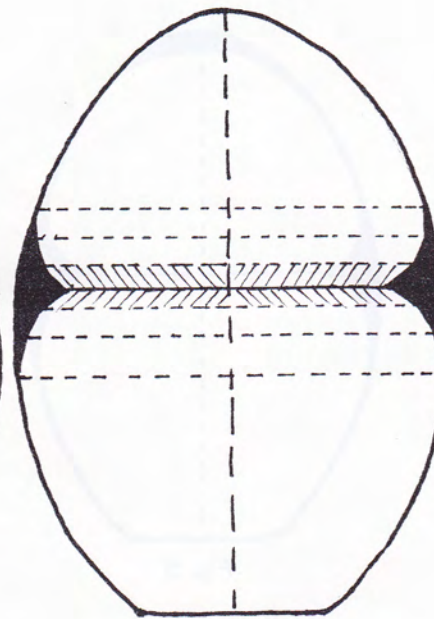


Fig. 5

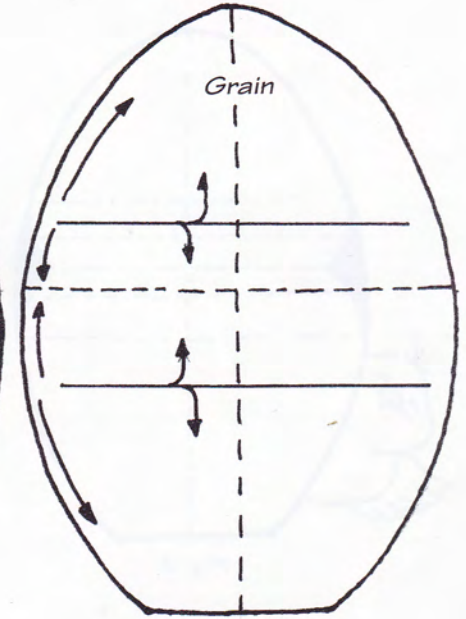
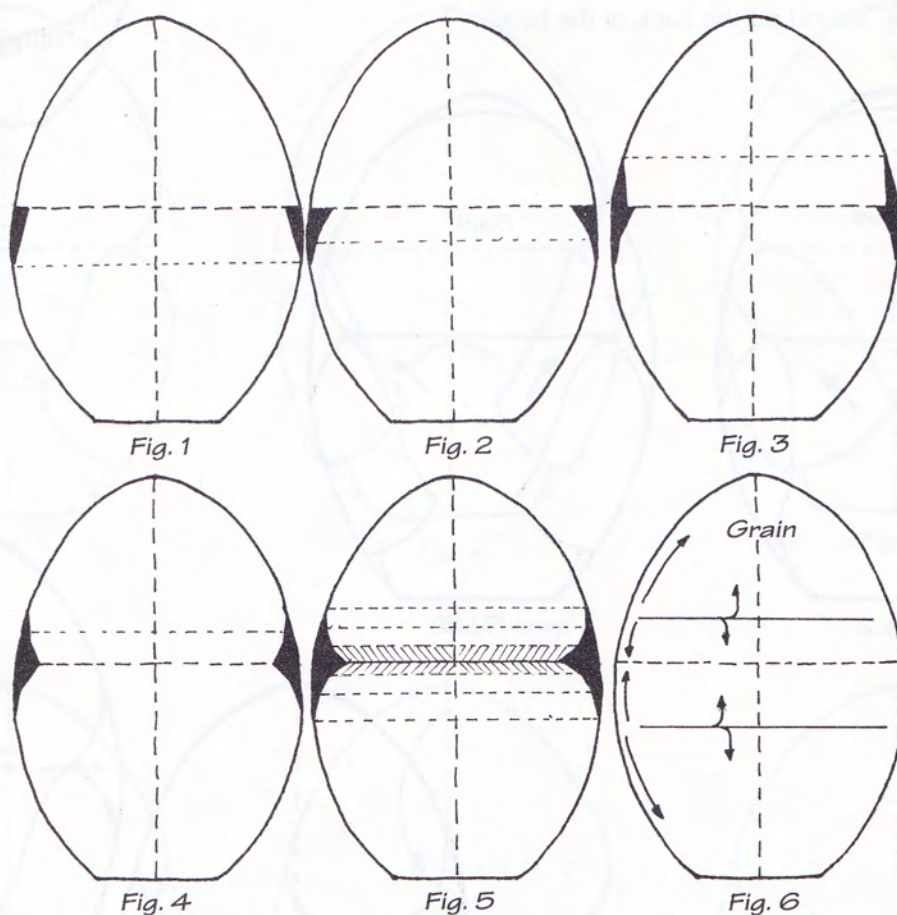


Fig. 6

Pigeon Eggs

Carving the pigeon egg is the same as carving the hen egg; however, since it's much smaller, I thought it would be helpful to show the carving and the grain direction for you. Fig. 6 shows the grain lines of the pigeon egg. Carve in the direction of the arrows. Fig. 1 through fig. 5 show the basic steps.



Carving the Wings and the Tail

The second step after carving the basic body is to carve the wings. Use a stop cut to score the wing lines. Then remove wood from under the wings, remembering the direction of grain lines (fig. 1). A 1/8" deep cut is sufficient. Taper your cuts toward the breast, and round and deepen the cuts where the breast, wing and head meet (fig. 2 and fig. 3).

Some wing variations (see the diagrams on the next page) call for a tail. At the fullest spot between back wings, carve a tail by making a "J" shaped cut upward then tapering it toward the neck (fig. 4 and fig. 5). Round off the back of the head.

Any area of raw wood that has not been carved should now be shaved off.

If there is any further shaping to do, include it in the shaving process. We'll leave the beak for last.

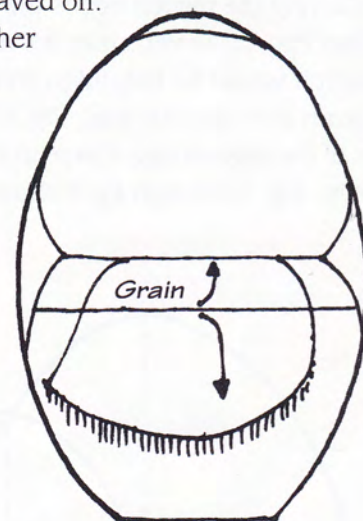


Fig. 1

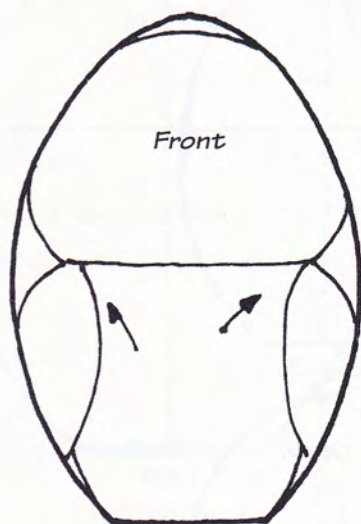


Fig. 2

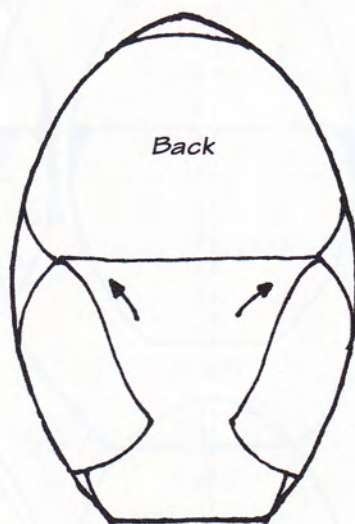


Fig. 3

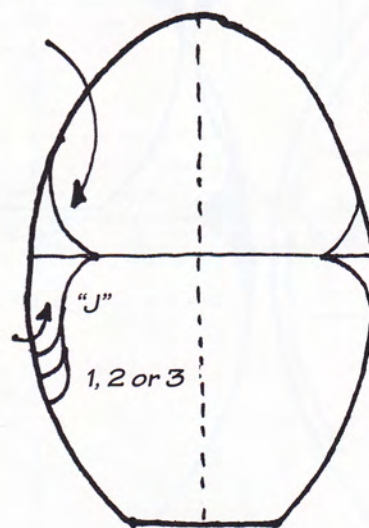


Fig. 5

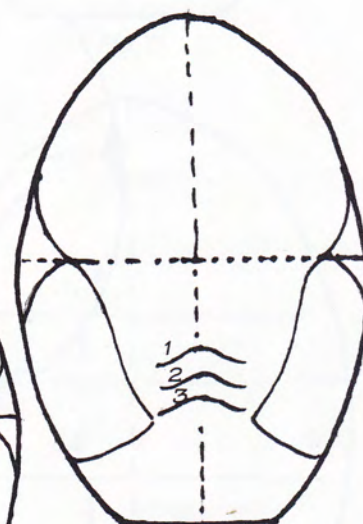


Fig. 4

Wing Variations

Choose whichever wing style you like. It really doesn't matter. I find that the first two are the easiest. Variations #1 and #2 need a tail. Also, notice that #4 has a higher arch at the shoulder; #1, #2 and #3 are a bit lower. It's your choice. They are whimsical you know!

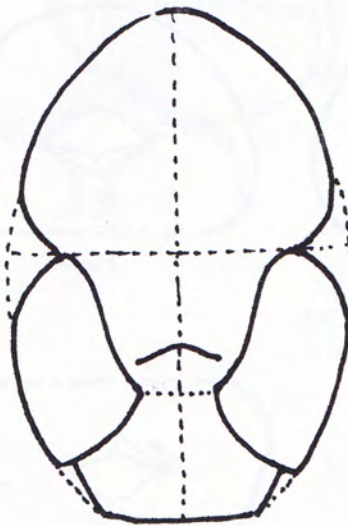


Fig. 1

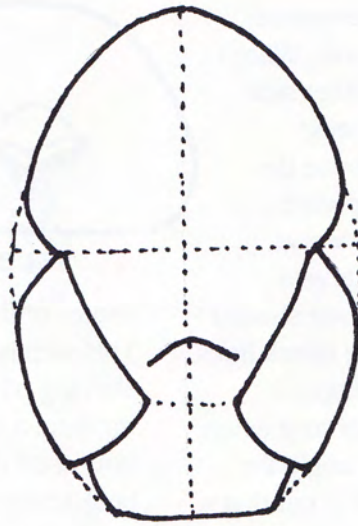


Fig. 2

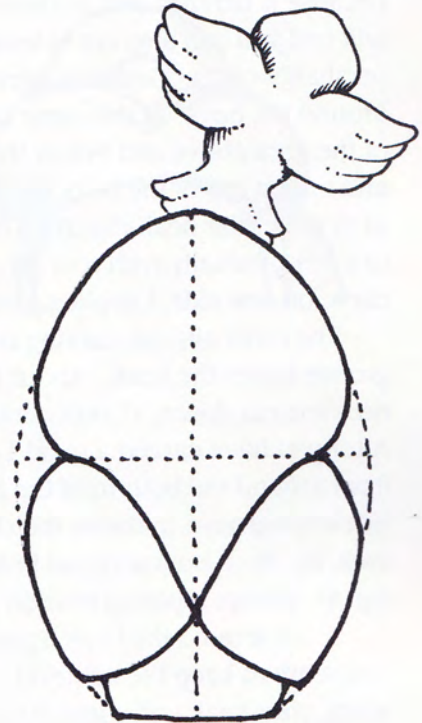


Fig. 3

Back views

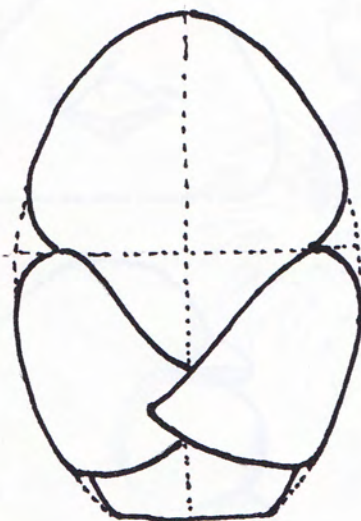


Fig. 4

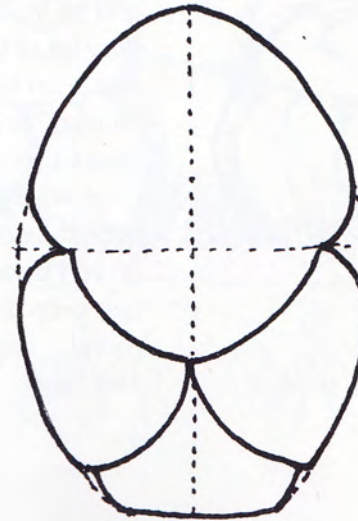


Fig. 5

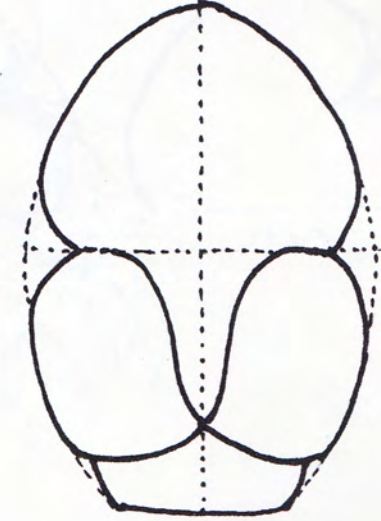


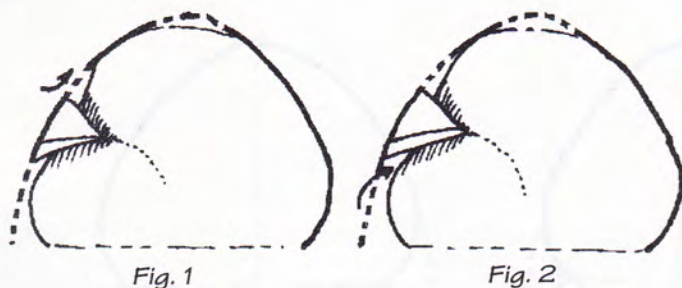
Fig. 6

Carving the Beak

Begin by scoring around the entire beak. All of the cuts will be upward, because of the grain. The first cuts will be just a shaving; be careful not to knock off the corners of the beak. Score around the entire beak again. I use a curved-tip knife because it handles well in these tight areas. You will find you can also cut sideways across the grain on shallow cuts. Continue carving the wood around the beak. At the same time consider the rest of the area above and below the beak. Curve in and out on top of the beak (fig. 1) and from out to in under the beak (fig. 2). Always remember to taper gradually with rounding in mind. What I carve on one side, I duplicate on the other side.

