

got wood?

online @ turningblanks.net

Store Newsletter

December 2011 / January 2012

Announcements

- **Fire Recovery Updates**

As most of you may know, we experienced a fire on November 29, 2011, which caused nearly a total loss. We were able to recover our operations and resume selling wood within 9 days thanks to the support of our friends, neighbors and families. Our shop is now temporarily set up in another location until we are able to rebuild. Our new steel frame building will be arriving on February 1st, and will be put up shortly thereafter. We hope to have the building installed and be able to move our new machinery back in by the 3rd week of February. We apologize for any impact the fire may have caused to all our faithful customers, and really appreciate everyone's continued support. We will soon not only be back up and running at full capacity, we'll also have a new building which is twice the size of the old one, and some cool new machines to help us do even better work!

- **Recent Wood Additions**

Some of the most recent woods we've cut and put up for sale have included: [ambrosia maple](#), [black walnut](#), [cherry](#), [eastern red cedar](#), [hickory](#), [pecan](#), [rainbow poplar](#), [select maple](#), [spalted maple](#), [spalted ambrosia maple](#) and [tulip poplar](#).

- **Upcoming Woods**

We are cutting as quickly as we can to keep our inventory as full as we possibly can. Over the next few weeks we'll be processing more chinaberry, eastern red cedar, black walnut, Bradford pear, ambrosia maple, cherry, and anything else unusual that we are able to acquire.

- **Kiln Dried Woods**

In November's newsletter, we announced the purchase of our new vacuum kiln. The fire caused us to push back the kiln's delivery until we are able to get our shop rebuilt, but it will be delivered soon. As soon as we are able to install the kiln, we will start kiln drying...we have several thousand board feet of pre-cut cherry, ambrosia maple, rainbow poplar and cucumbertree slabs to start drying as soon as the kiln is up and running.

Focus on Wood - Spalted Ambrosia Maple



Bowl Blank Example



Spindle Blank Example

- **General Information:** Spalted ambrosia maple is a term used to describe any type of maple which has been infested with ambrosia beetles, and at the same time has developed spaling caused by a variety of fungi present in the wood. The wood contains streaks of reddish brown and bluish grey caused by the ambrosia beetle. These tiny beetles bore into the wood, not to feed, but rather to make their homes. As they tunnel through the wood, they leave behind two types of fungus. One is the ambrosia fungus, which provides a food source for the beetle and its larvae as they grow (and which also provides the name for the beetle, as well as the type of lumber produced). The second fungus is a type of fungus which causes discoloration in the wood...creating streaks of color. On top of the colored streaks caused by the ambrosia beetle, these trees have also transformed from a light yellowish tan color to a mixture of dark greens and dark pinks which are intermixed with the other colors caused by the ambrosia beetle. These trees are quite rare, and this wood is only available in very limited quantities.
- **Common Names:** Spalted ambrosia maple, spalted wormy maple, wormy maple
- **Density:** 30.5 lbs/ft³ - Moderately dense
- **Hardness:** 850-1150 lbft - Moderately hard
- **Specific Gravity:** ~0.5
- **Drying:** Dries very well, with little potential for checking or cracking. Moderate movement occurs during drying. Very stable once dried.
- **Turning:** Turns very well, with very little dulling effect on tools. Only a slight tendency to tear out across the end grain.
- **Sanding:** Sands very well. For removing tool marks, 120 grit sandpaper is recommended. Will sand to a naturally high luster, usually requiring grits no higher than 600 to achieve excellent results.
- **Finishing:** Readily accepts nearly any type of finish. Accepts stains well, but generally is not needed due to the fantastic array of colors naturally present in this type of wood.
- **Toxicity:** Although very uncommon, the dust from any variety of maple wood can be irritating to the sinuses and can cause breathing problems for persons with preexisting respiratory disorders.

Photo of the Month Contest



Would you like to get some free wood? Each month we give away a \$25 to the winner of our photo contest. Everyone is eligible...don't be shy! We love seeing what our wood gets



Figured Silver Poplar by Stephen Mildenhall

seeing what our wood gets "turned" in to!
Interested in making a submission...or even several? All you need to do is [e-mail](#) your photo(s) to us, or upload directly through our [Facebook page](#) to be eligible. Please include your name in any emails, and let us know the size and type of wood in each picture that you submit.

Turning Tutorials - Working with Natural Defects in Wood, Part 1

This month we will begin a series of tutorials that will focus on working with the natural defects in wood. We will cover everything from beginning to end...how to plan ahead and how to recover from problems. This month we will begin with the initial stage of turning, in which the turner must decide the best orientation for a piece of wood.

- **Inspecting Grain Patterns**

With woods that have a characteristically straight grain pattern, one should inspect the outer surface of the wood for any areas of twisted or distorted grain. While these unusual grain patterns can look quite stunning in a finished piece, they can also be indicators of a possible defect on the interior of the wood. To reduce the chances of having an unforeseen knot or hole ending up in your finished piece by mistake, orientate your blank so that any areas of twisted or distorted grain will be removed as waste, thereby improving the odds that any potentially invisible defects will be removed as well.

- **Positioning Bowl and Platter Blanks**

As a tree grows, branches will fall off near the lower portion of the tree once they become shaded by larger branches above. As these limbs die off, they are quickly covered by bark and eventually grow into the tree's cellular structure. After many years, these tiny remnants of knots will remain near the center of a tree, with mostly clear, defect-free wood surrounding them in the outer part of the tree. To minimize your chances of finding one of these small, ingrown knots on the interior of your bowl or platter blank during turning, orient your blank so that the face that was originally closer to the center of the tree becomes the area that will be hollowed out as waste. The wood nearest the center of the tree is more likely to contain unforeseen defects. An easy way to do this - look at the end grain of the wood, where you will see the tree's annual growth rings. The larger, wider growth rings will become the bottom of your bowl or platter, the smaller, more tightly compacted growth rings will become the top of your bowl or platter.

Links of Interest

This month we wanted to share a link about the boiling method for drying roughed out, undried turnings to prepare them for the drying process. There are two articles, both by Steven Russell. [The first article](#) describes the process in good detail, and is followed up by [an addendum](#) which gives even more detail to the methods describes originally. Very good, useful information for those wanting to improve their drying skills.

I believe that is all we have for now, folks! As always...we want to hear your feedback, comments, complaints and concerns...anything to help us make our services better for you. Drop us a line anytime!

Regards,
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