The most difficult carving is the cheek groove under the beak. About 1/4" above the neckline cut down; all other cuts go upward. After you have carved a good 1/16" of wood from around the bottom of the beak, carve a sideways groove to divide the cheeks (see shaded area, fig. 3). Also, carve out behind the cheek lines (fig. 4), always tapering roundly in and up.

Score around the beak again; make sure when you score to keep the cut level. If you angle the score, your beak will come out smaller... but that's OK, too. I've even knocked off a beak corner—just knock off the other one to match. I've never thrown a bird away yet!



Continue removing wood from the beak area in very small amounts. When you have removed 1/8" of wood all around the beak, you are ready to shape the beak. Carve all wood from the corners of the beak to the center. Turn the bird upside down. Angle your knife, and cut corner to center 1/16". Turn the bird right side up and "pull" a cut 1/16" on the other side to complete the bottom of the beak. Next, at the corner of the top of the beak, angle your knife and begin to taper the beak toward the centerline. You will not be carving wood from the



Fig. 3

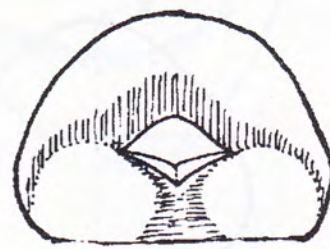
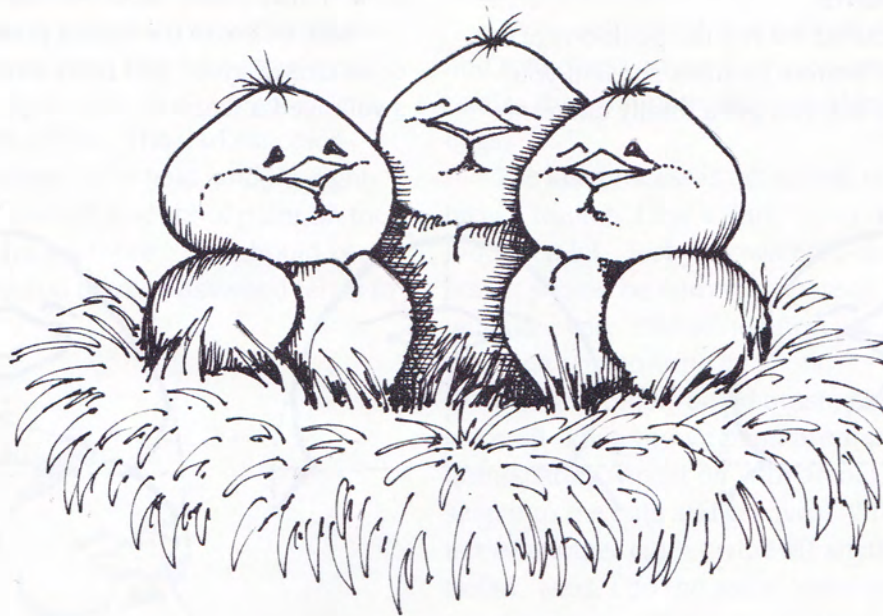
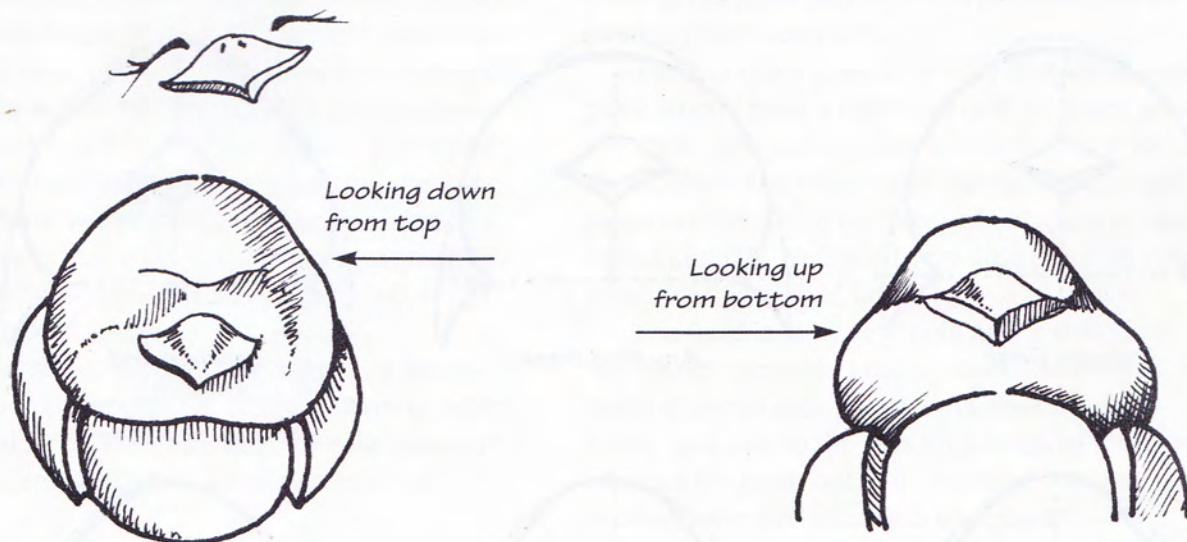


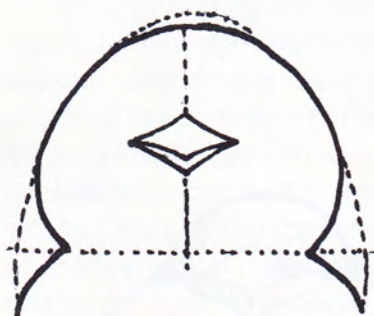
Fig. 4

center of the beak yet. This step is more like shaving off just a minimal amount. Round off the top of beak toward the head. Now you can see the basic beak. With a few more tapering strokes, it will be finished. The very tip of the beak has been barely shaved, as have the cheek tips. Once you have finished one beak, any others you do will be a breeze. Just keep in mind... round... chubby... and cute.

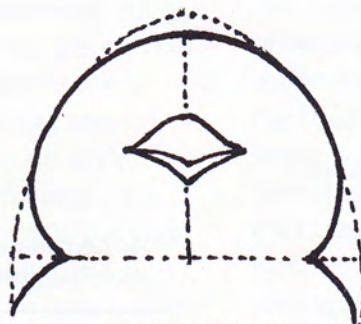


Finished beak

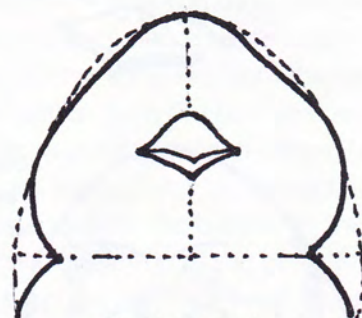




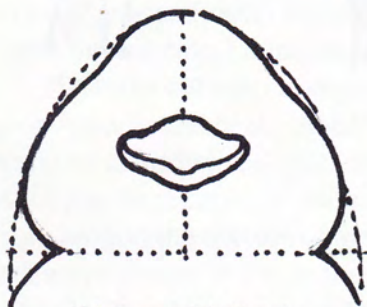
Penguin Beak



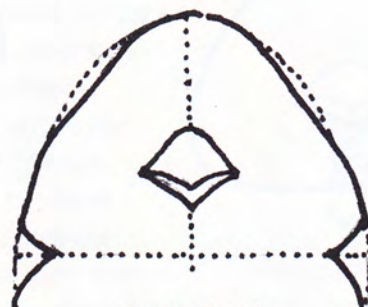
Any Bird Beak



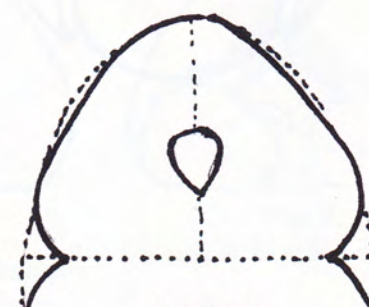
Cardinal and
Blue Jay



White or Mallard
Duck Bill



Eagle Beak



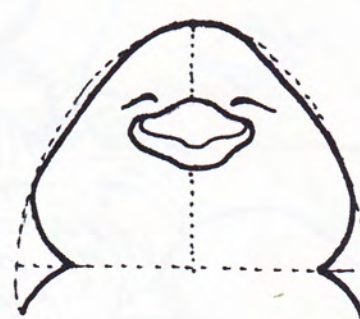
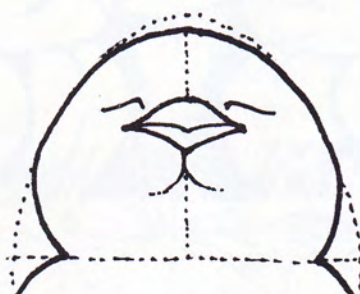
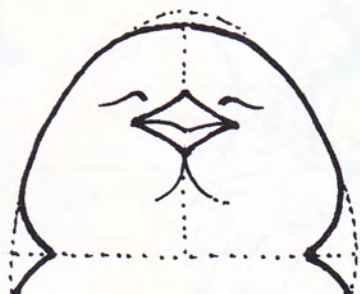
Owl Beak

Beak Variations

Above are pictured the regular positions of the beaks. But, as the bottom pictures show, if you shift the beak up a bit, you get a totally different

look. I also added chubby cheeks under the beak.

With beaks in the higher position, I usually draw closed eyes. The birds look as if they just swallowed a worm!



CHAPTER 5 • Painting Notes... ∞

I've painted clothing, ball caps, fabric, furniture, canvas, children's faces, floors, gourds, murals on walls and now wood carvings. I've been doing this for as long as I remember. I guess you could say I've painted on a few surfaces. I have developed my own techniques, not necessarily the right ones, but they have worked for me. One observation I have made is that it doesn't matter how great you carve, if your carving has a poor paint job, it will spoil the effect.

I use nothing toxic. All the paints are water-based, even the antiquing, or brown tinting, which is the final step. The antiquing will take your bird from amateur-looking to a real professional percher.

The painting process I use really doesn't take much more time. It will take a little practice to get the look you want, but you'll be prouder of your finished product. You'll want to paint anything you can get your hands on.

I use any acrylic craft paint that happens to be on sale. They all do about the same thing. I use a lot of paint, so when I find a color I like, I buy three or four bottles. It's much easier to use the paint straight from the bottle than to be constantly mixing colors. I find it is difficult to get the same color twice. The paint always seems to dry a little darker than it was when it was wet. Don't forget you can always add white to lighten a color.

I usually layer the colors. The darkest color goes on first, the medium color next, and the lightest color last. Squirt a small amount of paint on the pallet. You can always get more. This should keep the paint from getting too thick. Basswood tends to

soak up the paint, but that's no problem; just let the paint dry between coats.

The first color goes on solid. I add water to the paint when I have a tight spot or if the paint gets too thick. The second coat is usually just a lighter shade of the first color—just enough to highlight areas like the top of the wing, cheeks, top of head, breast and tail. You need very little paint on your brush for this second layer.

The third layer is very light and is done with a "dry brush" method. I use a ruined brush, one that's all flared out. If you don't have a ruined brush, give one to the kids for a week or forget to wash all the paint out of it. Some of my favorite brushes have become my dry brushes.

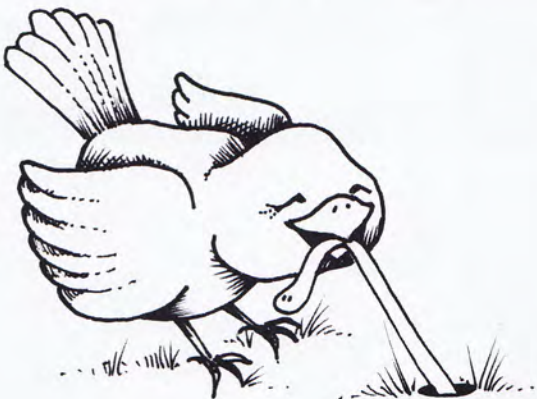
Do not wet the brush. Dip it in the paint and brush most of the paint off on a paper towel. Tap it just a few places where you want highlights or use a light circular motion on top of the second color.

Now you need to make feather colors. A bird field guide will help you determine which colors to use. Paint light colors over dark colors. I always paint the beak last, in this order: first paint the whole beak solid gold, then paint the top of the beak a lighter gold, and finally paint the tip of the beak light yellow.

These painting techniques create a lot of depth and roundness on the carving. Most people don't realize these chirpers are carved from wooden eggs.

The last process is antiquing, or adding a brown toning. I use a dark brown paint and water it down a lot. Test your watered-down brown paint first; it should be fairly transparent. If it's too thin, it will have very little or no effect. If it's too thick, you won't be able to wipe it off.

Using another ruined brush, I brush the watered-down brown paint around the neck and immediately wipe it off with an old cloth. It will seep into the cuts and grooves. With the wet corner of another cloth I wipe off anything I don't want tinted. Next, I do the same under the wings, one wing at a time. Then I do the area under the beak. Let the antiquing dry and then check the carving. If you want the antiquing darker, repeat the process.



Eyes

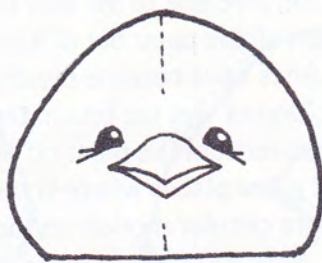
All of the faces are drawn with permanent markers, with the exceptions of the eagle, the owl and the crow. Those three birds have small, black, 4mm bead eyes. I set the eyes into deep gouged-out holes. You may use any of the examples shown here on any bird, or you might like to try your own version. Varying the placement of the eyes will

create different looks. I used the same beak on these examples so you can see what a difference the eye placement can make.

To finish the eyes, I use a toothpick and put a tiny dot of white paint in the upper right of each eye. That gives the eye the "sparkle" it needs. It's a secret that brings the eyes to life.



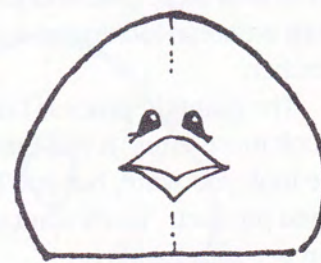
Close eyes



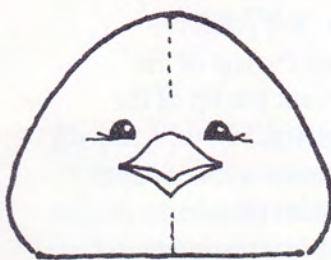
Wide eyes



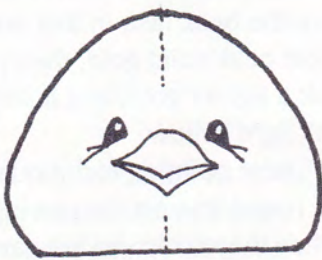
Small eyes



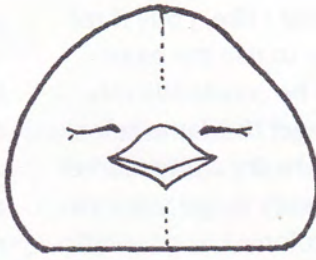
Goofy eyes



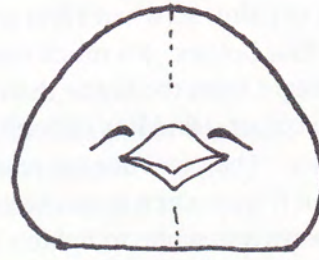
Straight-on



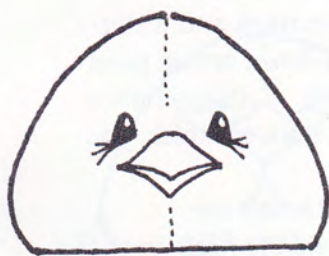
Slanted down



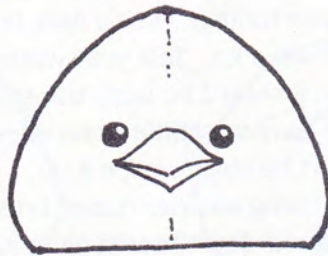
Closed - straight



Closed - slanted



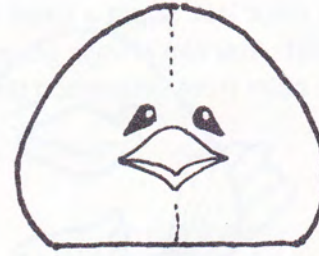
Arched eyes



Beady eyes

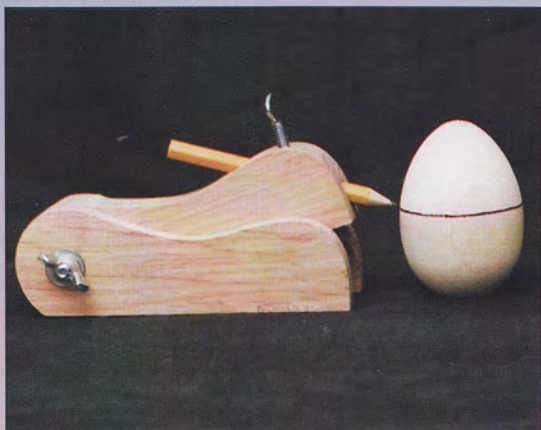


Contented

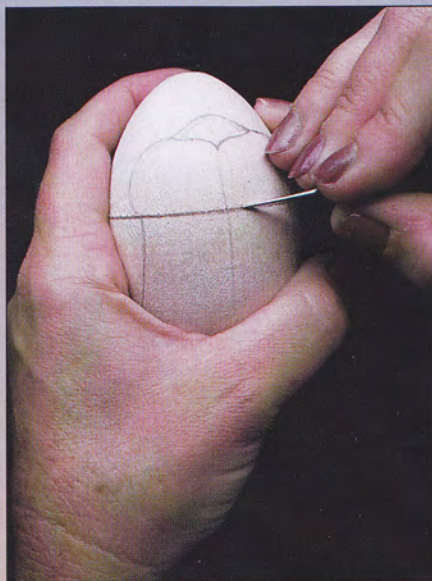


Droopy

CHAPTER 6 • Step-by-Step...



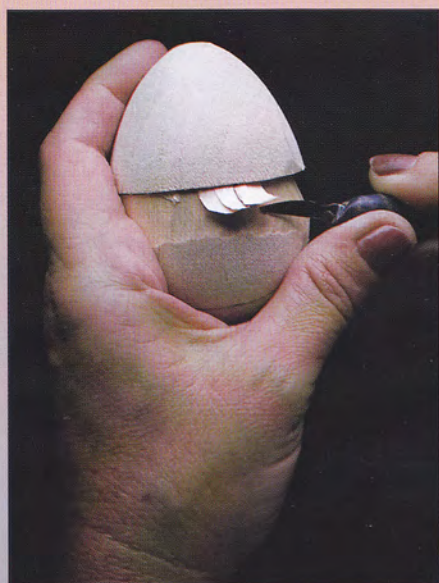
1 Before you begin carving, you need to — draw some horizontal and vertical lines on the egg's surface. Use a height gauge like my "gizmo" shown in the photograph to draw a horizontal line around the egg. This horizontal line makes the division between the head and the body and may be located at different levels depending on the size of your egg and the bird you are carving. Check your pattern for exact placement. A vertical line will help you place the beak and wings.



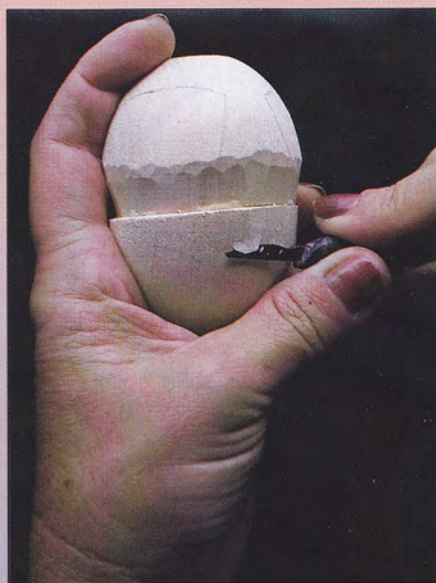
2 Let's get hopping. First, stop — cut the centerline. This will be the bird's neck. Run the knife around the centerline twice, making a stop cut. In the next few steps you will be making cuts toward this line, and the stop cut will keep you from removing too much wood.



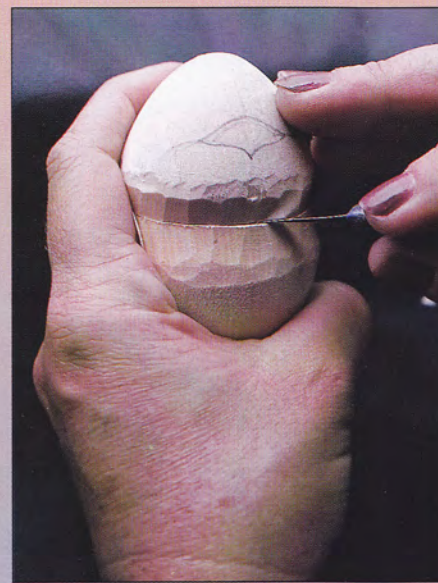
3 In an upward stroke, make — a slicing cut, 1/2 inch long and 1/16 inch deep.



4 Score the centerline again, — cleaning off all chips. Make another cut three-quarters distance from the start of the first cut, another 1/16 inch deep.



5 Repeat the same process on — the top half of the egg. I turn my egg upside down to do this, though you may be more comfortable working at a different angle.



6 Score the centerline one last — time.

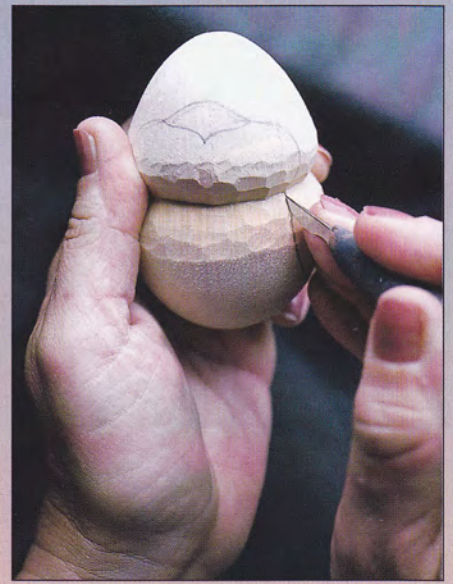
Step-by-Step Carving...



7 — Make a third pass cutting both sides sharply in to the center. This is most critical! Make sure the cut is deep. Round off all the edges, and then you're ready to move on to the next step.



8 — Now let's carve the wings. Use a pencil to draw on the wings, tail and cheeks. Remember that your pencil is your best friend. It may prevent a headache. Use it often.



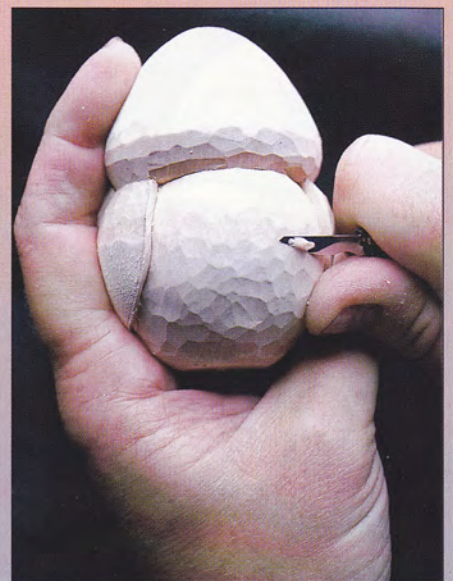
9 — When you have the wing lines accurately drawn, score the wing lines with a knife to make a stop cut. At this point, do not score the cheek or the beak lines.



10 — Now we are going to remove the wood from under the wings. Remember to pay attention to the direction of the grain as you do this step. Start with a 1/8 inch deep cut and remove wood up to the stop cuts you made for the wings.



11 — Taper your cuts toward the breast, then round and deepen the cuts where the breast, wing and head meet.



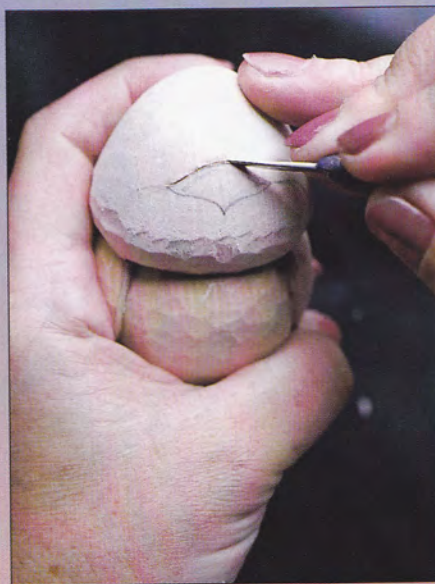
12 — Continue shaving wood from the breast and all the way down to the bottom of the egg. Remember to use small, controlled cuts to take off the wood.

Step-by-Step Carving...



13 Remove the wood from the back of the bird in the same fashion. At the fullest spot between the back wings, carve a tail by making a "J"-shaped cut.

When you have completed Step 13, take a look at your bird. Any areas of raw wood below the centerline that have not been carved should now be shaved off. If you have any additional shaping to do, include it in the shaping process.



14 On to the beak! Begin by scoring around the entire beak to make a stop cut. Because of the grain direction, all of the cuts will be made in an upward stroke.



15 First, remove a small amount of wood from all around the beak. These first cuts will be just a shaving. Be careful not to knock off the corners of the beak. A curved knife tip will help you get into these tight areas. You will find you can cut sideways across the grain on shallow cuts.



16 When you have carved a good 1/16 inch of wood away under the beak, carve a sideways groove to divide the cheeks under the beak.

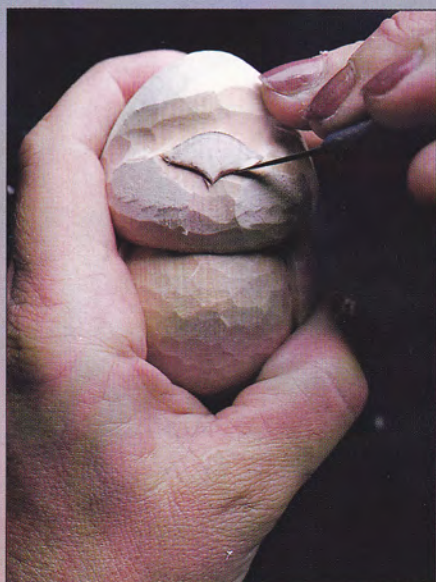


17 At this point, your carving should look like this. The most difficult area to carve is the cheek groove under the beak. About 1/4 inch above the neckline, cut down; all the other cuts go up.

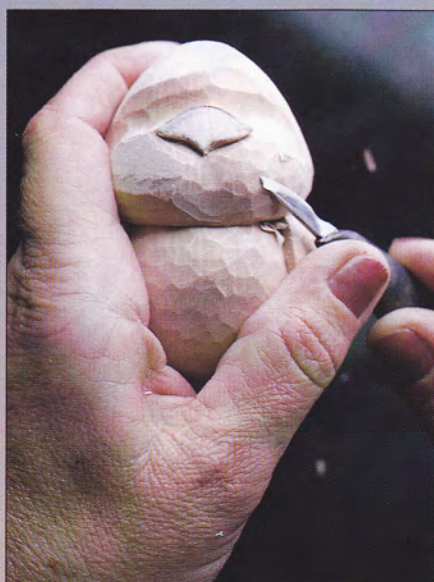


18 Now let's finish the beak. Remove a good 3/8 inch deep area of wood from behind the top of the beak. Also carve out the wood behind the cheek lines, always tapering roundly in and out.

Step-by-Step Carving...



19 Deepen all of the stop cuts around the beak. Make sure to keep the cuts level. If you angle the knife tip, the beak will be smaller than you intended. But that's ok. I've even knocked off a beak corner — just knock off the other one to match. I've never thrown a bird away yet.



20 Round the cheeks, removing small amounts of wood at a time. Very little wood has been removed from the high point of the cheeks. The sides of the cheek "roll" out toward the groove you cut along the cheek line.



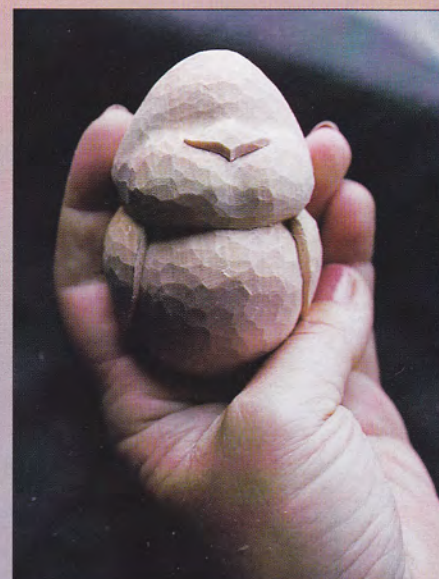
21 A side view of the bird shows how deep to cut when removing wood from behind the beak.



22 Angle your knife and make a 45 degree cut — angling in — along the bottom of the beak. Carve all wood from the corners of the beak to the center.

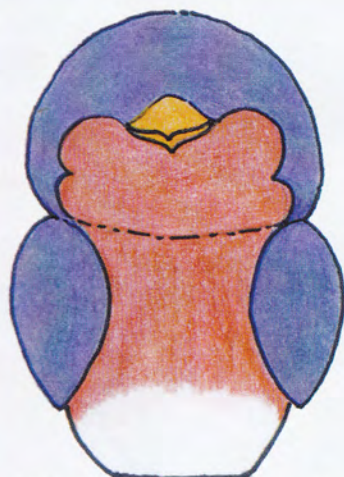


23 At the corner of the top of the beak, angle your knife and begin to taper the beak to the centerline. Now you can see the basic beak shape. A few more tapering strokes and it's finished.



24 Finally, use small cuts to shape the top of the head. Do any additional rounding, and your bird is ready to be painted.

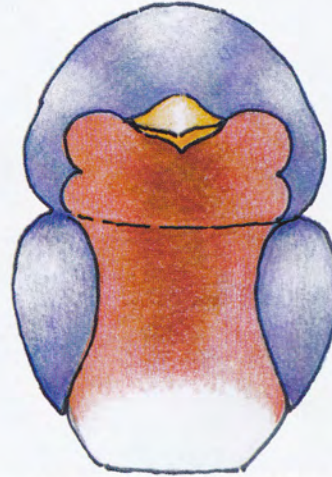
Step-by-Step Painting...



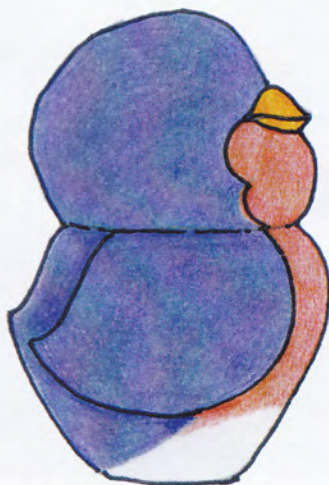
First coat — Breast, rust lightened with white



Second coat — Straight rust highlight on breast



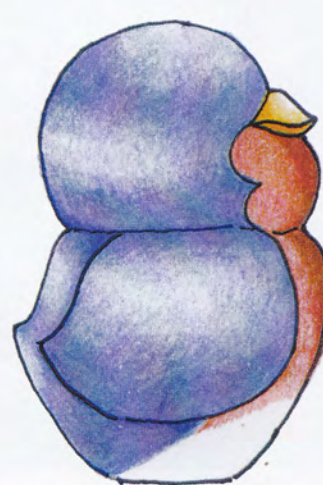
Third coat — Note highlights on beak, gold lightened with white



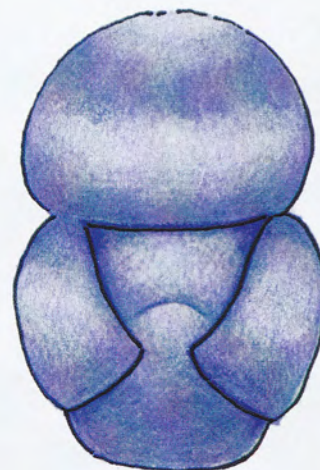
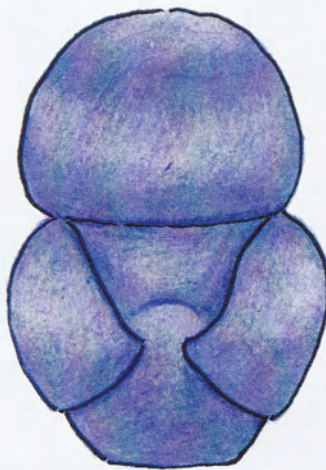
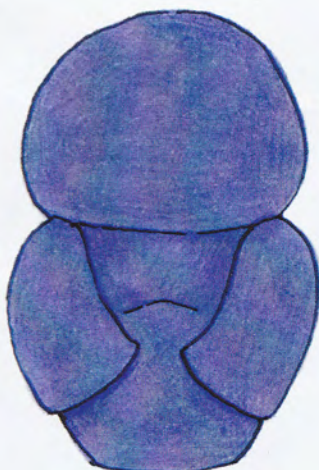
First coat — Bright almost royal blue

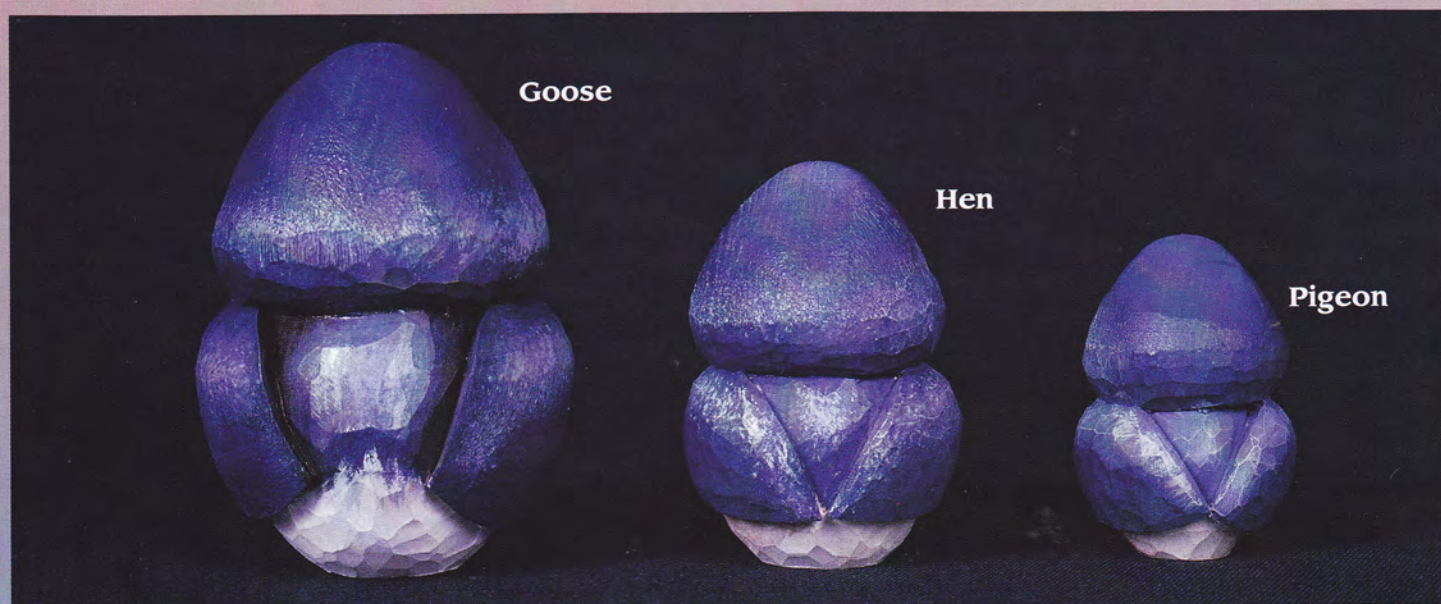
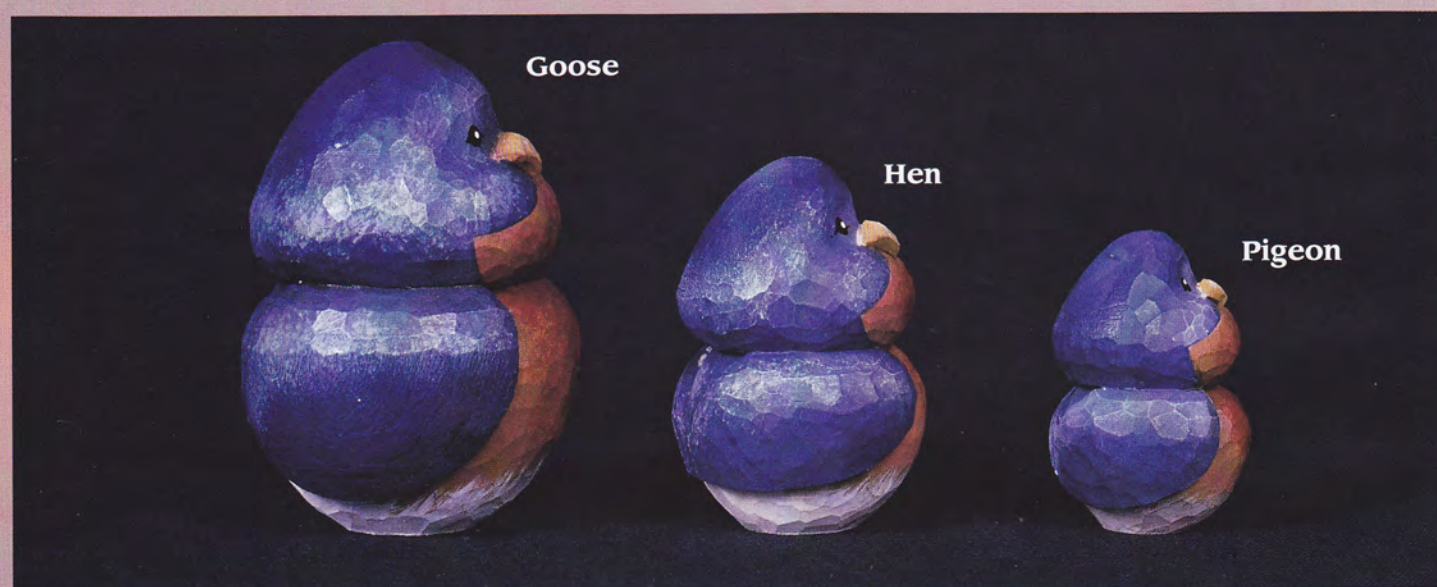
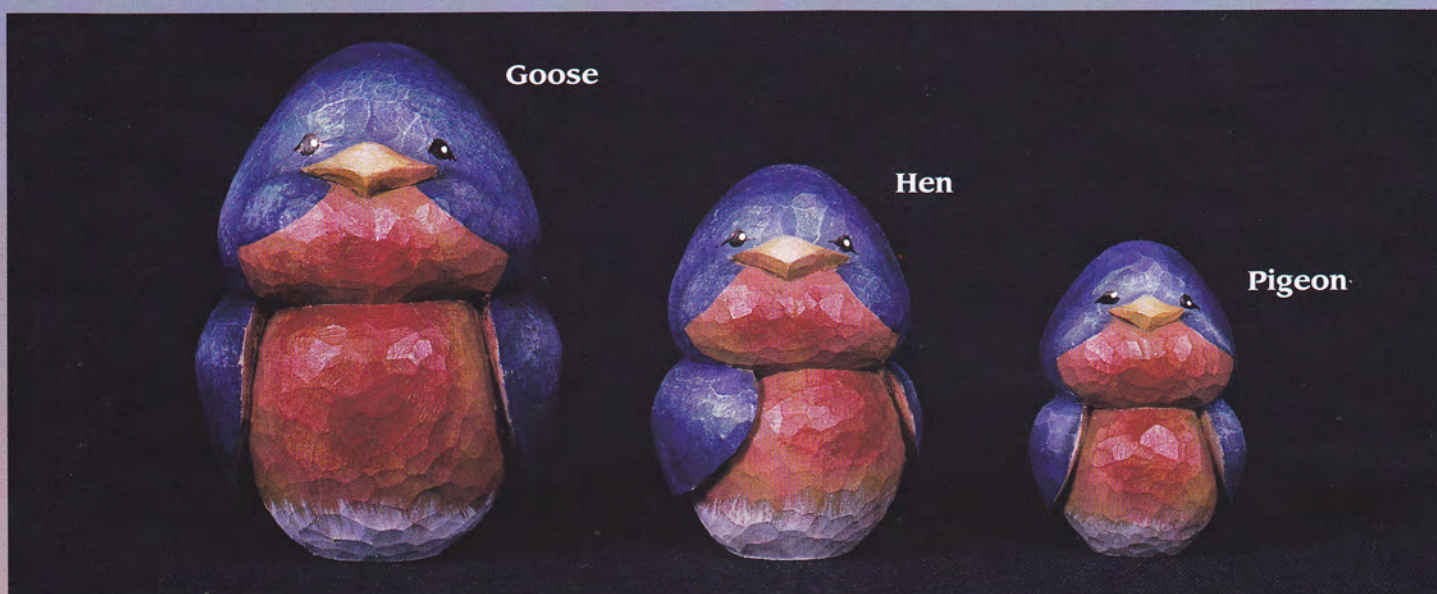


Second coat — Add small amount of white to blue

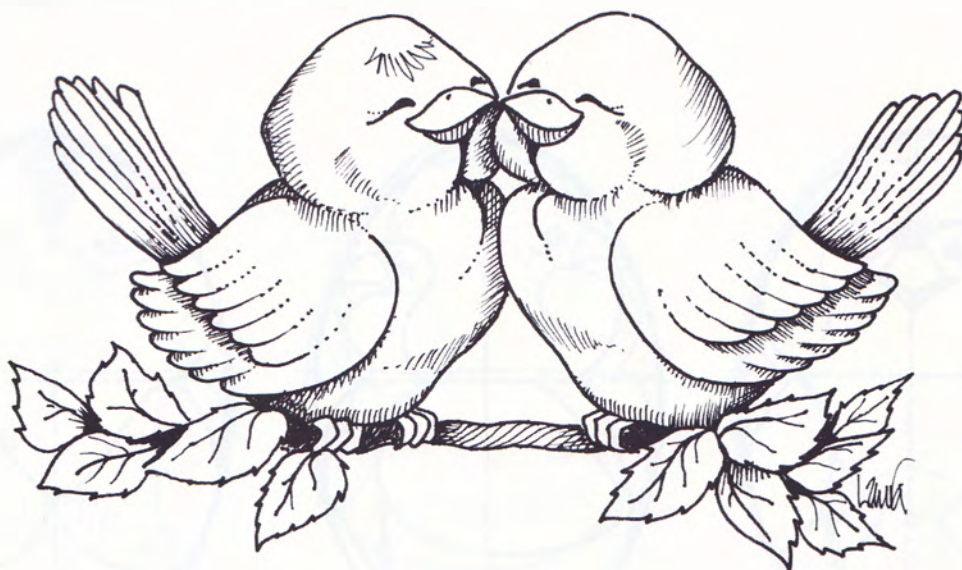


Third coat — Add more white for highlights





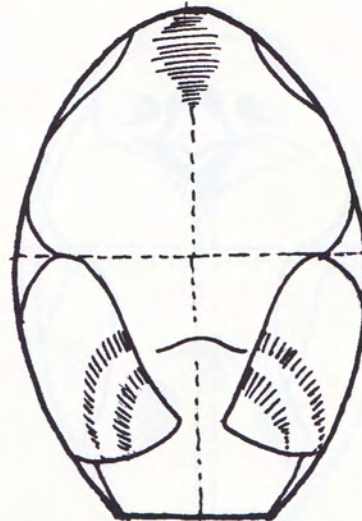
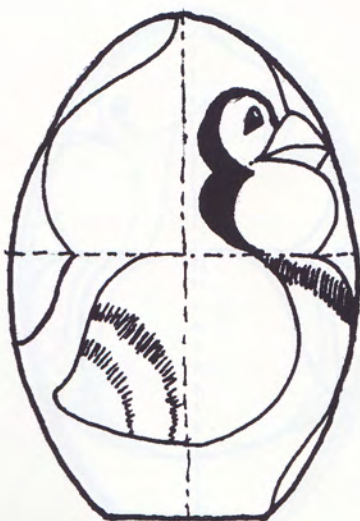
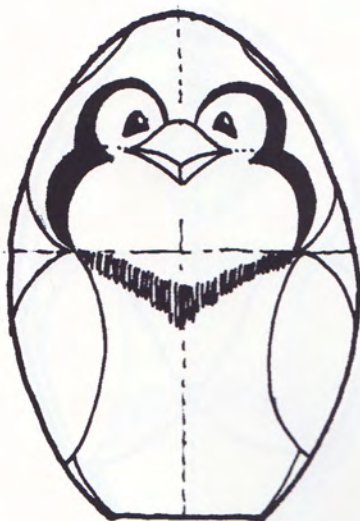
CHAPTER 7 • Detailing... ∞



Blue Jay... ∞

The blue jay uses the entire height of the egg. The back of the top of his head is grooved out to create his "tuft." His coloring is a variegated lavender blue from the top of his head to medium blue

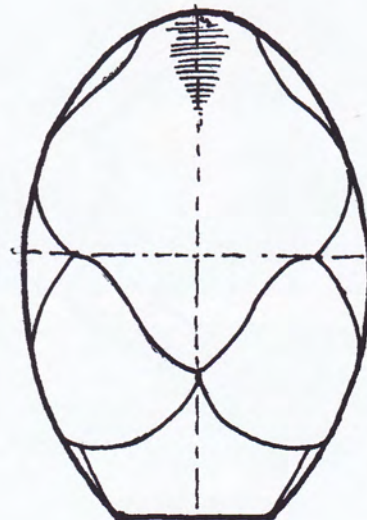
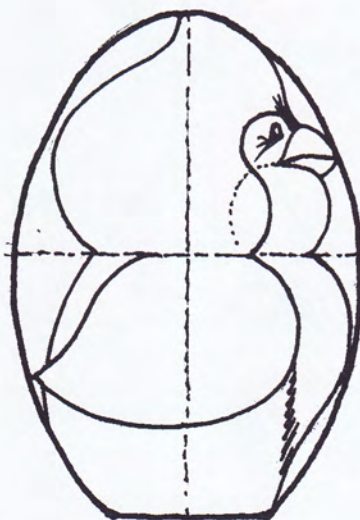
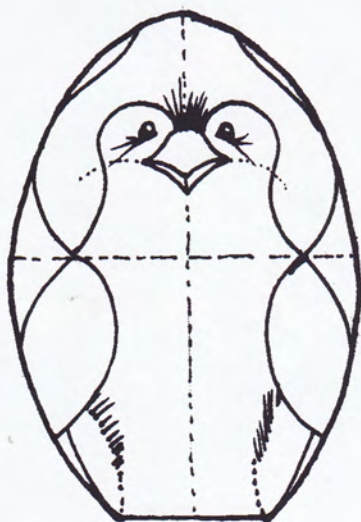
the closer you get to the middle wing and the bottom. His distinguishing black mask and black v-neck are obvious. He has a black beak.



∞ Titmouse...

The titmouse has a "tuft" made like the blue jay's tuft. The titmouse is a smaller bird; you may want to carve a little more off the sides of his head.

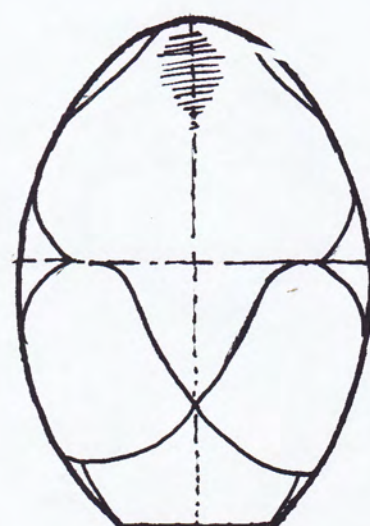
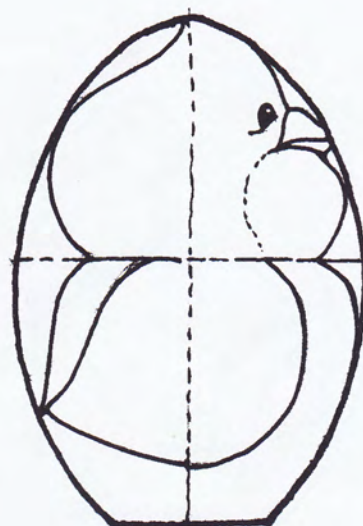
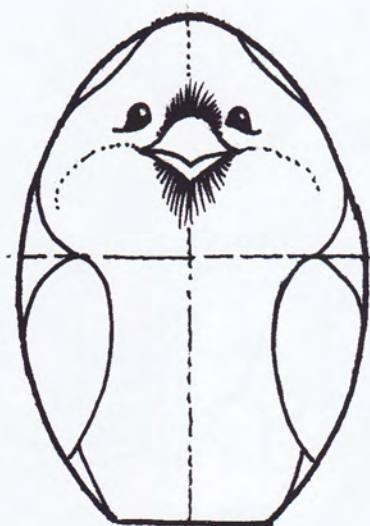
He is a variation of gray and white with a little dusty peach coloring under front wings toward his chest. He has a black beak.



∞ Cardinal...

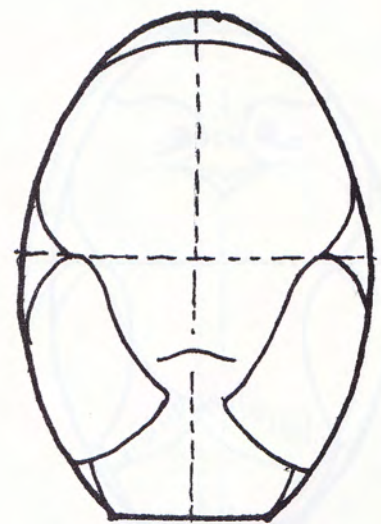
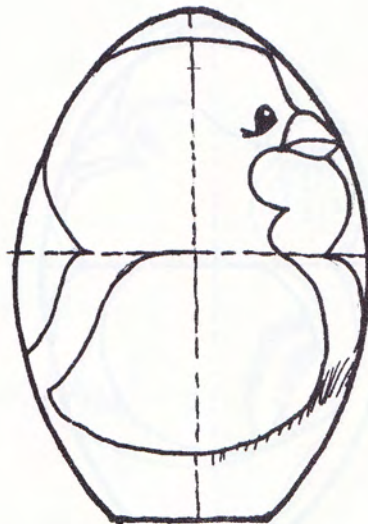
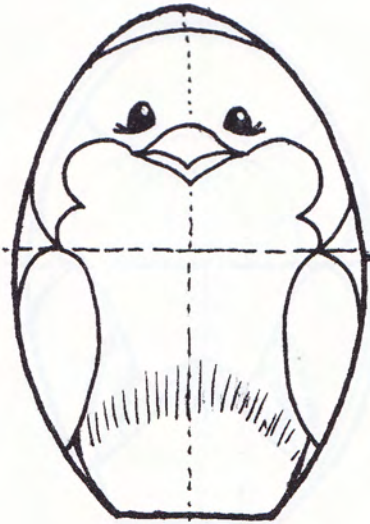
The cardinal is another "tufted" bird, using the full height of egg. The base coat is bright red. To highlight red you can't just add white paint; it's too

pink. Try adding a little yellow to make an orange/red color. Use a black marker to make the black marks above and below his orange beak.



This is my favorite bird. Use a bright, almost royal, blue for the base coat. Then add a small amount of white to the blue for the second coat. Just add more white for a lighter blue for his high-lights. Rust with white is the first coat on his breast,

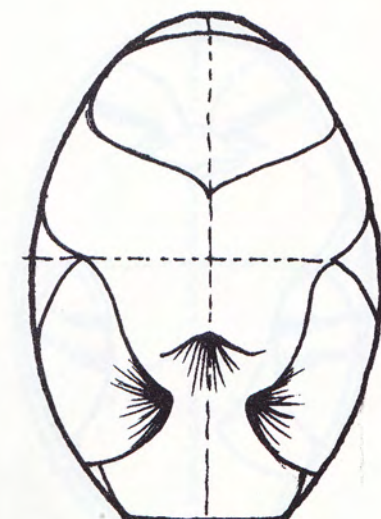
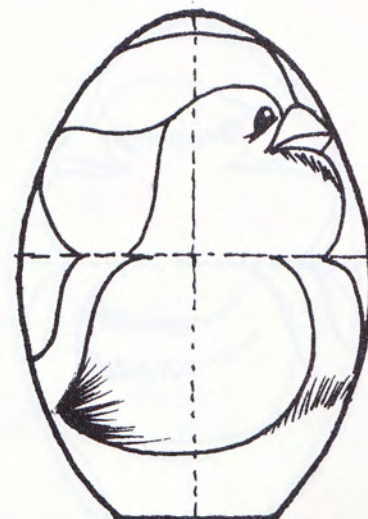
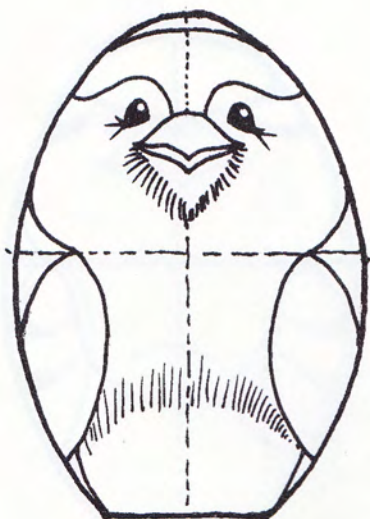
then paint straight rust to highlight breast. He has white under his wings and lower breast. Bluebirds actually have black beaks but I usually use a dull gold.



Chickadee...

The chickadee has a black cap. The rest of him is painted in various shades of gray. He has white cheeks and breast with dusty peach under the

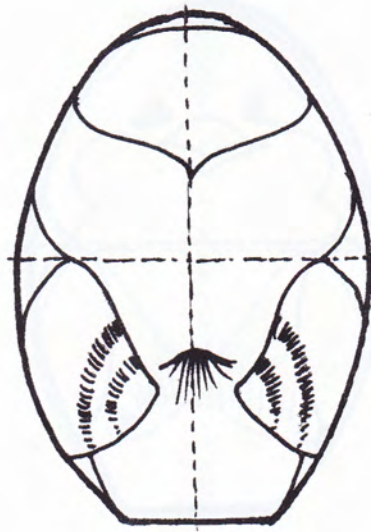
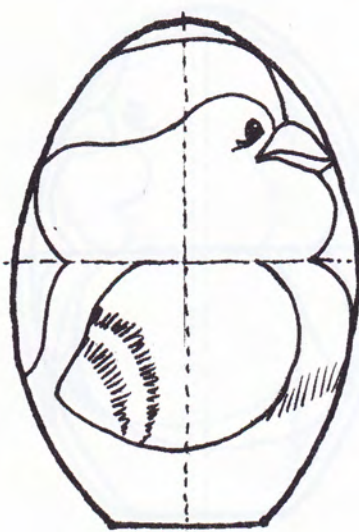
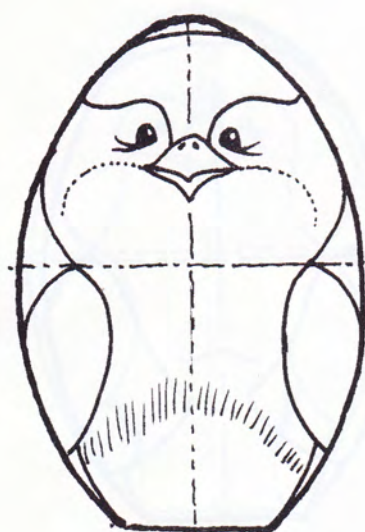
wings toward his breast. I use the black marker to put his "beard" under his beak. He has a black beak.



Goldfinch...

The finch is bright yellow with a black cap. His tail and wings are tipped with black and he has some white feathers. His lower front breast is white

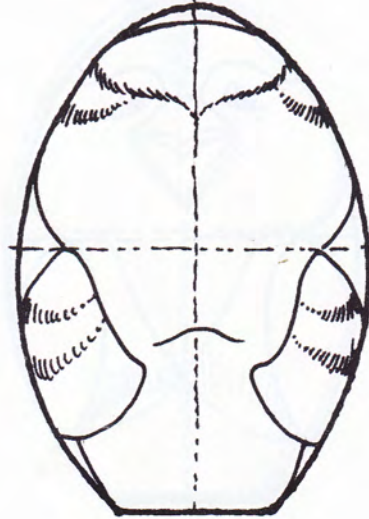
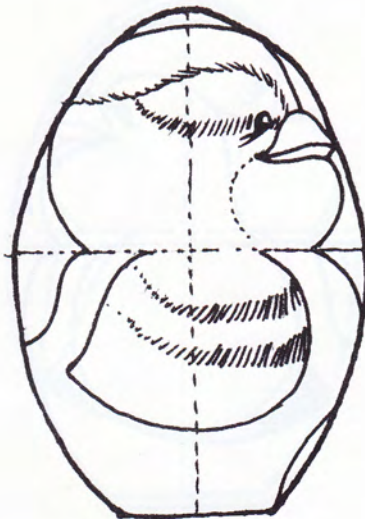
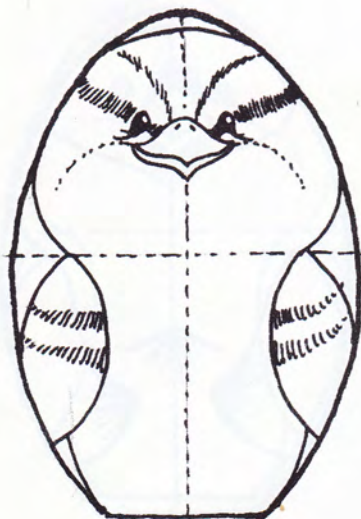
blended upward. The goldfinch has a yellow-gold beak tipped with black.



Sparrow...

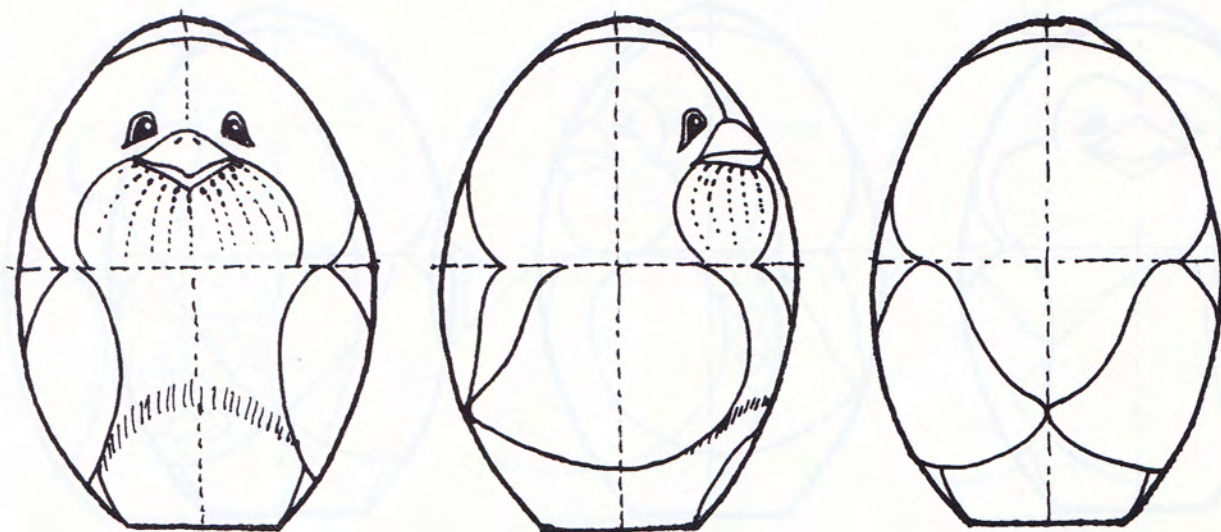
There are so many variations of sparrows. Usually, you are safe with a light brown body with dark brown, striped wings. Add a white breast and white

lower cheeks, plus a rust cap and brown-striped face. The sparrow has a black or gold beak.



The robin has a dark brown head and medium brown body. His breast is rust highlighted with light rust. His under beak is white speckled with brown

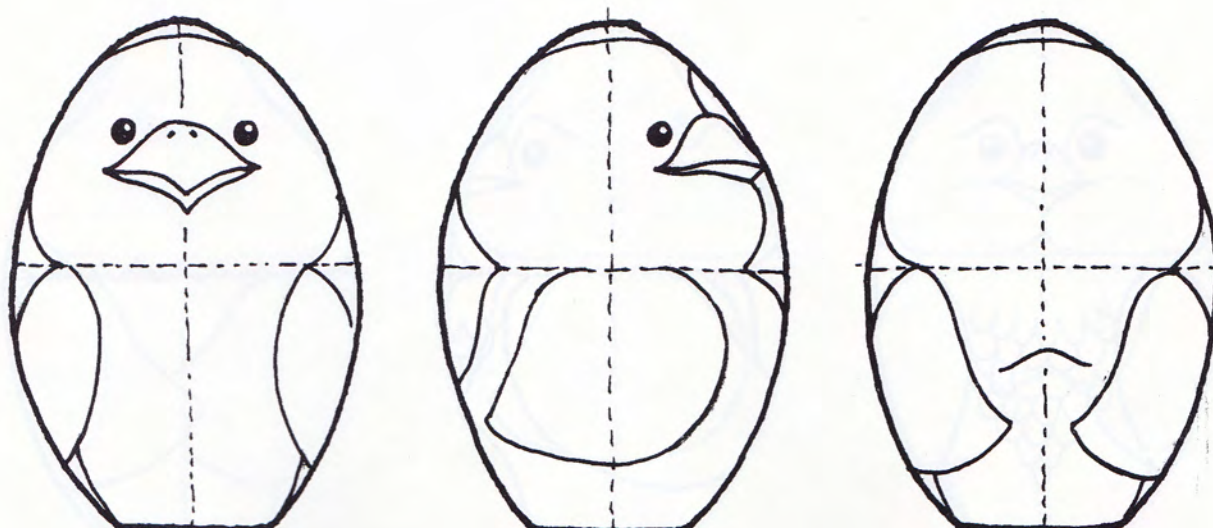
spots (try using a brown marker to make the spots). The lower breast is white blended upward. The robin has a gold beak.



Crow... ∞

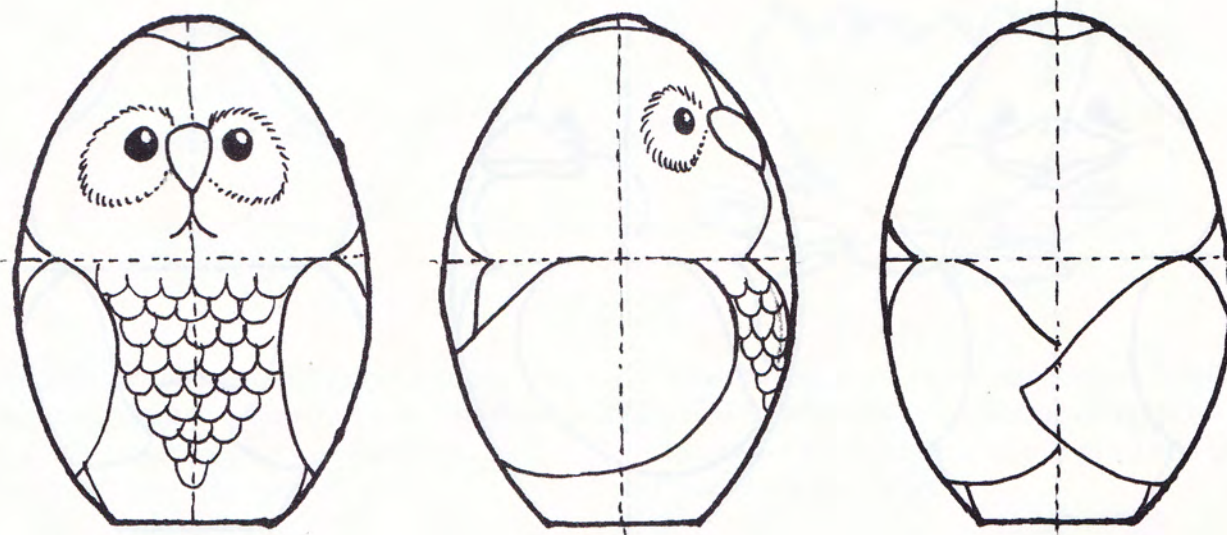
The crow, as you know, has a black body. I prefer an over-sized yellow beak (in nature the beak is black as well). Use 4 mm bead eyes because you

can't paint black on black and expect to see anything.



Owls are also varied in color. Carve a small dip on his head. He also has a sharper angle at the bottom of his head, making his head look squatty. In the eye area carve deep holes for 4 mm bead eyes.

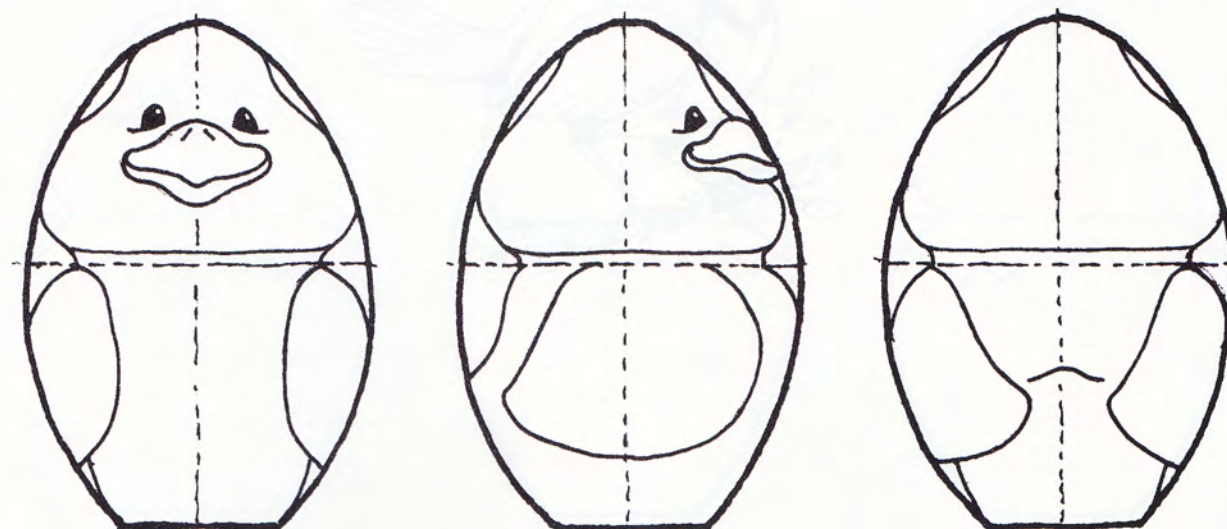
His head is white. His wings are white, tapering to light brown. Base coat his breast brown and paint white breast feathers. Paint the beak gold.



Mallards...

Mallards are distinctive because of their green heads. Base coat the head with a dark forest green, then add yellow to the green to highlight the cheeks

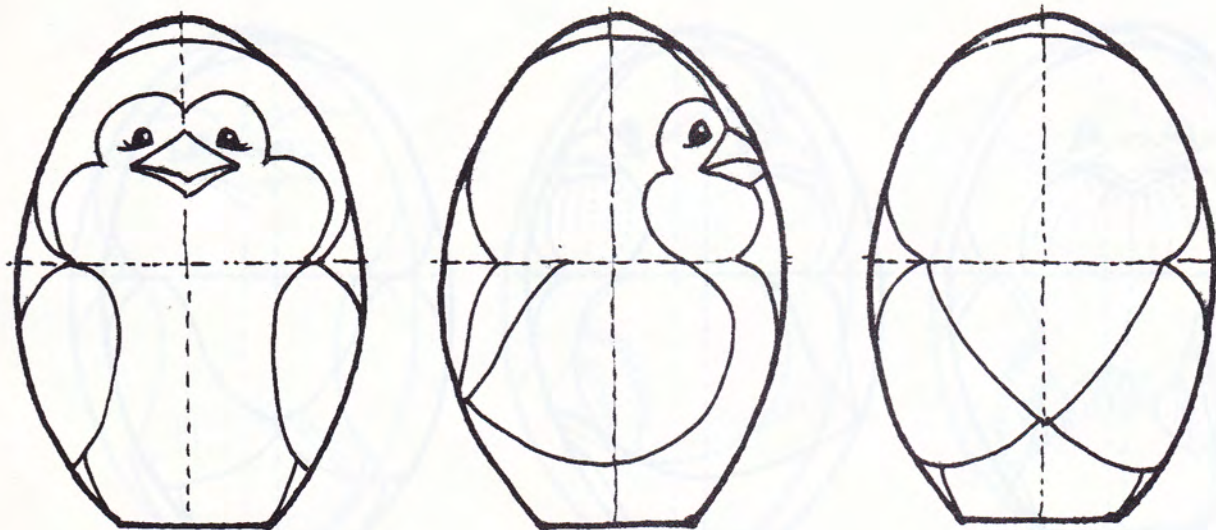
and the eye area. The mallard has a white band around the neck, a rust-colored breast, brown wings and a gold bill.



Penguin...

This guy is the easiest. He has a black head and a black body, with a white face and a white breast. I always give this guy pink cheeks because he's

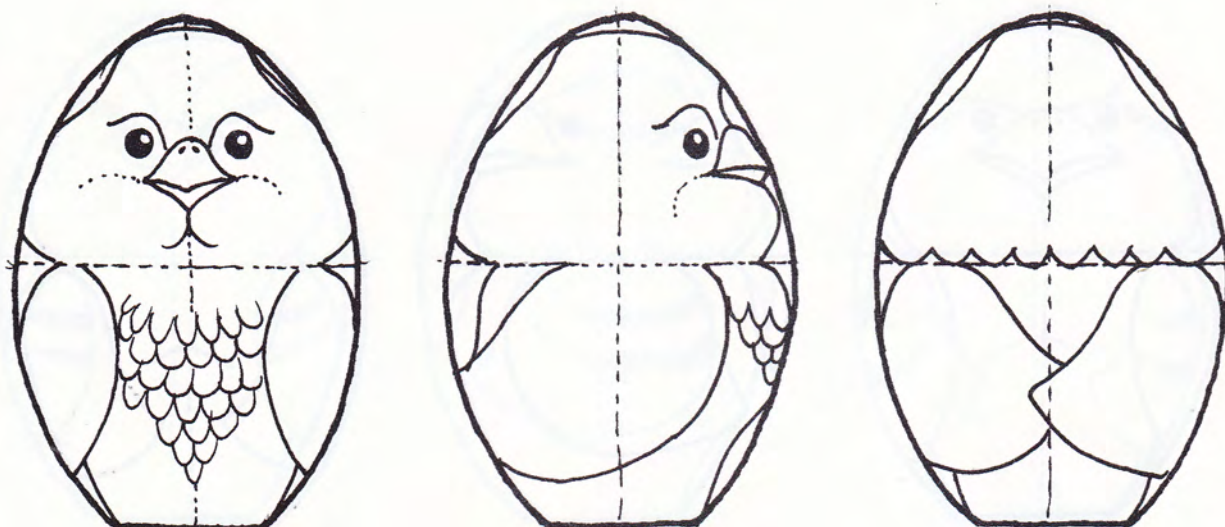
always cold. Lightly dry brush a little dark pink on his cheeks. He has a yellow beak.



Eagle...

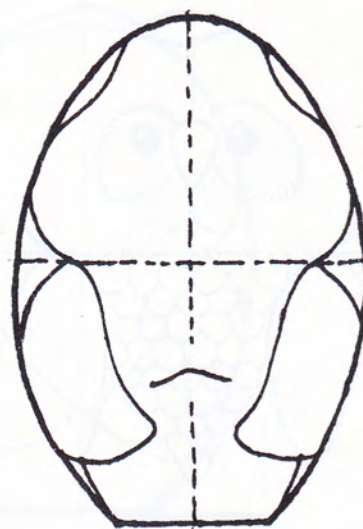
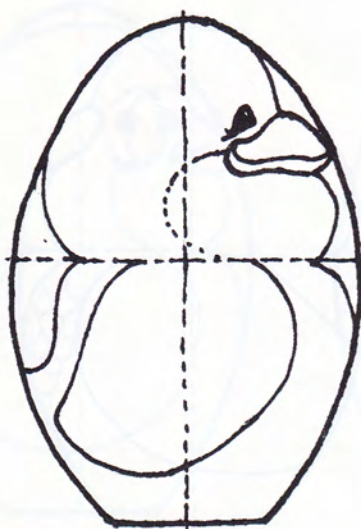
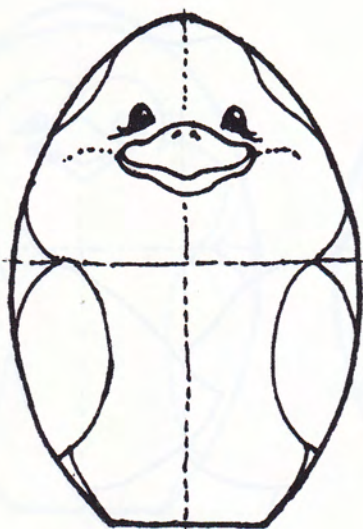
The eagle's head is different from all the other birds. The angle at the bottom of his head is sharper, not rounded, so you can notch out the back of his head. I also carve deep holes in the recessed

area behind the beak to "set in" 4 mm bead eyes. Be sure the eyes are deep enough so he doesn't look bug-eyed. The eagle has a brown body and a white head, gold breast feathers and a yellow beak.



Note the duck-shaped head. It is almost exactly like the mallard except for the neckband. The bill is

also curved at edges. I base coat these ducks with white or yellow. The ducks get yellow/orange bills.



CHAPTER 8 • Birds in A Shell... ∞



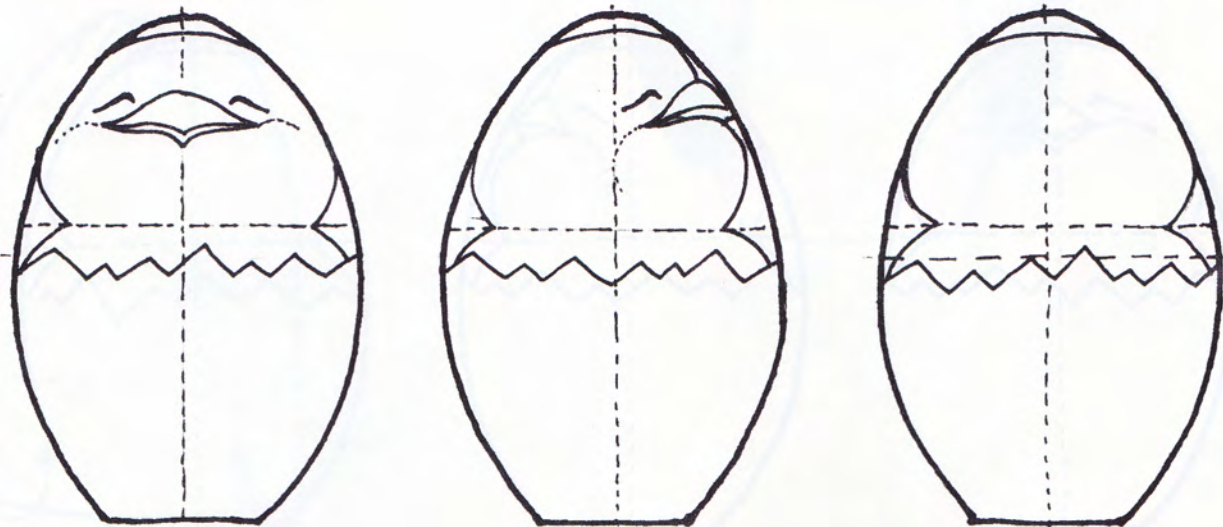
These little nestlings will steal your heart. They are even easier to carve than the birds. The head is a little smaller, there are no wings or tail to carve, and you must carve the shell.

Most bird eggs are brown speckled with pale blue or off-white backgrounds. One exception is a robin's egg — it is light aqua blue. A good field guide will also show egg colors.

Nestling... ∞

It's very important to mark your shell area before you begin carving. Draw a random zigzag horizontal line around the egg. After carving the basic body, stop cut the zigzag line all the way around the egg. Angle cut into the stop cut about 1/8" deep. Do not carve the shell; it needs to look

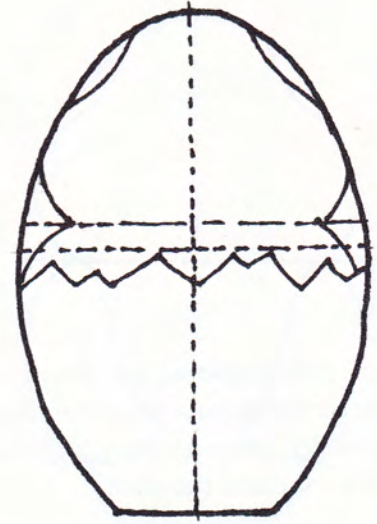
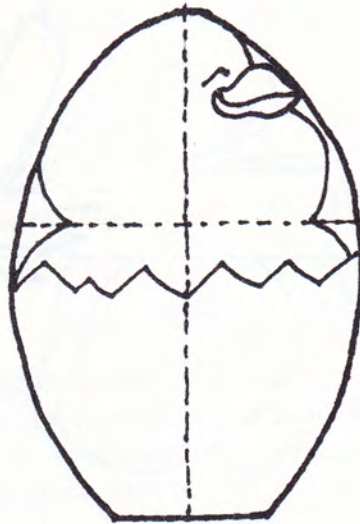
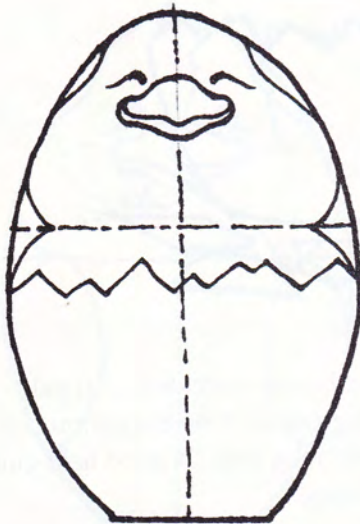
smooth. The nestling should be wide-eyed and wide-beaked. Paint the egg according to the descriptions in bird field guides. Remember that most baby birds don't look like their parents. They are mostly fuzzy. You can create a fuzzy look by dry brushing with white.



Duckling...

The duckling's shell is also not carved to give it a smooth finish. Note the horizontal centerline is higher than the centerline on the basic duck. The bill is smaller, and he is squinting. Paint the egg according to the description in your field guide. I

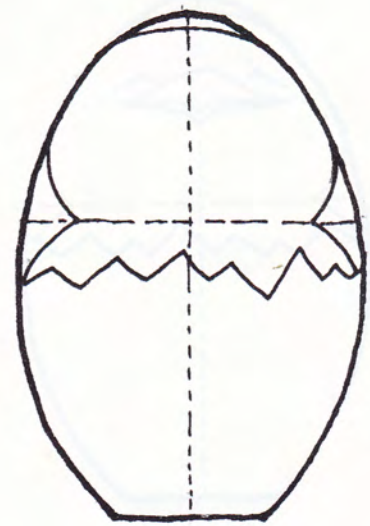
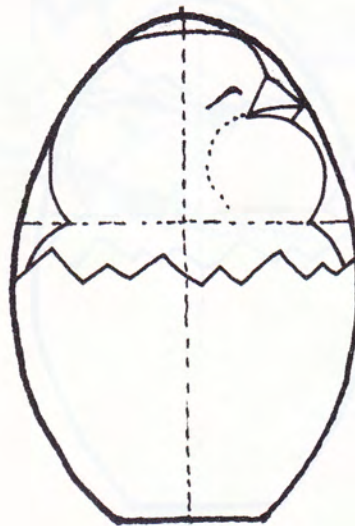
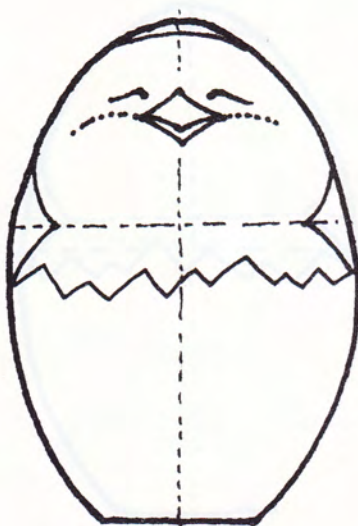
paint the duckling butter yellow and dry brush him with white for the fuzzy look. Yellow/orange is the color for the bill. You may also want to dry brush pink cheeks to give him that adorable baby look.



Chick...

The chick also has a higher centerline. He is butter yellow with white dry brushing for a fuzzy

look. He has a little gold beak and dry-brushed pink cheeks.



CHAPTER 9 • Sock Cap...

Sewing the Sock cap

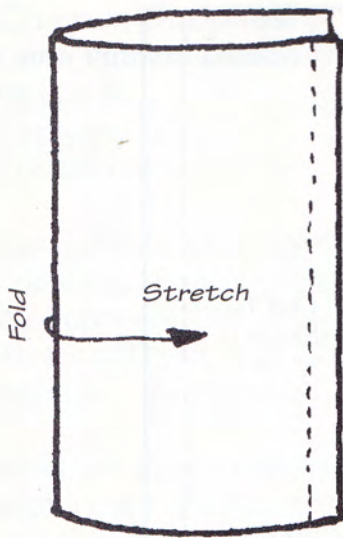


Fig. 1



Cut your fabric according to the pattern. Fold the cap in half so that the stretch runs horizontally. Sew a 1/4" seam (fig.1). Gather one end tight and secure a knot (fig. 2). Turn the cap inside out and turn the raw edge inside 1 1/2" (fig. 3). Turn up the cuff and glue it on the head. Glue a pom-pom on top of the gathers.

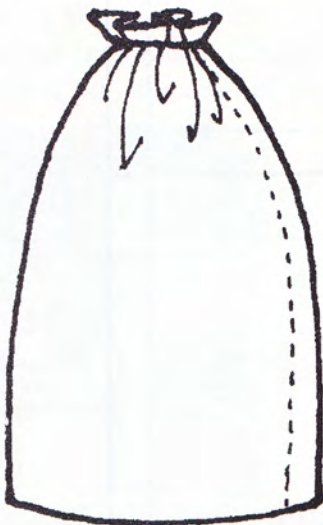


Fig. 2

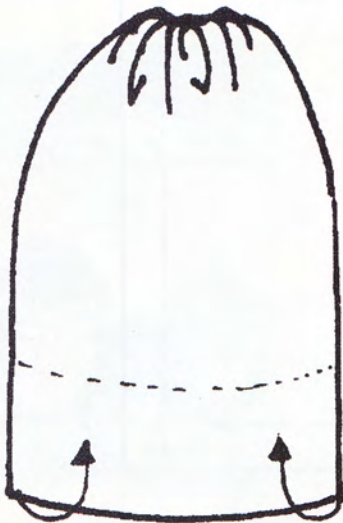
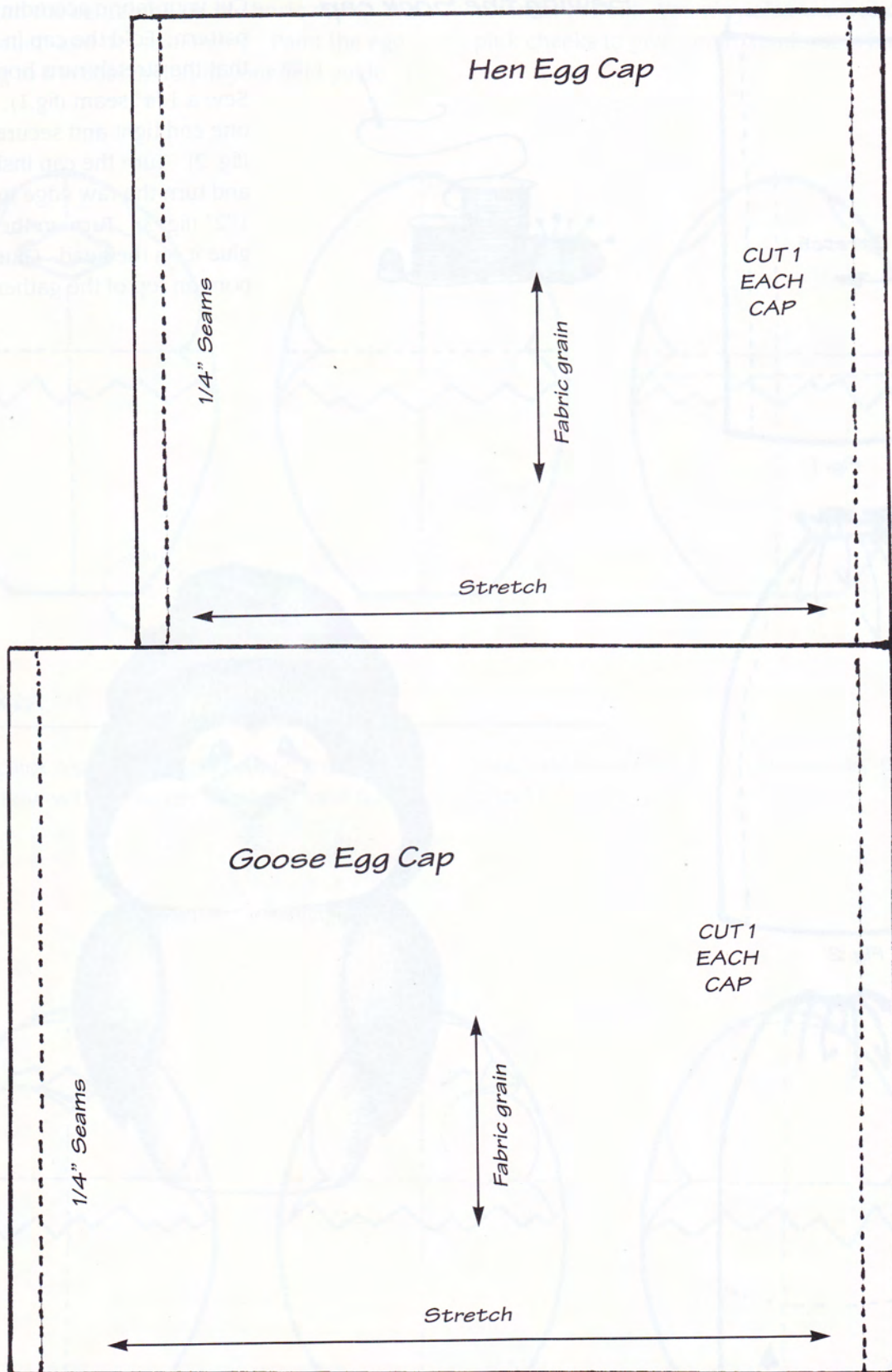


Fig. 3





Chirper Supplies

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Goose egg \$1.50 ea. \$15.00 dz.

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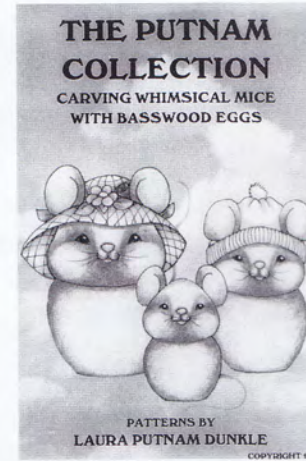
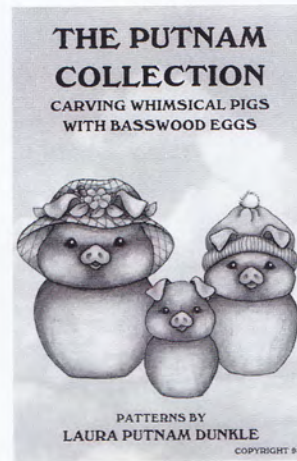
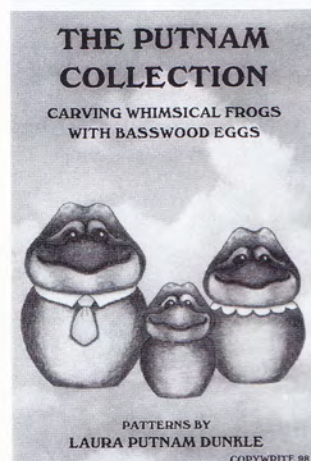
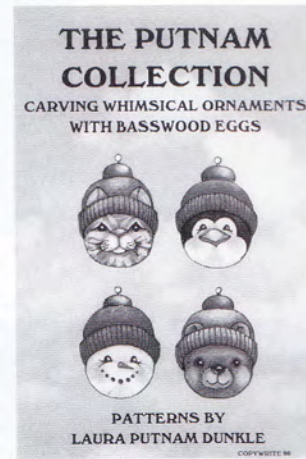
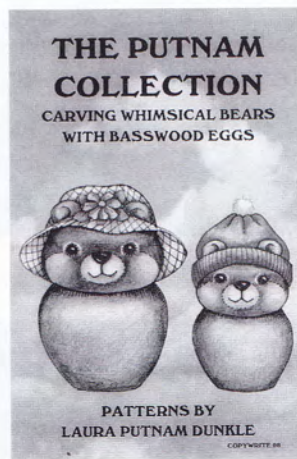
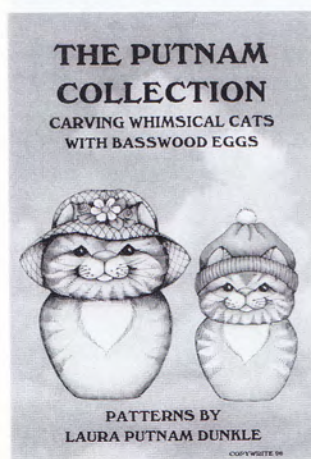
Gizmo marking gauge \$8.00 ea.

Pilot fine point marker black/brown \$2.50 ea.

Herb's Yellowstone and strop \$15.00

Carving Whimsical Birds book \$12.95 ea.

Eight Critter Patterns (cat, rabbit, bear, ornament, frog, raccoon, pig, mouse — shown below) \$5 each



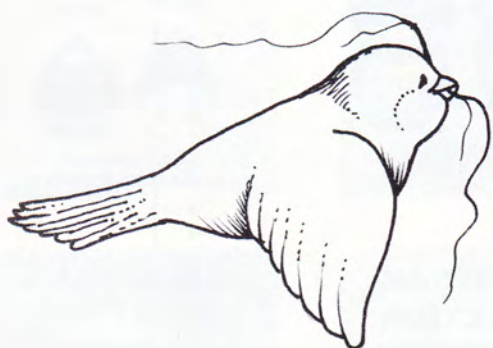
∞ About the Author...

I was born and raised in west Toledo, Ohio, and started creating things as soon as I could make the scissors work. My first business started in the seventh grade when I made and sold framed drawings. My interest in creating followed me into college where I majored in art. I moved to Indiana and turned my creations into a business. I opened a quilt shop in Shipshewana, Indiana, and produced 30 craft doll patterns, which I sold across the U.S. and Europe. That was a lot of fun! Eventually I moved back to Ohio. I spent a few years as a floral designer, then I was hired as a doll designer for a craft manufacturer. I traveled all around the country as a company rep and ran the doll department. I decided to get off the fast track and slow down. It was then that I discovered woodcarving. This has been the most rewarding media of the all for me. Now I am hooked. I carve about 8 hours a day and I design all of my carvings. Some of my best designs have come

out of my head at 3 o'clock in the morning. Actually they are blessings from the Lord. Since many people have asked for the designed patterns, I decided to write this book. In addition, I have created critter patterns for more eggs.

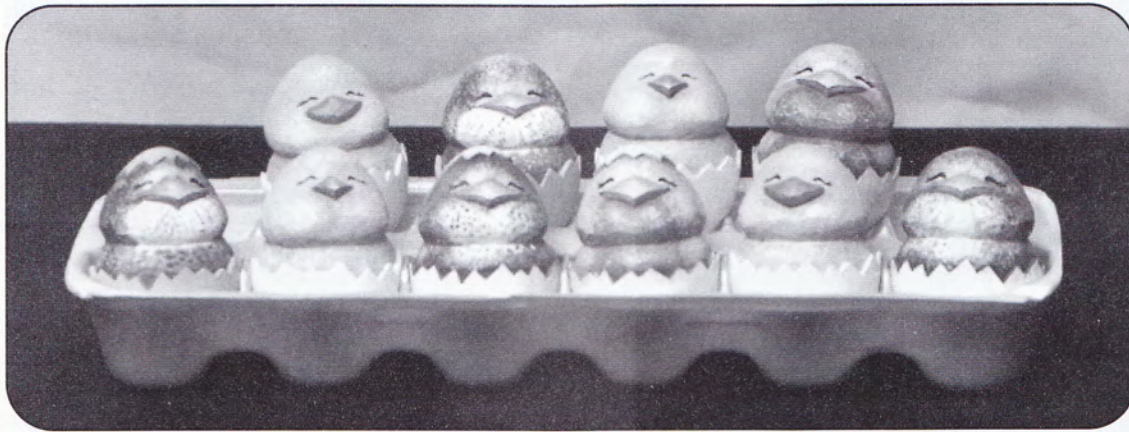
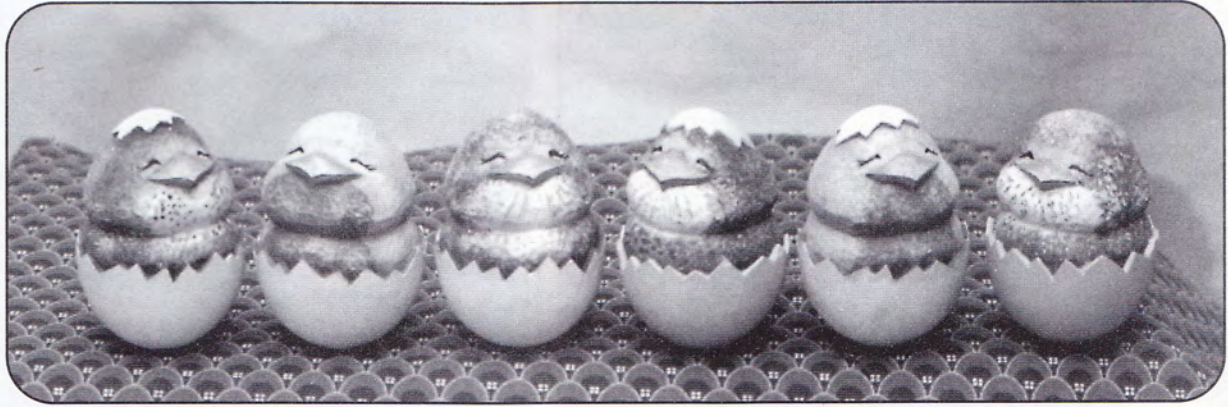
I hope you enjoy my "chubby chirpers" as much as I do. They make people smile and laugh, and we all can use more of that! I would love to see your creations and hear your comments, and I'd love to hear any suggestions and ideas you may have. Yes, we can *all* still learn.

Happy carving.
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Displaying Your Chirpers...

The following pages offer some neat ways to display and mount your little chirpers.
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